



# **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

## **Kea C P School**

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### 1. Our Vision

Children in the Foundation Class at Kea School are eager to attend and enthusiastic about learning. They work hard to develop the skills that they will need in the future and they play an active and dynamic role in their learning. In the Foundation Stage the children learn in a highly stimulating, organised and welcoming environment that fully reflects the children's backgrounds and wider community. The children themselves are highly motivated through inspirational and innovative teaching. Highly effective partnerships between staff, parents, children, other providers and agencies help to enhance the children's wellbeing, meet their needs and assure their protection.

*"Every child deserves the best possible start in life  
and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential."*

*(EYFS Framework, 2023)*

### 2. EYFS Principles

- 2.1 We recognise the EYFS as a crucial stage in education, both in its own right and in preparing children for learning in Key Stage 1. We believe that all children should be given the best possible start to their education. We therefore place great value on the quality of our provision in the EYFS. From September 2008 the EYFS was made mandatory for all Schools and early years providers in Ofsted registered settings attended by young children- that is children from birth to the end of the academic year in which a child has their fifth birthday. This policy is based on requirements set out in the ['Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)'](#) (September 2023).
- 2.2 At Kea School the EYFS is delivered in the 'Foundation Class' using a principled approach. There are four distinct but complimentary principles which the staff use to guide the delivery of the EYFS. These principles are:
- A Unique Child
  - Positive Relationships
  - Enabling Environments with teaching and support from adults
  - Learning and Development

- 2.3 We recognise that every child is **unique** and we value the diversity of the individuals within the class and recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of all our children. We achieve this by planning for the learning and development of each individual child, assessing and reviewing what they have learned regularly 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. We ensure that every child makes good progress and no one gets left behind through our 'keep up' culture.
- 2.4 At Kea School we aim to **promote positive relationships** as we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent through secure relationships. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating their children and we encourage parents to be actively involved in their child's foundation year at Kea School. All staff involved in delivering the EYFS at Kea School aim to develop good relations with all children, interacting positively and taking the time to listen. At Kea School the teacher acts as 'key person' to all children within the class.
- 2.5 The EYFS **learning environment** at Kea School is carefully selected, adapted, resourced, and organised to provide high quality teaching opportunities, learning and support from adults whilst allowing children to explore their own lines on enquiry safely and securely. The environment is arranged into 'zoned learning areas' where children are able to locate equipment and resources independently. The children also have access to fabulous outdoor areas and school facilities that create awe and wonder, whilst further enhancing learning opportunities.
- 2.6 At Kea School we identify that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are interconnected. Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. We recognise that active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. At Kea School **learning and development** opportunities are delivered across the seven areas of learning that are important, interconnected and shape the **educational programmes** in the EYFS. The Early Learning goals summarise the knowledge, skills and understanding that the children have gained by the end of the year. Ongoing assessment is carried out to assess children's achievements, next steps and future planning.

### 3. Rationale

- 3.1 At Kea School we believe that every child deserves the best possible start in life in order to fulfil their potential. We recognise that 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.

#### **4. Admissions/ phased entry**

- 4.1 Children are entitled to join the Foundation Class at Kea School, in accordance with Cornwall Council's policy, at the beginning of the school year in which they will attain the age of 5.
- 4.2 At Kea children are admitted full-time during the Autumn Term. On occasions, parents opt for their children to start on a part time basis; all children need to attend school full time from the term after their fifth birthday however.
- 4.3 Staff in the Foundation Class work closely with staff at Kea Pre-School. Once a term Pre-School children join the Foundation Class and participate in activities. This helps to familiarise the children with the school environment and staff. In the Summer Term the Pre-School children attend 'Learning Together' sessions with Foundation staff. All the Foundation staff take turns to visit Pre-School to build relationships and deliver a personalised story session.

#### **5. 'Settling in'**

- 5.1 At Kea School we recognise that importance of building positive relationships with every child and we understand that children require 'settling' into the routines of School life. To enable this transition to occur as smoothly as possible for children and parents we have implemented the following:
- 5.2 Prior to the children starting School the teacher and Teaching Assistant visit Kea pre-school to meet and observe the children in a familiar setting. If appropriate and it can be arranged, the teacher will also visit children from other settings during the Summer Term.
- 5.3 In June/ July the new intake of children and their parents are invited to attend five '**Learning Together**' sessions. These sessions provide an opportunity for parents/ family members to communicate informally with the Foundation Class staff team and also allow the child to familiarise themselves with staff and the setting.
- 5.6 Prior to the children starting School parents are asked to complete an 'information sheet' for the class teacher detailing information on their child's likes/ dislikes, interests, fears/ phobias, friends and any medical conditions/ additional needs that they may have. This information is invaluable in assisting the 'settling' of the child into the setting.
- 5.7 EYFS 'phases of development' attainment information from pre-school/nursery settings is collated prior to the child's start date in the Foundation Class.
- 5.8 *During the first two weeks of the Autumn Term a member of Kea pre-school staff works within the Foundation classroom to assist the children, parents and School staff in 'settling' the children and providing invaluable information on the child to the Foundation Class staff*

#### **6. Learning environment/ resources**

- 6.1 The EYFS welfare requirements must be followed by all EYFS providers and at Kea School we follow the advice provided in the *EYFS Statutory Framework* in order to ensure that we meet these legal requirements in a way that reflects the needs of the individual children in our care. At Kea School we aim to create a welcoming environment which is

safe, stimulating and where children are able to enjoy learning through play, grow in confidence and fulfil their potential. We know that is essential for children to be able to interact and explore a rich and diverse environment if successful learning and development is to take place. The staff in the Foundation Class, regularly assess the learning environments (indoor and outdoor) and activities that the children are exposed to, to ensure their safety at all times and when necessary risk assessments are conducted.

- 6.2 Outdoor and indoor spaces, furniture, equipment and toys must be safe and suitable for their purpose. An audit of the environment and resources will be conducted informally on a regular and on-going basis by the Foundation Class staff. Any broken or damaged items are taken out of use immediately.
- 6.3 In the Foundation Stage at Kea School the children have access to a calming, attractive and stimulating classroom. We also have various outdoor areas accessible, the children have direct access to a balcony and a small fenced area adjoining the classroom which enables the children to 'free-flow' between the indoor and outdoor environments. We are also able to easily access the Foundation garden, court, the school field, orchard, and the adventure playground to allow the children to explore a range of levels and surfaces. Within the indoor and outdoor environments the children are provided with a range of resources to provide for the seven areas of learning in the EYFS.

## **7. Staff, safeguarding and organisation**

- 7.1 At Kea School we recognise that 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. All staff (and those parents who regularly help in the class) who are responsible for the care of the children in the Foundation Class have an Advanced Criminal Record's Bureau Disclosure. All staff have undertaken appropriate training and have up to date skills and knowledge achieved through regular professional development activities. Each member of staff has a valid First Aid certificate and has undertaken regular training in Child Protection. We strongly believe in the importance of keeping our practice up to date and we therefore ensure that all our staff attend courses and training on a regular basis as part of our School Professional Development Programme.
- 7.2 The Foundation Class is staffed with two part-time teachers and a full time teaching assistant. An additional teaching assistant is employed if required (according to the needs of the children in each particular class). Lunchtime supervisors undertake the care of the children between the hours of 12pm- 1pm. Staffing arrangements are organised to ensure safety and to meet the needs of the children in the class at all times.
- 7.3 All staff ensure that they take the steps necessary in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children in the class. At Kea School we promote the good health of the children via healthy eating, access at all times to individual water bottles, daily physical activity, and regular opportunities to learn about our bodies and ways to keep ourselves fit and healthy. We also take necessary steps to prevent the spread of infection by providing the children with accessible hand washing facilities, paper towels and tissues, by applying good food hygiene processes when providing snack and by the regular cleaning of surfaces by Foundation Class staff as well as cleaning staff. Staff also take appropriate action when a child is unwell by ensuring that the child is comfortable and by contacting parents at the earliest opportunity, after checking with the headteacher first.

- 7.4 At Kea School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2023. We recognise the need to promote the welfare of the children, promote good health, manage behaviour effectively, ensure all adults who look after the children are suitable to do so, ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose and maintain records, policies and procedures required. See the School's Safeguarding Policy for further information.
- 7.5 At Kea School we plan and organise our systems to ensure that every child receives an enjoyable and challenging learning and development experience that is tailored to meet their individual needs. We ensure that there is a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities, delivered through indoor and outdoor play. The staff ensure that there are effective systems in place in order to ensure that the individual needs of all children are met. Where necessary the staff will consult with the child's parents, the School SENCo and other agencies in order to determine how best to ensure that every child's needs are met.

## 8. Curriculum

- 8.1 At Kea School we recognise that children are competent learners from birth and that children develop and learn in a wide variety of ways. Therefore, the Foundation Class staff carefully consider the needs, interests and stages of development of the children in the class when planning an appropriate and challenging curriculum across all seven areas of Learning and Development. The Childcare Act 2006 provides for the EYFS learning and development requirements to comprise three elements:
- **the early learning goals** (the knowledge, skills and understanding which young children should have acquired by the end of the academic year in which they reach the age of five)
  - **the educational programmes** (the matters, skills and processes which are required to be taught to young children)
  - **the assessment arrangements** (the arrangements for assessing young children to ascertain their achievements)
- 8.2 These 'learning and development' EYFS requirements provide the framework used by the staff at Kea School to plan the curriculum and to assess the children within the class.
- 8.3 The seven areas covered by the early learning goals and educational programmes are as follows:
- 'Prime Areas'
1. Communication and Language
  2. Physical Development
  3. Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- 'Specific Areas'
4. Literacy
  5. Mathematics
  6. Understanding The World
  7. Expressive Arts and Design
- 8.4 Kea School recognises that each of these seven areas is equally important and depend upon each other in order to support a rounded approach to whole child development. The Foundation Class staff ensure that all seven areas are delivered through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. We use the

classroom, school facilities and outdoor area to enable children to access both planned, structured play activities and self-chosen, spontaneous play activities.

- 8.5 See also the School's 'Teaching and Learning Policy' and English and Maths Policies
- 8.6 The children take part in whole school assemblies after the October half term once the class are confident and settled.

## **9. Assessment**

- 9.1 In the Foundation Class at Kea School we are aware that a child's early experiences are crucial to the future success of a child as these experiences help to build a secure foundation for later learning. For this reason the staff in the Foundation Class, are sensitive to the individual development of each child to ensure that the activities that they undertake are suitable for the stage that they have reached. To ensure that the child is working at an appropriate challenge level staff adopt the following process:
- 9.2 Ongoing observational assessments are used to inform planning for each child's continuing development through play based activities. The 'educational programmes' state what activities and experiences must be provided and Development Matters September 2023 provide ideas for what adults can do and what adults can provide in order to offer appropriate support and challenge for the children.
- 9.3 A flexible and in the moment approach is adopted that responds quickly to children's learning and development needs
- 9.4 Staff are constantly monitoring progress, achievements, interests, and challenges through observations and interactions. Significant achievements are recorded on Tapestry, which is shared with parents and used by staff to formulate the children's 'next steps' and to identify learning priorities for the individual child. These priorities, along with the knowledge of the child's interests and learning styles shape and feed into the planning process.
- 9.5 Each individual child's progress, across the seven areas of learning, is recorded using an excel spreadsheet and an assessment ladder each term. Tapestry is used for formative assessment and an electronic copy of the child's Tapestry Learning Journal is given to parents at the end of the year.
- 9.6 The statutory ELGs establish expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS. They, along with 'Development Matters', provide the basis for planning throughout the EYFS, so laying secure foundations from birth for future learning. By the end of The EYFS we recognise that some children will have exceeded the goals whilst some will still be working towards some or all the ELGs. For those children who are working towards some/ all of the ELGs the curriculum in Year 1 will be adjusted to consider the need for these children to be provided with opportunities to work towards achieving these ELGs.

## **10. Parents and other providers as partners**

- 10.1 At Kea School we recognise that close working between early years practitioners and parents is vital to ensure that children achieve their full potential and for the identification

of children's learning needs. Parents/ guardians and families are central to a child's well-being and staff support this important relationship by sharing information and offering support for extending learning in the home. This is achieved by regular conversations with the parents in the mornings or after school, the use of Tapestry to share learning experiences both in school and at home and Stay and Learn Together sessions that take place during the summer term.

- 10.2 In the May/June, prior to their child starting Kea School, parents are invited to the School for a 'Welcome to Kea School Parents Meeting.' During the course of the evening parents are invited to meet the headteacher, the staff that will be working with their child within the class, a School Governor and a representative of the Friends association. The parents are provided with a presentation on the School by the Headteacher and then talked through some information on the delivery of the EYFS in the School by the class teacher. Information is also shared on the practicalities of the School day and on the 'Learning Together Sessions' which take place in June/ July.
- 10.3 Once the children have started the school website Foundation page is updated half termly with an overview of the core learning that will be taking place. Parents are provided with a weekly written update about what their child has been learning. Regular letters are sent home from the class teachers informing parents of what is happening in the Class Foundation during the course of the half term period.
- 10.4 Every week the children also visit the School library for 'Book Club' a weekly book is recommended and the children can select a book to take home. The children and are offered the opportunity to change their book club book on a weekly basis.
- 10.5 Parents are invited to attend a phonics and reading meeting delivered by the RWI lead in in September. Children begin their reading journey by taking home a phonics books containing the letter sounds that they have learnt that week along with a 'book for pleasure' to take home to share with their friends/ families. Books are initially changed weekly if the parent has written a comment in the accompanying reading record. Once a child starts blending they take home a 'sound blending' book, initially containing CVC words. Once a child is confident in reading CVC words they build up to reading a sentence.
- 10.6 Every half term the children take part in a 'show and tell' session which is related to our topic. Parents are encouraged to send an item in or post photographs, pictures or videos on Tapestry that will support their child in telling the class about their 'Show and Tell.
- 10.7 Parents are actively encouraged to come and participate in the classroom activities and to join the class on any trips and visits.
- 10.8 Formal parents' meetings are arranged with the class teacher after the October half term to discuss how the children have settled into School. Another formal parents meeting takes place around Easter to share the child's progress and achievements to date and their next steps.
- 10.9 At the end of the academic year parents are provided with an electronic copy of their child's Tapestry Learning Journal and a written summary of their child's achievement in relation to the EYFS Characteristics of Learning.



- 10.10 Parents are also encouraged to informally discuss their child's progress/ share anecdotes via the 'proud clouds' which parents fill in at home and return to school. This is shared with staff and other children.
- 10.11 At Kea School we recognise that it is essential to ensure continuity and coherence when children receive education and care in more than one setting. The Foundation Class staff have excellent relationships with the 'Kea Before and After School Club' We all work together when children are attending both settings to ensure that the transition is as seamless as possible for the child. When the child moves from setting -setting staff ensure a verbal dialogue occurs between practitioners in order to share any relevant information.
- 10.12 At Kea School we are aware that there will be a frequent need to work with professionals from other agencies. We enthusiastically promote the development of these positive working relationships and we actively engage with specialists from a range of professions when necessary.

## **11. Transition to Year 1**

- 11.1 A smooth transition from the Foundation Class to Year 1 will enable children to settle well and respond well to a new curriculum and classroom organisation.
- 11.2 To enable this to happen the following arrangements will be considered:
- Stay and Learn Together sessions take place in the year 1 classroom for the Foundation Class children their parents are invited to come to these sessions too. Both the year 1 and Foundation Class teacher are at these sessions.
  - Visits from the Y1 teacher to the Foundation classroom in the Summer term
  - Compatible teaching styles
  - A similar approach to classroom and lesson organisation particularly in the Autumn term
  - Additional support for pupils not yet attaining the ELGs
  - The Y1 teacher and Foundation Class teacher meet during the Summer Term to share information on the children prior to the transition.