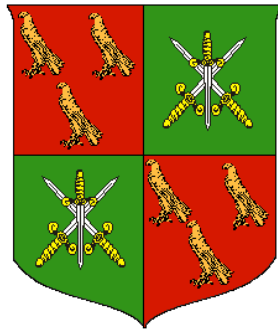


Bunscoil Mhic Reachtain



Foundation Stage Policy

2023

Aims:

The overall aims of this policy are;

- to ensure consistency in teaching and learning and classroom organisation throughout the foundation stage.

Aims of the Foundation Stage

- To embed the foundations of spoken Irish.
- To help the children develop their social skills when interacting with others.
- To build on children's existing skills in thinking and communication, enabling them to access the more formal school curriculum.
- To develop the children's physical skill, so that they have increased control over their body movements.
- To develop the children's aesthetic, moral and spiritual awareness so that they can begin to make judgements.
- To enable the children to understand more about the world around them by exploring first hand features of both the natural and man-made world.

As a measure of our aims we believe on entering a Rang 1 class at Bunscoil Mhic Reachtain you will see children who:

- use spoken Irish in their interactions with peers and staff
- show evidence of feeling included, secure and valued
- interact with other children and adults in positive ways
- are engaged in and show high levels of motivation in activities planned by adults and also those that they plan or initiate themselves
- are taking part in well-planned, purposeful activities that build on what children already know, match the different levels of the children's needs and take place both in and outdoors
- are developing skills and talents in curriculum areas.

The Foundation Stage Curriculum

The foundation stage curriculum is organised into seven areas of learning:

Personal Development and Mutual Understanding

This area of learning is about emotional well-being, knowing who you are and where you fit in and feeling good about yourself. It is also about developing respect for others, social competence and a positive disposition to learning.

Language and Literacy

This area of learning includes speaking and listening, linking sounds to letters and reading and writing simple words.

Mathematics and Numeracy

This area includes number recognition, calculating and shape, space and measure.

The World Around Us

In this area of learning children are developing the crucial knowledge, skills and understanding that help them to make sense of the world. WAU forms the foundation for later work in Science, Design and Technology, History, Geography and Information and Communication Technology.

Religious Education

The curriculum for Religious Education is defined by the Department of Education and the four main Christian Churches in the North.

Physical Development and Movement

This area of learning includes large and small scale physical activity which develops an awareness and increased control of children's own bodies.

The Arts

This area of learning includes art, music, dance, role-play and imaginative play.

Approaches to teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage

We have planned a carefully structured curriculum that provides rich, broad and stimulating experiences. A curriculum that is flexible enough to allow for unexpected and unforeseen opportunities for children's learning that arise from everyday situations. We have structured a

curriculum that allows children to become involved in experiences which are mostly based on real life situations. We believe that activities should always be relevant, imaginative, motivating, enjoyable and challenging.

Planning

Planning for young children should reflect that all areas – personal, social, emotional, physical, and intellectual are interrelated and that one activity may have outcomes drawn from across the curriculum areas. The planning formats we use have been designed to reflect this. Teachers are responsible for weekly and six weekly planning, both topic based and subject specific.

Organisation of the learning environment

The learning environment in and out of doors will be planned effectively to meet the requirements of all areas of learning. It will be well organised into clearly defined areas within the limitations of the physical environment.

The areas will include:

- _ book area
- _ sand tray
- _ water tray
- _ mathematical area
- _ literacy area with a variety of resources
- _ home corner/role play area
- _ creative area
- _ construction and small world area
- _ dough and malleable area
- _ a variety of resources to give practise in both fine and gross motor skills
- _ computers and accessories
- _ access to outdoor play area and resources stored in garage

All areas will be attractive and suitably resourced so that children are encouraged to use them and engage in purposeful, challenging activities with or without the presence of an adult.

Resources will be organised in such a way that children are enabled to make informed choices, select independently what they need and take responsibility for clearing away.

Organisation of the School Day

Morning routines in reception.

You will see children:

- choosing their name card and placing on the class register
- choosing their dinner or lunch card and placing on the class register
- putting their homework folder in the appropriate box
- choosing the day and the weather
- identifying the helpers for the day
- discussing the timetable for the day

Equal Opportunities and Special Needs

At Bunscoil Mhic Reachtain we believe that the equality of opportunity is important for all pupils irrespective of gender, ethnicity, social circumstances, religion or belief and intellectual capacity. Within the Foundation Stage we strive to reflect and respect this diversity in our choice of resources and in the model we set for children. In this way and through appropriate differentiation we try to meet the needs of all pupils. Individual education plans are written and updated throughout the year with the SENCo. As far as possible, children and their guardians are involved in designing the IEP's.

Assessment for Learning in the Foundation Stage

As AfL is a complex process which will take time to develop, Y1&2 provide the opportunity to lay the necessary foundations for children's language and thinking. During the Foundation Stage the emphasis should therefore be on establishing a supportive climate of sensitive interaction, openness and risk-taking in which adults engage in dialogue with children about their learning. Classroom strategies will include planning with the children, modelling, effective use of questioning, plenary sessions and conversations with individuals and groups.

Learning intentions describe what children will know, understand or be able to do and may be shared with the whole class, groups, or individuals. Sharing learning intentions is appropriate when introducing significant or new learning but is not necessary in every lesson. Whilst working with groups or individuals, particularly in play, learning intentions may evolve from the children's responses. Teachers should consider how learning intentions may be displayed in appropriate ways as children progress through the Foundation Stage.

Success criteria are the steps required to achieve the learning intention and offer explicit guidance on how to be successful. They summarise the main teaching points or processes and they always relate directly to the learning intention. The process of understanding success criteria takes time and needs to be developed. Modelling by the adult is particularly important for helping children in the Foundation Stage understand the value and purpose of success criteria. Success criteria may not always be in written form and teachers may use photographs or images to illustrate the process.

Formative feedback is essential for effective learning and teaching as it can motivate children by building self esteem and reinforcing the positive aspects.

Formative feedback focuses on how the children have met the success criteria in relation to the identified learning intention and offers advice on the next steps in the learning process. Time should also be allowed for the child to make improvements. In the Foundation Stage feedback should primarily be verbal and should take place throughout the learning process.

Effective questioning, as an integral part of assessment practice, serves two main purposes: to assist with assessment and to improve understanding. A learning climate, which promotes sensitive interaction and encourages risk taking, can influence how successfully questioning is used and how beneficial it is to children's learning. Modelling how to think aloud and how to frame questions is essential to enable children to develop the appropriate vocabulary for questioning. Adults should engage children in reflective discussion about their learning and make judgements on what children understand and can do.

Reflection on learning is an important element of AfL; it promotes independent learning, communication, and support in the classroom. The focus in the Foundation Stage should be on building an open, reflective climate in which adults model appropriate language and behaviour. It can be developed through peer and self assessment and evaluation which will

most often be verbal in the Foundation Stage. Assessment enables children to reflect on *what* has been learned and when appropriate, judge it against a set of criteria. Evaluation describes the process children use to gain an understanding of *how* they are learning. Both are equally important for children’s development.

Roles and Responsibilities

The staff will:

- work in partnership with parents, carers and outside agencies;
- promote children’s learning through planned experiences and activities that are challenging but achievable;
- teach skills and knowledge;
- understand that children learn in different ways and at a different pace to each other;
- use rich and varied language to help children develop linguistic structures for thinking;
- plan both indoor and outdoor provision to maximise opportunities for children’s learning;
- support the transition to and between settings, promote an inclusive ethos and provide opportunities for each child to become a valued member of that group and community so that a strong self image and self esteem are promoted;
- seek advice/support on behalf of the children when necessary.

Dissemination Of The Policy

All staff members and school governors will receive a copy of this policy. It will also be available in the parent reference display area and on the school website.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The policy will be reviewed, and amended annually. Any relevant comments from new research/learning will also be included in the evaluation and review process.

Signed: (Principal)

Date

..... (On behalf of the Board of Governors)

