



# THE FOREST FEDERATION

## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

### Rationale

Young children entering formal education have many years ahead of them in school. It is therefore important to begin this process in a sensitive and caring manner.

### Aims

As part of our Federation, the Forest Federation's Foundation Stages follow the same main aims of our schools. In the Early Years we aim to provide a happy, safe, caring, stimulating and well organised environment in which children learn by building upon what they already know and can do. We ensure all children develop to their full potential; academically, socially and physically, so that they acquire knowledge and understanding relevant to life. We aim to help the children to develop lively enquiring minds and give them opportunities to make choices, take decisions and become independent and socially confident with a positive self-image. We help our children develop moral values, respect and tolerance of and for others and are committed to the development of a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum. We believe a child's education is and must always be viewed as a partnership between parents and school. All children are treated as individuals and are valued, supported and encouraged to achieve the main aims of the school.

### Objectives

- To provide a well planned and resourced curriculum, following the guidelines in Development Matters leading towards the Foundation Stage Early Learning Goals dovetailing into the National Curriculum.
- To promote independence and self management through a child centred stimulating and attractive environment.
- To provide planned and purposeful differentiated activities that provide opportunities for teaching and learning both indoors and outdoors.
- To structure quality and stimulating play situations. Making appropriate interventions in order to develop and extend learning.
- To continually monitor and assess children, through profiling.

The Forest Federation greatly values the importance that the EYFS plays in laying the secure foundations for future learning and development. However, we also believe that early childhood is valid in itself as part of life. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

### What is the Foundation Stage?

The EYFS for children is from birth to five years of age.

Our Forest Federation schools believe it is important to provide an Early Years education that aims to meet the individual needs of every child in our care. To this end we create a stimulating, nurturing and multisensory environment. Children are made to feel safe and secure and are valued as individuals. Independence is fostered as are positive attitudes to learning; each child is encouraged to reach their full potential regardless of their ethnic and socio-economic background.

### The Foundation Stage curriculum

The EYFS Statutory Framework provides a high quality teaching programme which promotes children's learning, working towards achieving and where appropriate, exceeding the "early learning goals", which is a statutory requirement.

### Learning and development

Learning and development is categorised into three prime areas of learning:

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

*Additionally there are four specific areas of learning*

Literacy-Reading and Writing

Maths-Numbers and Shape space and measures

Understanding the world-People and communities The world and Technology

Expressive art and design. - Exploring and using media and materials and Being Imaginative

A creative curriculum approach is adopted throughout the school and in the Foundation Stage all areas of learning are covered. The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning. Activities

are planned with these 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.

#### **Accommodation**

**Rangemore** The EY children are accommodated in a safe, independent mobile with enclosed outdoor environment.

**Needwood** The EY children are accommodated in a purpose built classroom. It is safe and includes an enclosed outdoor learning area. Both schools classrooms are large and bright with their own integrated cloakroom and toilet facilities. The room has the appropriate sized furniture, which is adaptable and mobile.

#### **Staff**

Both class teacher across the Federation are supported by an HLTA. Appropriate training is given to teaching assistants ensuring that the children benefit from having two adults in the classroom.

#### **Teaching Strategies**

We value the importance of play both indoors and outdoors and its vital role in educating and developing young minds. Staff provide a balance of child initiated and differentiated adult led learning opportunities.

#### **Induction**

Staff meet children in their pre-school setting prior to entry and they are invited to attend sessions in the Summer term.

#### **Assessment**

We complete an 'on entry assessment' with each child in the first 3 weeks of school, this provides us with information about what each child can do and is used to inform planning and monitor progress. Planned, regular observations are also made by the class teacher / teaching assistant to ensure that each individual child's needs are being met and provided for.

#### **Dyslexia Friendly**

**Rangemore** has been awarded Level 1 Dyslexia Friendly Status and **Needwood** holds the full Dyslexia Friendly award. Please refer to our dyslexia friendly guidelines.

#### **Equal Opportunities/Special needs**

Please refer to the Public Sector Equality Duty policy and the Special Needs Policy.

#### **Home and school links**

Parents are encouraged to sign a home/school contract upon entry to school so that everyone knows the part they can play. The children have home tasks that parents can help with, including reading.

Parents are invited to:

- Attend parents' evenings and induction meetings
- Take part in PTA activities
- Participate in 'Open Day'
- Attend services and sporting events such as Christmas / Easter, / Mothering Sunday Harvest festivals, sports and games days.
- Share concerns and satisfactions with the Teacher
- Contribute to observations and assessment.
- At Rangemore parents attend a play and stay and read and stay later in the year.

#### **Reporting to parents**

EYFS children have regular communication with their key workers; additionally they have 2 formal parent consultation events a year and receive an annual report at the end of the summer term. This will detail how their child has progressed.

#### **Conclusion**

Through good quality Early Years practice, we aim to ensure that children are educated in a welcoming, colourful, stimulating environment which is safe, secure, happy and caring—an environment which acknowledges children's achievements and builds self-esteem. For further information please refer to the EYFS statutory guidance.

This policy will be reviewed annually or as deemed necessary.