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The Foundation Stage applies to children from three years of age to the end of the reception year. The Foundation Stage is important in its own right, and in preparing children for later schooling. The Early Learning Goals set out what is expected of most children by the end of the Foundation Stage. The early years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- it builds on what our children already know and can do;
- it ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged;
- it offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
- it provides a rich and stimulating environment.

The policy:

!! ^bClarifies the legal requirement and responsibilities of The Priory Learning Wt

experiences in controlled and safe situations.

The more general features of good practice in our Trust that relate to the Foundation Stage are :

- the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn and how this affects their teaching;
- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment including sustainability;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations;
- the relationships between home and school and the use of parental input prior to the children starting school;
- the clear aims for our work and the regular monitoring to evaluate and improve what we do;
- the identification of training needs of all adults working within the Foundation Stage.

We make regular assessments of children's learning. The identification of progress and future learning needs is made using teacher knowledge and observations. We use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of teacher knowledge and observation, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate.