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# Early Years Foundation Stage Policy Of Queenborough School And Nursery

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# Queenborough School and Nursery Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

## **Introduction**

At Queenborough School and Nursery, every member of our happy community is valued, nurtured and kept safe. Our contributions, big or small, are celebrated, allowing each of us to feel a sense of worth and ownership of our school. We are always ambitious, constantly striving to improve, giving and accepting only our personal best in everything that we do. We can work independently, as well as part of a team and our relationships are built on high moral standards and the mutual respect that underpins our community.

## **Aims**

The aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage at Queenborough School and Nursery are:

- To give each child a happy, positive and fun start to their school life in which they can establish solid foundations on which to expand and foster a deep love of learning;
- To offer each child a wide range of new and exciting experiences and give them the opportunity to consolidate, explore and test them out along with their own, individual experiences;
- To enable each child, through encouragement and high expectations, to develop, to the full, socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally;
- To offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited opportunity for development;
- To provide a safe, secure and enriched environment to enable children to challenge their own abilities, inspire their imagination and natural curiosity.
- To support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing;
- To help each child recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and developing the confidence to work towards personal goals

## **Teaching and Learning**

Both Nursery and Reception follow the curriculum as outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory framework, Outcomes and Development Matters. The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are seen as important and interconnected but three areas are seen as particularly important for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, for building their capacity to learn and form relationships and thrive, they support children's learning in all other areas, they are known as the prime areas.

The prime areas are:

- Communication and Language - Listening and Attention, Understanding and Speaking

- Physical Development - Moving and Handling and Health and Self Care
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development - Making relationships, managing feelings and behaviour and Self-confidence and Self-awareness

The specific areas of learning develop essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society.

The specific areas are:

- Literacy - Reading and Writing
- Mathematics - Numbers and Shape, Space and Measure
- Understanding the World - People and Communities, The World and Technology
- Expressive Arts and Design - Exploring and using media and materials and Being Imaginative.

### **Characteristics of Effective Learning**

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning. The Nursery and Reception teachers plan activities within the Nursery and Reception classrooms with this in mind. They highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them.

The three characteristics are:

- **Playing and Exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- **Active Learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- **Creating and Thinking Critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

### **Teaching Strategies**

We ensure that there is a balance of adult led and child initiated activities across the day. We include direct, carefully planned, adult led experiences for the children in the form of structured adult led teaching and adult led group activities. These are particularly important in helping children to learn specific skills and knowledge is often through children's play that we see how much of this learning children have understood and taken on.

Each day we follow a timetable with set routines in place. This looks quite different in the Nursery and Reception classes. We set aside times each day when the children come together to be taught in the more traditional sense, gathered together on the carpet as a class. In these sessions we focus on our Topic work, Mathematics, Literacy, Phonics and Stories. These sessions help to develop collaboration, learning as a group, listening to the teacher, taking turns to answer, sitting still etc.

Reading and story play an important part of the day. We want to make sure our children have a love of books and will leave the Early Years Foundation Stage with a bank of stories they know well, both traditional and modern classics. We make sure there is always time for a whole class

story at the end of the day but also that there are many opportunities to enjoy books at other times.

A Nursery session starts with a circle with their key group. They will look at the days of the week, numbers, letter sounds, the weather and name recognition as well as sharing any news they might have. During the session children will be asked to join their key person for an adult led activity and will also go into groups for a letters and sounds activity. Nursery has a designated snack area so children can have snacks when they are feeling hungry. The session ends with a story from one of the adults. Children sit in their key groups during story time.

## **Play based learning**

Learning through play is an important part of our Early Years environments. We believe children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them. Using children's interests as a starting point, we provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning to help them make sense of the world. They have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside others as well as on their own. They are able to practice skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experience at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests and inspire those around them. We believe that it is important that adults take an active role in child initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating and extending their play.

## **Planning**

As a school, we use the Cornerstones Curriculum. This model is highly creative and allows the children to learn under themes which are specific to their year group. Each theme starts with a memorable experience to ignite curiosity and engage the children with their learning. The model allows all subjects to be linked more closely to the theme and therefore children's key skills in the foundation subjects should improve. In the Nursery and Year R, we use the Cornerstones planning document as a starting point and this then develops following the children's ideas.

At Queenborough School and Nursery, we follow a learning model, based around Bloom's Taxonomy. The model provides teachers with a point of reference for ensuring that learning is deepened and provides children with another set of common vocabulary with which to discuss their learning. The school's lesson planning procedure is adapted to show progression through the phase of learning. When working within each phase of learning, teachers ensure they use consistent vocabulary, so that pupils develop an awareness of what skills they are using.

The quality of teaching and learning is monitored by the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, Assistant Headteachers and subject leaders in school through lesson observations, pupil interviews and planning. The Early Years Leader monitors teaching and learning across the Foundation Stage and analyses EYFS data in conjunction with the Nursery teacher and Senior Leadership Team.

## **Organisation and the Role of adults**

At Queenborough School and Nursery, we have a 45 placed Nursery offering the universal 15 hours funded places and a limited number of 30 hours funded provision and two Reception classes that can admit up to 30 children. Both the Nursery and Reception classrooms have doors leading to our outdoor provision. Children have access to outdoors during designated times.

Both the Nursery and Reception are led by a qualified, CRB cleared teacher who acts as the Key Person. In the Nursery setting, Mrs Anne Marie Austin has responsibility of the teaching and learning of our youngest pupils. Mrs Heckley-Smith, Mrs Glass and Miss Hall have the responsibility for the teaching and learning of our Reception children. The teachers are supported by a variety of fully qualified teaching Assistants or Nursery Nurses who work as a team and meet formally once a week in order to plan effective provision, prepare resources and review assessments. Mrs Anna Glass has an overall responsibility for Early Years.

Each child is assigned a key person. Their role is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs to help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with the parents/carers.

## **Parent/Carer Partnerships**

At Queenborough School and Nursery, we believe that positive relationships with parents and carers are essential in a child's learning and helping them to reach their full potential. We want parents to feel they can speak to us about their child at any time and feel comfortable to approach different members of staff within the Nursery and Reception learning environments. As well as transition sessions, we offer parents meetings throughout the school year as well as the chance to attend workshops for parents with a range of foci, for example, reading or Mathematics.

## **My Unique Story**

At Queenborough School and Nursery, we are committed to ensuring the best start in life for every child we teach. Within the Nursery setting, all children have a special member of staff, often referred to as a Key Person, who will ensure a child's specific needs and interests are met. This partnership can be done much more effectively when we understand what fascinates and interests a child at home. We invite parents/carers to discuss their child regularly to help us provide appropriate activities and opportunities for their child to support and develop their learning. It is also equally helpful to know what individual children dislike or have difficulty with or any other concerns parents/carers may have. Within the Nursery, your child's progress and learning will be captured in a special book, a link book for home life and Tapestry our online learning journal which is used both at Nursery by staff and home by parents and carers. We invite parents/carers to be as fully involved in this as possible as we would like to create a very precious and much valued record of your child's journey through their early years. Photographs and notes

about your child's playing and exploring at home and in the Nursery will be a unique record to share with the whole family.

Parents and carers are encouraged to discuss, summarise and celebrate the progress their child has made through regular meetings. This is linked to areas of learning identified in the national Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). This two-way conversation will be captured on a My Unique Story format which will be inserted into your child's special book.

## **Learning Environments and Provisions**

We aim to create an attractive, welcoming and stimulating learning environment which will encourage all children to explore, investigate and learn through first-hand experience. Our learning environments are a place where children feel secure and confident, and are challenged to develop their independence. Our Early Years classrooms have defined areas with clearly labelled resources to ensure children can access them easily. A variety of activities are planned for and set up each day to reflect the seven areas of learning. Activities are planned for both the indoor and outdoor classroom throughout the school day. We aim to provide a reflection of the inside environment outdoors. These areas are arranged to encourage quiet areas and more active areas within the learning environment. Each child has their own labelled peg within the Nursery or Reception classroom. We encourage children to take responsibility for keeping their clothes, book bag and water bottles safe.

## **Behaviour Management**

At Queenborough School and Nursery, every member of our community has the right to feel safe, valued and to learn to the best of their ability. In order for this to happen, there is an expected standard of behaviour and conduct which all members of our community are committed to upholding. From the earliest age, our pupils are taught to take ownership for all aspects of their learning and this extends to the choices that they make about their behaviour. Staff understand the need to balance a consistent approach to behaviour management with responding to the individual needs of every child.

At Queenborough School and Nursery we aim to:

- Promote and encourage behaviour which is conducive to our mission statement;
- Establish which behaviours are not conducive to our mission statement and to discourage these;
- Ensure that the behaviour of all pupils allows all members of our community to be safe and feel safe;
- Encourage pupils to respect themselves, others and the environment around them;
- Promote the use of positivity when managing behaviour;
- Demonstrate a consistent approach to teaching the causes and effects of behavioural choices, such as rewards for positive behaviour and sanctions for negative behaviour.

## **The Behaviour Code of Queenborough School and Nursery**

The following code of behaviour has been established in conjunction with students and staff. This code sets out the behaviour expected from all members of our community throughout the school.

### **Our Behaviour Code:**

1. We will respect and value every member of our community and welcome every visitor.
2. We will take ownership for our learning and be responsible for our own choices.
3. We will try our best in everything that we do.
4. We will keep ourselves and others safe and move safely around the school.
5. We will respect the school environment and learning resources.

This code is displayed throughout the school and staff make reference to it when dealing with all behavioural matters. Please see Behaviour Policy 2016 for more information.

## **Assessment for learning**

Assessment is an essential part of the learning and development of children in EYFS. It involves all members of the EYFS staff observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting on those observations. We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects next steps and identified needs.

On entry to Nursery we carry out baseline assessments for each child. Both the Nursery and Reception staff submit termly assessment data to the Headteacher showing each child's development across the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG) and comments on whether their development is either entering, developing or secure. The Early Years Leader and Nursery teacher moderate judgements termly to ensure pupils are on track to meet expectations. Where children or a group of children are not on track, a discussion is held during Pupil Progress Meetings with Reception teachers or the Key Person in Nursery as to how planning will be adapted to address any gaps in the children's learning. Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their children's progress. The parents are given the opportunity to meet children's class teachers at various points during the year during Parent Teacher interviews.

Assessment judgements will be moderated as an Early Years Foundation Stage team as well as key members of staff attending local area moderations or County moderations for the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile.

## **Tapestry**

In the Early Years Foundation Stage at Queenborough School and Nursery we use an online learning journal, using educational software called Tapestry which records a child's unique learning

journey. By logging on with a secure username and password, parents and carers are able to view their children's observation, photographs and video from their time in Nursery, Year R and Year One. This enables parents and carers to follow their children's individual progress closely and reflect upon their achievements. Parents are also encouraged to add comments and observations they make of their child learning at home.

## **Inclusion**

Children with special educational needs will be given support as appropriate to enable them to access the curriculum fully. This includes children that are more able, and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities. Individual Education Plans identify targets in specific areas of learning for those children who require additional support, in line with the school's Special Educational Needs Policy. Reception teachers discuss these targets with the child and his/her parents/carers. Progress is monitored and reviewed formally every term. The

## **Transition into Nursery**

Children are offered a place in the Nursery after their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday giving the majority of children the experience of a full year of Nursery Education before they move into mainstream school. Once the child has been offered a space parents/carers and the child are invited in for a meeting to go through the Nursery session. Children get to meet the staff and play in the Nursery with their parents. Before their start date children receive a postcard from their key person to tell them about the group they will be in when they start and the date they start on.

## **Transition from Nursery into Reception**

To enable continuity and to support the needs of the individual child, Queenborough School and Nursery will:

- The Reception class teachers will visit the nursery to observe and get to know the children and to have time to discuss each child individually with their Key Person;
- Arrange a group meeting with all Reception and Nursery staff to discuss the children moving into Reception;
- Hold a Parents welcome meeting to provide key information to parents/carers regarding the transition to Reception
- Invite parents to an initial meeting in Term One to discuss how their child has settled in and give the parent/carer a chance to share any information/concerns or worries they may have;
- Visit those children new to Queenborough School and Nursery at their pre-school setting
- Arrange a series of transition sessions for the children and parents to spend time with their new teachers in their new classrooms;
- Hold termly internal moderation involving Nursery and Reception staff.

## **Transition from Reception to Year One**

Moving from one Key Stage to another is recognised to be, for some, an anxious time that can impact on their progress. To enable continuity and to support the needs of the individual child, Queenborough School and Nursery will:

- Organise regular visits by the Year One teachers to the Reception classes during the summer term prior to transition into Year One;
- Hold transition session for Reception children. The children will spend time with their new teacher in their new classroom experiencing the environment and becoming familiar with their journey from this class into the outside area, the toilets etc.;
- Send home a laminated sheet which includes key information on it including pictures of the class teacher and teaching assistant, classroom, times of break and lunch times etc. at the end of the Summer term;
- Ensure Year R and Year One teachers meet to discuss the individual needs of children ensuring assessment data is shared and key areas highlighted. Year One teachers will have a good understanding of the Good Level of Development and how to effectively plan for all children;
- Ensure that the routine of the day and the environment in Term 1 mirror that which the children have been used to in their final term in Reception;
- Send home a booklet for parents regarding the changes their children will face as they move into Year One;
- Use Tapestry, the online learning journey into Year One to ensure parents / carers are involved in their children's learning at school;
- Arrange for a Year One teacher to attend LA Moderation with the Reception teacher;
- Hold termly internal moderation involving Reception and Year One staff.
- Carry out agreement trialing of EYFS Profile assessments that involve Nursery, Reception and Year One staff.

## **Safeguarding**

Queenborough School & Nursery is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our Children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We strive to ensure that consistent effective safeguarding procedures are in place to support families, children and staff at school.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is Mrs Clare Bush, who oversees safeguarding for the whole school and Nursery. The Safeguarding Governor is Jan St John-Knight. Other staff trained in Child Protection are Barbara Conroy, Headteacher, Karen Williams, Assistant Head, and Anna Glass, Assistant Head. Queenborough School & Nursery have policies and procedures in place to deal effectively with Child Protection and safeguarding issues together with recording and monitoring processes. All school staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

To promote a safe environment for children at Queenborough School & Nursery, our selection and recruitment process includes all statutory checks on staff and regular volunteers including enhanced DBS (disclosure and barring service) checks. New Staff and Volunteers are also required to complete an Induction with one of the Safeguarding Team on their first day.

All staff are trained to a level appropriate to their safeguarding responsibilities ranging from HAYS online course for safeguarding basic awareness for all to Level 2 for key staff. Other safeguarding training is attended by relevant staff and governors. This training is monitored and comprehensive records kept by our Senior Leadership Team.

All concerns are passed through members of staff who are trained as "Designated Child Protection Officers" in school in compliance with the HM government "sharing of information" guidance March 2015. Staff are required to report any causes of concern to the school safeguarding team using a written pro-forma. All cause for concern forms are stored securely and frequently monitored to ensure that they are completed, shared and followed up appropriately. The safeguarding of the child is paramount.

Attendance throughout Queenborough School and Nursery is monitored closely and concerns are shared as appropriate with parents/carers, the School Liaison Officer, Children's Social Care and the school Safeguarding Team. Both within the Nursery and Year R classrooms regular attendance is promoted to ensure children do not miss out on valuable learning time. Queenborough School & Nursery will work effectively with other agencies and parent/carers when necessary to safeguard children. We comply with the Department for Education's guidance on Keeping Children safe in Education Sept 2018 and every member of staff has been issued with this document.

At Queenborough School and Nursery we aim to provide all pupils, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability, equal access to all aspects of school life and work to ensure that every child is valued fully as an individual.

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