EYFS at Foxes Piece; Stepping Stones and Reception

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Subject: **Early Years**

Definition
The EYFS at Foxes Piece comprises of provision for 2-year-olds, a school-based nursery for 3- and 4-year-olds and our Reception Class. We work closely together to ensure consistency across the setting. The EYFS refers to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The statutory framework for the EYFS sets the standards for the learning, development and care of children from birth to 5 years in England. The guidance within the EYFS framework ensures that early years leaders, practitioners, teachers, teaching assistants and childminders, can effectively support and nurture the learning and development of children in their setting, from birth to five years of age. Four themes underpin the Early Years Foundation Stage: **A Unique Child -** every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We value and respect each child as an individual and understand that children develop in different ways and at different rates. Each child's unique history and experiences, including their experiences and opportunities, are their starting point for supporting their learning and development. We understand that every child is different, bringing with them their own unique qualities and experiences. We believe in the capacity of each child to learn and consider the whole child at the centre of this process **Positive Relationships** – children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships. Establishing high-quality relationships is at the heart of what we do. We know that early relationships are critical to future success, and it is imperative to take the time to ensure children feel safe, secure, comfortable and confident in the setting and with key adults. By tuning into children's signals and getting to know them as individuals, children understand that their needs will be met; they feel safe, relaxed, secure and confident. The home-school partnership is key; a strong relationship with parents and carers has a huge impact on children's learning and development. **Enabling Environments** – children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners, parents and carers. Creating the right environment for young children is vital in supporting their development and learning. During the early years, children learn through play, through interacting with each other, with adults, and with their environment. Our enabling environment offers rich learning opportunities through play and sensitive adult interactions; high quality, open-ended resources stimulate children's thinking and curiosity, and we ensure children are given the time and freedom to explore, take risks and learn from their mistakes. The environment is seen as the 3rd. educator; ensuring a rich, well-considered learning with intelligent resources is integral to children's learning. **Learning and Development** – W e recognise the importance of learning and development and our role in ensuring all children, regardless of need or background, have the opportunities they need to flourish and progress in all areas of learning and development. Our curriculum is responsive to all children and recognises that children learn and develop at different rates. We understand that children learn and develop in different ways, and that each child will be at a unique stage in their learning journey. Our skilled practitioners support each child to develop though thoughtful planning, high-quality provision and sensitive interactions. We support all children to make progress towards their next steps and are fully inclusive.

Intention Statement

High-quality early education is good for all children.

We recognise that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) holds significant importance in shaping children's early experiences and provides the foundations for all future learning at Foxes Piece. We will be ensuring all children learn and develop through the 7 areas of learning, with a particular emphasis on the prime areas, especially for our younger children and we will support each child to experience and acquire learning skills supported by the characteristics of effective learning.

We will focus on developing;

- effective communicators.
- resilient learners.
- curious minds.
- Develop lifelong learning skills and the characteristics of effective learning.
- Build the foundational knowledge they need to support their learning and development across the EYFS and beyond.

Through play and adult supported experiences children will become confident and happy learners.

We will support children to become emotionally literate and happy to come to school.

We aim to:

- Provide a safe and happy start to school life here at Foxes Piece, fostering an enduring love of learning for all.
- Develop effective communication skills to enable children to access a full curriculum.
- Forge close and positive relationships with parents.
- Deliver a broad and exciting curriculum with activities and opportunities.
- Enrich the lives of our children.

Teaching, Planning and Progression

<u>Teaching</u>

We provide a stimulating and exciting environment both indoors and outdoors. The resources are accessible and organised, reflecting diversity and the interests of our children.

The curriculum is organised into seven areas of learning which are:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development
- Communication and Language
- Literacy
- Maths
- Understanding of the World
- Expressive Arts and Design.

Adults within our settling work as an effective and supportive team, providing good role models for the children in our care. We talk to and play alongside children, enabling spontaneous and valuable teaching opportunities. We also lead adult- guided activities with planned and more focused objectives.

We strive to provide meaningful and challenging experiences, responding to individual needs and interests, allowing children to make links in their learning. We build on each child's cultural capital. We have ambitious and challenging expectations of the children in our care and support is given as needed.

The Characteristics of Effective Learning

How children learn is just as important as what they learn. In Reception, we focus on The Characteristics of Effective Learning, which guide how children engage with their environment and interact with others. These characteristics—playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically—lay the foundation for children to become motivated and effective learners.

Child-Initiated Learning across the EYFS and The Importance of Play

Children thrive in our EYFS setting, which supports continuous provision. This approach ensures that learning is uninterrupted, allowing children to explore, build upon their knowledge, and develop key skills through meaningful play. Our curriculum is delivered through planned, purposeful play and a balanced mix of adult-led

and child-initiated activities. It is through this continuous provision that the characteristics of effective learning will be developed.

Each child's characteristics of learning are acknowledged and developed. We intend to provide plenty of opportunity for children who are disadvantaged and who have EAL. (Links to Unique Child)

"Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults."

Statutory Framework for the EYFS, EYFS Reforms Early Adopter Version 2020

Play is integral in our approach and underpins all aspects of learning in our EYFS; it is a fundamental right of all children in to play. We offer generous opportunity for play-based exploration and firsthand experiences that excite, motivate and engage children, enabling them to explore their deep fascinations and learn at the highest level. Through their play, children demonstrate what they have learnt, know and understand. Play, both indoors and outdoors, makes a powerful contribution to children's wellbeing, development and learning.

In play, children can become deeply involved as they take things they already know and combine them in new ways, so their understanding deepens. It is important that children choose to play.

Through play, children develop language skills, their emotions and creativity, social and intellectual skills. For most children their play is natural and spontaneous, although some children may need some extra help from adults. Adults in our setting have a deep understanding of how play supports children to develop and learn and are skilled at observing and reflecting on children's play to gain an insight into the child's purposes and how best to support them. Play takes place indoors and outdoors and it is in these different environments that children explore and discover their immediate world. It is here they practice new ideas and skills; they take risks, show imagination and solve problems either on their own or with others.

It is important to note that play, while central, is not the only way in which children develop and learn in the early years. Children also have opportunities to learn through first-hand experiences, alongside being shown how to do things, having conversations, and taking part in activities which are planned by adults to introduce or practise particular skills. Such adult-led activities are not play but they are most effective when they use some of the features of play to engage and motivate children, by ensuring that they are playful – with elements of choice, hands-on experience, connections to children's interests, and enjoyment.

<u>Planning</u>

Planning includes purposeful play opportunities and both independent exploration (discovery time) and explicit teaching. Progression documents covering common play behaviours ensure that skills are being developed right across the EYFS and beyond. These can be seen in the classrooms to support teaching.

Our environment encourages children to be independent, with space to explore and develop ideas over time. Children learn both indoors and out and our learning environment allows the children to follow their interests. High-quality schemes also support planning of certain areas of development allowing the teacher to plan progressive sequences to learning. These include;

- Kinetic letters
- Ready Steady Write
- Developing experts in science
- Complete PE
- White Rose Maths
- PKC
- Twinkl Phonics

High-Quality Interactions and Sustained Shared Thinking.

Alongside effective planning, staff in our EYFS understand the importance of high-quality interactions that take place in the moment. Adults notice, engage, question and respond; they have genuine interest children's thoughts and ideas. Adults know when to stand back and observe, and when to interact sensitively. They 'wonder' and ask key questions to develop and challenge children's thinking, deepening the learning process and supporting children to make connections. They model or enhance play opportunities where appropriate to

stimulate and extend children's development. Adults ensure that appropriate resources are carefully selected to support children's learning through play. They skilfully observe play and join in when invited, watching and listening before intervening.
The effectiveness of adults in promoting high-quality learning depends upon them having a clear understanding of child development and high expectations of what young children can achieve.

Assessment

The National baseline is completed in the first few weeks of school. A variety of other assessments then informs planning, alongside tracking to see who is working at age related expectations against the Development matters document. This is completed across the year, usually around 4 times.
Significant moments in a child's development are recorded as 'wow' moments and shared with parents via Class DOJO. Parents are also encouraged to share these moments from home too.

Pupil Voice

Staff talk often with the children about their life in school. They can make requests and add their ideas to activities and planning. They are included in various forms of whole school feedback and regularly can talk about their feelings.

Transitions

We strive to make the transition into nursery and school a positive and exciting experience for all.
Prior to beginning school in September, in the summer term:

- All parents are invited to a Welcome meeting with our Headteacher and early years staff
- Children receive personal invitations to come and visit us at stay and play sessions.
- Parents and children are encouraged to come to an informal 'stay and play' at school before the end of the summer term
- Foxes Piece staff visit pre-school settings to liaise with staff and share information and records
- Individual appointments are made for parents and children just before term begins so a more personal meeting can take place.

When school begins:

- We run an 'Open Door' policy and a relaxed start to the day. Parents are encouraged to talk with staff at both the beginning and end of the day.
- Our timetable changes as the year progresses and the Reception children settle into school life e.g. attending assemblies and sharing playtimes.
- Parents are kept informed about their child's learning through DOJO online platform. Parents receive photos have their child's learning a few times a week. They also receive a weekly newsletter informing them of learning opportunities taken place that week.

Into Year One:

- Year One staff get to know the class during the summer term through shared activities and children spend time in the Year One classroom. Current Year One children share their Year One experiences.
- At our summer term parent evenings, parents can visit the Year One classroom and meet staff.
- Opportunities for mixed year group activities include carousel of sports, focus days e.g. Health and Safety, One World Day, Christmas parties etc.

Organisation and Provision

Parents

We acknowledge the enormous role parents play in their child's development and our relationships with parents are crucial. We aim to keep parents not just informed but involved in their child's education, striving for a meaningful engagement of all our parents.

Inclusion (SEND, MA)

The EYFS framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

Health and Safety (as school)

- Risk assessments are in place for indoor and outdoor learning in our setting.

- Staff have received the appropriate compliance training for H&S as well as safeguarding, first aid, food hygiene etc.

Roles and Responsibilities of Co-ordinator

The communication of this policy will be shared amongst the staff and be stored on the school shared drive for reference.

The responsibilities of the co-ordinator are as follows:

- Supporting class teachers and practitioners across the EYFS
- Monitoring the learning of the children
- Monitoring the progress of the children
- Obtaining any necessary resources
- Providing a strategic lead and direction for the setting in school

The co-ordinator links with other EYFS teachers in other schools and pre-school providers.

Early Years Pupil Premium

We will endeavour to identify our least advantaged pupils and inform parents or carers of their opportunity to apply for their child's entitlement to extra funding in school. All extra funding we receive will be used to support areas in which we identify that the child will best benefit. We will track children's progress to ensure that they are making good progress and to ensure that support is adjusted to target specific areas as the child develops.

Monitoring of the EYFS Staffing and CPD

We are committed to providing the best possible experiences for our children. The EYFS Leader is responsible for monitoring provision, teaching and learning and children's progress. Information is shared with the Headteacher, SLT and EYFS team as appropriate, and any necessary actions are taken. All adults in the EYFS team have a key role in children's learning and development. Therefore, they are required to be knowledgeable and skilled in the EYFS curriculum. Any training needs for existing or new members of staff are identified and addressed as part of performance management targets.

We place high priority on recruiting and retaining high-quality early years teachers and teaching assistants. Our practitioners have an in-depth understanding of child development and use this knowledge to support every child to take the next steps in their learning journey. We ensure that all practitioners have access to training and development opportunities and are supported to develop a deep understanding of young children's learning and development.

Reviewed	**Mrs Lisa Fern** **September 2026**
To be reviewed	**September 2027**