

Document 9

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Southfields Primary School



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Approved by:	Caroline Kiely (EYFS Governor)	Date:	24.01.21
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Last reviewed on:	Spring 2021
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Statement of Intent

In our Early Years setting, we aim to recognise and meet the needs of the unique child, promote their particular strengths and nurture a self-belief to aspire. We intend to ignite curiosity, promote exploration and celebrate discoveries together. We know that our children enter the Nursery and Reception classes with varied life experiences, so our curriculum is tailored with our learners in mind, building on their Cultural Capital. We ensure children strive through challenges, gain resilience and experience regular successes. We promote positive learning behaviours and equip our learners with knowledge, skills and aspirations to flourish in their future school years.

Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [2017 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#).

Structure of EYFS

Our EYFS consists of two Reception classes and one Nursery class, which offers provision for 15 hours a week.

Principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year and it is based upon four principles;

1. A unique child

At Southfields School it is recognised that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. Children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by their school and home environments and we begin to build links with the families. Observations allow the assessment of how each child learns to gain an understanding of the characteristics they develop to become effective learners. Questioning, praise and encouragement are used to develop a positive attitude to learning and high self-esteem. During their first year at school, the children are introduced to the learning habits. They are taught to be observant, investigative, curious, determined, imaginative, adventurous, co-operative and to use reasoning. Children begin to understand the concept of the growth mindset. They develop an understanding that everyone can learn with practice and effort. The children are taught how to learn and how to become successful learners.

2. Positive relationships:

Children learn to be strong, independent individuals by developing secure relationships with teachers and peers alike. Relationships with parents and carers are also important and are nurtured and developed. All relationships are respectful, caring and professional.

3. Enabling environments:

Teachers recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. The role of both the indoor and outdoor environment in learning/organisation of learning provides opportunities for child initiated activities reflecting the topic where they can develop gross motor skills,

social skills etc. Stimulating resources which are accessible and open-ended are provided, so they can be used, moved and combined in a variety of ways.

4. Learning and development:

Children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. All areas of learning and development are equally valued, understood, and seen as being interconnected at Southfields Primary. The children have time and freedom to become deeply involved in the activities and their learning. Children are encouraged to explore and learn safely. There are areas for activities and play, and others for quiet time and rest.

Implementation

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2017 statutory framework of the EYFS. The curriculum for the Early Years forms the first stage of our Whole School Curriculum.

Southfields Primary deliver a broad and balanced curriculum with a focus on skills and knowledge through first hand experiences. The use of the **Cornerstones Imaginative Learning Projects (ILP)** ensures the underpinning of all the areas of learning and facilitates a welcoming environment for child led and adult directed activities.

There are seven areas of learning and development that provide a framework for planning, teaching and assessing in our early years settings. All areas of learning and development are inter-connected.

The Three Prime Areas are:

- 1. Communication and Language** - children are given lots of opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; to speak and listen in a range of situations.
- 2. Physical Development** - children are given opportunities to be active and interactive; to develop their co-ordination, control and movement. Children are taught the importance of physical activity and to make healthy choices in relation to food.
- 3. Personal, Social and Emotional Development** - children develop a positive sense of themselves and others; forming positive relationships and develop respect for others; develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and have confidence in their own abilities.

During the Autumn Term, there is a particular focus on the Prime Areas to promote the well-being and involvement of our learners. There are also four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The Four Prime Areas are:

- 1. Literacy** - children are taught to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. We follow the Letters & Sounds Scheme and share stories using Talk 4 Writing to promote language skills. Children are given access to a wide range of reading materials to ignite their interest.
- 2. Mathematics** - children are given opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces and measures. We use Power Maths the support different representations of Maths models and NRich to enhance practical provision.

- 3. Understanding the World** – Children make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.
- 4. Expressive Arts and Design** – Children explore and play with a range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

Our Curriculum and teaching also encompasses the Characteristics of effective Learning.

Playing and Exploring: Engagement

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Active Learning: Motivation

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children are given some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Creating and Thinking Critically: Thinking

Children are given opportunities to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open ended questions. Children access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

Planning Stages

Each half-termly Imaginative Learning Project is tailored for our Reception cohort and follows four stages: Engage; Develop; Innovate and Express. Each stage incorporates the key Characteristics of Learning mentioned above.

Engage

Hook learners in with a memorable experience.
Set the scene and provide the context for learning.
Ask questions to find out children's interests.
Spark children's curiosity using interesting starting points.

Develop

Teach facts and information for deeper understanding and knowledge.
Demonstrate new skills and allow time for consolidation.
Provide creative opportunities for making and doing.
Deliver reading, writing and talking across the curriculum.

Innovate

Provide imaginative scenarios that encourage creative thinking.
Enable children to apply previously learned skills.
Encourage enterprise and independent thinking.
Provide opportunities for collaborative working and problem solving.

Express

Provide environments for reflective talk.
Create opportunities for shared evaluation.
Celebrate and share children's success.
Identify next steps for learning.

GARKOSAURUS Values

Our Early Years promote the whole school 'GARK' values and celebrate our 'GARK-osaurus' stars every week in our Friday Assembly. Throughout the week children show how they belong to our special GARK-osaurus family.

A Tryosaurus shows Good Learning.

Tryosaurus are resilient and persevere even when something is tricky. They never give up and always try their best!

An Explorosaurus shows Acceptance.

Explorosaurus know that there are similarities and differences that they can discover. They love to try new things and celebrate their discoveries, creations and new friendships.

A Thinkosaurus shows Respect.

Thinkosaurus think carefully about the choices they make and how they can become an even better GARKosaurus!

A Shareosaurus shows Kindness.

Shareosaurus are kind to their friends, help them and share with them. They know the best learning happens when they listen to their friends and work as a team.

In addition to the GARK values, **Spiritual, Moral, Social & Cultural** (SMSC) aspects run through our Early Years setting and our children's emotional, physical and spiritual needs are fulfilled through a broad, balanced and enriched curriculum as well as strong links with parents.

Classroom Organisation and Resources

The organisation of the classroom reflects the importance that is placed on children learning through play and first-hand experience, developing independence and having opportunities to initiate their own activities.

The Reception class provides the following areas:

- Small world tray for retelling stories
- Role play area
- Large and small construction
- Sand and water
- Book corner with a range of fiction and non-fiction books
- Writing table with a range of writing resources
- Making area with access to a choice of natural and man-made resources
- Table-top and small world toys
- Computer, i-Pads and printer
- Interactive whiteboard
- Malleable materials
- Musical instruments
- Painting and creative equipment

- Maths games and equipment
- Outside classroom – a safe, fenced area including a role-play gazebo, sand & water play, den area, outdoor chalkboard, planting equipment and areas, small mud pit, road track, trikes and construction.
- The Reception class also has a set of boots and waterproof clothing in order to make full use of the outside classroom, school field, trim trail, Yurt, Fort and the on-site wild-life area.

Use of Whole School Resources

- The Reception class use the hall for dance, drama, physical education and assemblies.
- Use of outside field, playground, trim trail and Yurt.
- The kitchen for a range of cooking activities.
- The ICT suite to use PCs.
- Large range of musical instruments.
- Library.

Induction

Reception and Nursery staff work closely on, delivering daily Phonic sessions and organising half termly craft mornings in the Early Years setting. This allows the pre-school children and the Reception teachers to become familiar with each other before the transition period begins.

On a weekly basis, both Reception and Nursery children attend the ‘GARK-osaurus’ Assembly to celebrate successes.

The Reception teachers visit the Nursery setting to meet the children, play alongside them indoors and outdoors, and share stories and songs for several whole morning sessions between Easter and the end of the Summer Term.

- The children from Southfields Nursery and external nurseries are then invited to visit the Reception classes to join in with play and share stories and songs towards the end of the Summer Term.
- A transition meeting to discuss children’s transition records is held between the Nursery co-ordinators and the EYFS Lead in July.
- In the latter half of the Summer term, a Welcome meeting is held by the Headteacher, Reception teachers and the Pastoral Team to introduce parents/carers to the school, Reception procedures and the curriculum. Parents/carers are given a school prospectus which outlines the curriculum and school routines, along with a document pack to be completed and return to school.
- When school starts in September, all children attend school for the morning only in the first week and move onto full time in the following week. Each week the Reception teachers consult with parents about how their child is settling into school to ensure that children are not becoming over tired with the days that they are doing in school through the first term.
- Reception children are introduced to the life of the wider school gently as they are ready. Children need to settle with their classmates in a quiet atmosphere and build up their confidence to join the whole school assemblies after the first few weeks. By the end of the first half term Reception children attend a whole school, Key Stage 1 and EYFS assemblies. They participate in school assemblies as fully as possible and every attempt is made to ensure the children know what to expect.
- On starting school, each child has a Year 2 buddy who takes special care of them during lunchtime play.

Impact

At Southfields Primary School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. The EYFS assessment of attainment and progress is based on observations, discussions, questioning and evidence of children's independent learning. Valuable evidence of children's learning is obtained through observation of independent and targeted learning. These observations are undertaken by teachers and teaching assistants and are recorded in a variety of forms: in the children's individual learning folders; books and their Tapestry Online Journals. They also contain information provided by parents. Each child's progress is also recorded against 17 assessment scales derived from the ELGs (Early Learning Goals). These observations are used to shape future planning. At the end of the EYFS - Nursery & Reception, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Exceeding expected levels or,
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers.

Parents as Partners

Parents/carers are the child's first and most enduring educators. When Parents/carers and practitioners work together in early years settings, the results have a positive impact on the child's development. A successful partnership needs to be a two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise. This is developed by:

A Welcome Meeting

This enables parents to understand how to: help their child become 'school ready'; understand the value of supporting their child's learning at home and be able to access more information.

Tapestry Online Journals

Weekly progress & 'wow' moments are shared using the Online Journal. Parents are able to view observations and annotated photographs in their child's online 'Learning Journeys' as they captured in school!

Using Tapestry, parents upload homework challenges, which are practical and fun. These are set on a weekly basis and give teachers a holistic view of our learners. They celebrate the unique child - demonstrate similarities and differences with customs, routines and celebrations.

Good Communication

Early Years operate an "open door" policy, whereby parents/carers can come and discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner and view children's work. Curriculum letters are sent home periodically to keep parents informed of their child's current curriculum and learning needs.

Individual next steps and progress with parents/carers are discussed at parents' evening in Autumn and Spring terms. An annual written report is shared with parents/carers in July summarising the child's progress against the early learning goals and EYFS assessment scales.

A Designated Key Person

Each child is assigned a key person who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home.

Stay & Play

In the Autumn term, there are 'Stay & Play' sessions for parents, with a focus on phonics and reading, and to share ideas on how parents can be involved in their child's learning. These continue through the Spring and Summer Terms to build on progress.

There are unique experiences in and outside of school and parents/carers are invited to help in the reception class and to accompany children on school visits.

Coffee Mornings

Parents are invited to Coffee Mornings organised by our Learning Mentors - these range from networking with other parents to learning many new skills.

Any concerns over special needs will be discussed with parents and the Special Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) for the school.

Safeguarding and welfare procedures

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Early Years Lead annually.