



EYFS Policy



Reviewed Feb 2024

Introduction

‘Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child’s experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.’

(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage)

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of their Reception year. At Quinton Primary School, children are admitted into pre-school in the September term after their third birthday and into Reception in the September following their fourth birthday.

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Quinton Primary School, we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development.

We also believe that early childhood is valid in itself as part of life. It is important to view the Early years preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

1.Intent

Aims & Objectives

We aim to support all children to become independent and collaborative learners. We will aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop in all areas of their learning.

At Quinton Primary School, we will:

- Provide a happy, safe, stimulating and challenging environment of learning and development for the children to experience as they begin their journey through school.
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond and enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence.
- Value each child as an individual, assessing their needs and supporting them to make at least good progress.

- Develop excellent relationships with parents and carers to build a strong partnership in supporting their children.
- Provide a caring and inclusive learning environment which is sensitive to the requirements of the individual child including those who have additional needs.

2.Implementation

At Quinton Primary School we work as a team on the following principles:

- To build on what our children already know and can do;
- To ensure that no child is excluded or disadvantaged;
- To offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children, and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
- To provide a rich and stimulating environment;
- To acknowledge the importance of a full working partnership with parents and carers.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based on four themes:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

A Unique Child

At Quinton Primary School, we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and praise to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of people within the school and believe in celebrating diversity. All children at Quinton Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, gender, religion or abilities. All families are valued within our school.

We give our children every opportunity to achieve their personal best by adapting tasks and activities to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. We do this by taking account of our children's range of experiences when we are planning for their learning.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations keyed to the needs of our children, so they are able to reach their full potential. We do this through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them learn effectively;
- Offering a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Employing resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- Planning challenging activities to meet the needs of all children.
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide additional tailored support (including referrals to external providers) when needed.

- Working closely with parents, carers and other outside agencies to ensure all children's needs are met and we enable them to access the provision and make good progress.

Positive Relationships

At Quinton Primary School, we recognise that children learn to be strong, confident and independent from being in secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with both children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents/carers are children's first and most important educators and we value this partnership through:

- Talking to parents and carers before their child starts school at our induction meeting.
- Providing an information booklet about commencing in Nursery and Reception.
- Inviting new starters to spend time in Nursery/Reception Class during the summer term for a series of transition sessions and open mornings.
- Holding a parent open evening to introduce staff and discuss school routines in the summer term and to answer any questions which parents/carers may have.
- Dealing with any parental queries or concerns promptly and efficiently. Conversely, if staff have concerns about the progress of a child, they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss them.
- Written contact through the reading record and school newsletters.
- Sending home 'WOW' slips designed to enable parents to record outstanding achievements (In Nursery this is using sharing leaves and Reception sharing stars).
- Inviting parents to attend informal meetings about areas of the curriculum, such as phonics or reading.
- Having regular access to their children's online 'Learning Journey' and valuing the on-going contributions sent through 'Tapestry'.
- Offering two parent evening meetings per year at which their child's progress is discussed.
- Sending a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of their time in Nursery and Reception.
- Asking parents to sign a generic permission form for visits, food tasting, photographs etc.
- Parents are invited to a range of activities during the school year such as assemblies, open mornings, Christmas Nativity play and sports day etc.

Enabling Environments

At Quinton Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development, where the children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have daily access to a stimulating environment which encourages development across all seven areas of the Early Years Framework.

Play-based learning is paramount and children have opportunities to direct their own learning with planned opportunities provided by staff.

We provide an environment which encourages a positive attitude to learning and reflects the individual's interests, passions and abilities. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that each child comes from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection from the activities on offer, to encourage independent learning. We ensure that resources and spaces are safe to use and checked regularly.

Learning and Developing

The EYFS Framework

There are seven areas of learning and development that help to shape educational provision in Early Years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. None of the areas of learning can be delivered in isolation from the others. Our children's learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skills not just academically but also socially, emotionally and physically.

The three prime areas which are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity, building their enthusiasm and capacity for learning and forming relationships are:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

Staff will also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Characteristics of Effective Learning

We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

Playing and exploring

Children will have opportunities to investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'. 'Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development.'

Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other

children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

Active learning

Children will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements.

‘Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.’

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence, they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Creating and thinking critically

We encourage and support children to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

“When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.”

Children should be given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning. Adults can support children’s thinking and help them make connections by showing interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open ended questions. Children can access resources and move around the classroom freely and purposefully to extend their learning.

Key Person

We use the key person approach to help your children feel individual, cherished and cared for while they are away from home. This approach means that there is one named member of staff to act as the main point of contact for you and your child.

The child’s key person will:

- Help them become familiar with the setting, so that they feel safe and confident.
- Regularly talk to them to make sure that their needs are being met appropriately.
- Record their achievements with written observations and photographs.
- Monitor their development and review their progress at regular intervals.
- Devise, share and agree upon short term goals for them to work towards. These next steps will be reviewed and changed when necessary.

- Plan exciting and fun activities that can help them to achieve their planned next steps in learning.

Each child's key person does not shadow them all of the time. Other staff will also play and work with that child.

Safeguarding & Welfare

'Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.'

(EYFS Statutory Framework, page 19)

At Quinton Primary School in order to provide a setting that is welcoming, safe and stimulating where children can grow in confidence, we will:

- Promote healthy eating;
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs;
- Ensure that all adults who look after the children, or who have unsupervised access to them, are suitable to do so;
- Ensure that the setting, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for the purpose it was intended for;
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for the safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

Keeping Safe

It is important to us that all children in the school are safe. We aim to support children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We encourage children to take risks and highlight the importance of keeping themselves safe by teaching them how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See our Safeguarding Children Policy).

Assessment

At Quinton Primary School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. We use observation to help us to understand where the children are at and how to move them forwards. This may be done in the moment or through the planning of next steps. We aim to send one detailed observation a week to parents so that they can be part of their learning journey. Within the observation staff record photographs/videos and written evidence of the learning that took place alongside any verbal evidence from the children. The observations are linked to the characteristics of effective learning and the Early Learning Goals. This is then shared with the parents using Tapestry.

These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

In pre-school, the children's level of development is recorded using the Development Matters age-bands. During the first term in both Nursery and Reception, the teachers assess the ability of each child using a baseline assessment. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children.

The Foundation Stage Profile is the nationally employed assessment tool that enables teachers to record their observations at the end of the Foundation Stage, and to summarise their pupils' progress towards the Early Learning Goals. It covers each of the seven areas of learning contained in the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage.

We record each child's level of development against the 17 early Learning goals as Emerging or Expected. We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs.

Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal observations, photographic evidence and through planned activities. Assessment is completed regularly and involves both the teacher and other adults, as appropriate. The collection of assessment data in the Foundation Stage Profile is a statutory requirement.

The teacher keeps progress records, online learning journals and records examples of each child's work. These learning journeys contain a wide range of evidence that parents have the opportunity to look at as and when they wish to.

Tracking grids are updated at the end of each half term. This provides a summary sheet for each child which feeds into the whole-school assessment and tracking process. We record each child's level of development to be emerging, developing or secure, working within the Development Matters age-bands and Early Learning Goals.

Parents receive an annual written report that discreetly discusses the child's characteristics of effective learning in the general comments and offers brief comments on each child's progress in each area of learning. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs, and gives details of the child's general progress. We complete these in June, and send them to parents in early July each year.

3.Impact

Our children grow to be confident, competent lifelong learners and good citizens.

The children at Quinton Primary School experience a smooth transition between Nursery, Reception and beyond. Effective communication and collaboration empower the children to leave the EYFS with a solid foundation of learning on which they can build.

As a team, we carry out regular internal moderation sessions and also ensure that staff attend external meetings and training to ensure that we feel confident with our judgements and that these judgements are consistent with a range of other settings. Assessment starts with careful observations which are then used to inform planning. Learning and teaching is thus effective when children feel a sense of belonging, curiosity and competence showing resilience, perseverance and determination. By monitoring assessment procedures regularly, we can effectively demonstrate what learning is taking place and how each child is progressing in all

seven areas of the EYFS curriculum. Progress toward the ELGs will ensure a positive disposition to learn. As they move through the early years, a rich diet of balanced learning experiences is undoubtedly the best way to develop happy, curious children.

Mrs Loquens (Early Years Phase Leader)