

Stower Provost Community School



Early Years Policy

Ownership	L Buxton
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Approved by Govenors	
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Stower Provost Community School

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.”

(Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage 2021)

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. The Early Years Foundation Stage is based upon four themes:

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

At Stower Provost, we follow the Early Learning Goals and the Development Matters. The Development Matters document is guidance for adults who work with children, to help them to support and embed your child’s learning journey. Throughout their year in Reception, the children will be observed and assessed through their play in order to gain insights and make reasonable judgements against the Early Learning Goals. We will use the terms ‘emerging’ or ‘expected’ to describe our judgements of your child’s progress.

A Unique Child

At Stower Provost Community 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, 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 rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school. All children at Stower Provost Community School are treated fairly regardless of race, gender, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school. In our school we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children’s range of life experiences when planning for their learning. In the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

Welfare

It is important to us that all children in the school are ‘safe’. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to assess risk and recognise and avoid hazards.

“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.”

(Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage 2021)

At Stower Provost Community School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage.

At Stower Provost Community School we:

- Promote the welfare of children.
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose.
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

Positive Relationships

At Stower Provost Community 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 the children and their families.

Parents/Carers as Partners:

- We recognise that parents/carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value being partners with them in their child's education through:
- Talking to parents/carers about their child before their child starts in our school.
- Offering both parents/carers and children the opportunity to spend time in the Foundation Stage before starting school.
- Operating an open door policy for parents/carers with any queries.
- Sharing regularly the children's 'Learning Journal' with parent/carers and valuing the on-going contributions to this from parents.
- Offering two parent/carers/teacher consultation evenings per year.
- Sending a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of their time in the Foundation stage.
- Developing a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents/carers.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. We have very strong links with various feeder Pre-schools and take an active role in the local preschool network. The Foundation Stage Staff meet with providers to discuss each individual child and their transition process into school.

Enabling Environments

At Stower Provost Community School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning styles, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

The skills and learning from the statutory framework have been organised into and covered by topics which aim to draw children into their learning whilst providing a web of support and enable children to see how strands of knowledge and skills are interwoven throughout. Planning is further supported by observations of the children; staff are skilled at observing children to identify their achievements, interests and next steps for learning. These observations then support and further lead the direction of the planning. In addition to this the staff explore what the children know about a theme and what they would like to learn about, so that the children have an active and key role in leading their learning. This fostering of the children's interests develops a high level of motivation for the children's learning and development.

The planning objectives within the Foundation Stage are from the 2023 Development Matters Statements and the Early Years Foundation Stage 2023 document. 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.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts reception, staff will administer the Statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA, May 2021).

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development 2
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging') 1

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters guidance) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

The Learning Environment

The Foundation Stage classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet, creative etc. The Foundation Stage has its own outdoor classroom area. The free flow between the inside and the outside has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. The children can explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant.

Learning and Development

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in early year's settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

Prime Areas:

- 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.

Specific Areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

We deliver learning for all of the areas through, purposeful play and learning experiences, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

“Children’s play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations.

In their play children learn at their highest level.”

(Statutory Framework for EYFS 2021)

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and 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.

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.’

(Statutory Framework for EYFS 2021)

At Stower Provost Community School, we understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements including those stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2021 and Stower Provost safeguarding policy:

- To provide a setting that is welcoming, safe and stimulating where children can grow in confidence
- Promote good health
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children’s stage of development and individual needs
- To 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 and feel ‘safe’. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. We encourage children to take risks and highlight the importance of keeping themselves safe by teaching them how to assess risks and recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See the school’s Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy for further details).

Good Health

All children are provided with a healthy snack each day. They have access to water at all times.

Intimate Care

“Intimate” care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. However, depending on a child’s age and stage of development, they may need some support, for example dressing, wiping their bottom after using the toilet and changing underwear following an accident. Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child.