



## **Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Parents' Guide**

This guide is to help you understand how we teach in the Foundation Stage. The Foundation Stage is the stage of education and learning for children between 3 and 5 years of age. At Glade Primary School, the Foundation Stage refers to children in Reception, sometimes called Year R or YR.

We welcome and encourage support from home and hope that the information in this booklet will be of help in this partnership between home and school.

*September 2014*

## Your child in the Foundation Stage

Children need opportunities to move and to explore their surroundings through all their senses, to talk with adults and to play with them, engaging with new people and situations, and learning new skills. Our Early Years builds on children's experiences at home. We use Developmental Matters (non-statutory guidance material) to support implementing the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. We believe that children learn best from practical experience and all areas of the curriculum are delivered in this way as much as possible.

The areas of learning are delivered through planned, purposeful play with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Learning takes place both in the classroom and outdoors. Staff work flexibly, based on the level of development of individual children. Each half term topics are chosen that will develop skills and understanding in each of the seven areas. Progress is closely monitored by our experienced Early Years staff and recorded in individual pupil profiles and Learning Journeys. At the end of the foundation stage an EYFS profile will be completed for each child and shared with their parents/carers.

Basic number concepts are taught. The read Write Inc phonics programme is used to develop children's reading skills. Children learn to recognise and read "speed sounds", which are then blended together to make words. Children borrow books for reading at home and the use of reading diaries / contact books maintains good channels of communication between home and school, which is vital in order to re-enforce learning advances made at this age.

In the Reception year, we aim to work in partnership with parents/carers to provide a first class caring educational environment. Children are encouraged to have a positive approach to learning and to believe that learning is fun and enjoyable. We have high expectations of our children and believe in the 'can do' approach to learning by always encouraging them to 'have a go' and do their best. Your encouragement will help your child to settle into school happily and confidently and show that home and school are working together. In order for your child to get the best from their education we need to work together to promote the right approach to learning. To do this we would like you to encourage:

- High self esteem
- Confidence
- Fun/enjoyment
- The 'can do', 'have a go' approach
- A positive attitude
- High expectations

## **What is the Foundation Stage Curriculum?**

There are seven areas of learning and development. 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. These three areas, the prime areas, are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development.

We also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

## **What can I do to help my child before starting school?**

Before starting school, you can support your child's learning and development in many ways. When starting school your child will be encouraged to be personally independent. You can help by:

- Encouraging your child to dress and undress. Try to allow a reasonable amount of time to do this. Creating a dressing up box at home will help by making dressing and undressing fun;
- Encouraging your child to tidy up toys, books and games after using them.

You can help your child's social and emotional development by:

- Talking with your child and encouraging your child to talk with other children and other adults;
- Encouraging and supporting your child to play co-operatively with other children.

You can help your child with the early stages of reading, writing and maths by:

- Encouraging an enjoyment of books and stories; visiting the local library and sharing stories with your child;
- Encouraging your child to join in with rhymes and songs;
- Providing your child with a variety of writing equipment to encourage drawing and writing skills, labelling your child's pictures with his or her name and perhaps some writing. Your child may want to copy your writing if he or she is ready. Try to avoid writing with capital letters.
- Helping your child with simple mathematical skills, e.g. matching and sorting everyday objects, counting objects or playing with water at bath time; pouring, filling and emptying.

Before your child starts school, we would like them to be able to:

- Dress and undress themselves, including putting on their shoes
- Take off their coat, hang it up and put it back on again
- Use the toilet independently (including flushing!)
- Wash and dry their hands
- Eat with a knife and fork
- Tidy up and put away toys
- Share toys and take turns

You can also help your child by:

- Continuing to encourage independence; explaining why he or she needs to change for PE. Your child's teacher will reinforce this at school but is often the only adult available when your child changes for PE. This is one of the reasons why it is essential that all clothing is marked;
- Asking if your child would like to invite new school friends home to play. If you are considering out of school activities, bear in mind that your child will be tired after a busy time at school;
- Communicating with a member of the reception team. Please tell us if something is worrying you or your child.
- Encouraging your child to develop an awareness of safety. This covers such things as not putting things in his or her mouth to not talking to strangers and learning the importance of road safety.

**If you want to find out any further information, speak to your child's class teacher. The best time to do this is at the end of the school day.**