



South Wingfield Primary School

Early years policy

“Early childhood is an explosion of experience.” Jenny Lendon

This policy outlines the principles for good practice across the Foundation Stage. It uses the four guiding principles from the EYFS framework of every child is a unique child, children learn through positive relationships, children develop well in enabling environments and children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

These principles will ensure a continuity of practice through the Foundation Stage that will enable all children to become competent and confident independent learners. The Foundation Stage is a distinct phase in education. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is important in its own right as well as underpinning all future learning by supporting and fostering children’s personal, social and emotional well being and establishing positive attitudes and dispositions towards learning.

“The greater the language children are exposed to the greater the learning capacity of the child.” Jan Dubiel

Our main aims for all children are:

- To provide a broad and balanced curriculum for every child to develop the building blocks for future learning
- To plan a curriculum that is relevant, fun/engaging and based on real experience
- To provide first hand experiences to put their learning into context
- To provide a safe and secure learning environment
- To develop confidence, independence and self esteem
- To encourage and motivate children to become independent learners
- To support children on the first steps of their learning journey

- To provide a range of learning opportunities such as solitary play, independent group play, adult supported play, adult directed learning and discrete teaching
- To develop social skills and relationships
- To reflect the diversity of social and cultural backgrounds in the class
- To provide a curriculum where learning happens inside and outside
- Take children interests and use them to plan relevant activities
- To provide children with a secure grounding in the core skills necessary for children to continue to be successful in Year 1

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum The curriculum is divided into seven areas of learning.

These are the three prime areas:

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

Specific areas

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

Four guiding principles should shape practice in early years' settings. These are:

- every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships
- children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.

- importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn at different rates. (See “the characteristics of effective teaching and learning” at paragraph 1.15). The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). (Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2020)

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of ‘differences’. All children are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

In our school we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children’s range of life experiences and interests when planning for their learning.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children’s knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children’s learning needs;
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- using resources which reflect diversity;
- planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- monitoring children’s progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

We recognise the importance of ensuring all children are given opportunity to reach their full potential and that we have a responsibility to 'narrow the gap' in the achievement and attainment of potentially vulnerable children.

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See Whole School Safeguarding Children Policy)

The role of adults

All Reception staff must help ensure that every child's learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs. The teacher will support parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. They should also help families engage with more specialist support if appropriate. In reception it is the role of all adults to support children's learning using a range of strategies. Adults are responsible for setting up a rich and stimulating learning environment that encourages independent play and investigation. In reception the class teacher will support parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. They should also help families engage with more specialist support if appropriate. Time needs to be given to allow children to explore the environment independently and learn at their own pace. Adults are also to use a range of teaching strategies such as supporting child initiated play, leading activities that have been planned from child interests and discrete teaching sessions. Adults need to plan for balance of these activities depending on the needs of the child. It is the role of all staff to ensure that the needs of all children are being met equally and that all children have an opportunity to take part in all activities. Adult led activities will become more frequent across the year as children progress with their learning. As children begin Reception, adult led sessions will occur for Maths, Literacy and Phonics. These will begin as short 15 minute sessions and will increase in length over the course of the year as is appropriate. Children will also engage in wider curriculum subjects that we have carefully planned to challenge learners in EYFS across all areas of learning.

'Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is

guided by adults. Practitioners need to decide what they want children in their setting to learn, and the most effective ways to teach it. Practitioners must stimulate children's interests, responding to each child's emerging needs and guiding their development through warm, positive interactions coupled with secure routines for play and learning. As children grow older and move into the reception year, there should be a greater focus on teaching the essential skills and knowledge in the specific areas of learning. This will help children to prepare for year 1.' (Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2020)

Safeguarding and Welfare

At South Wingfield Primary School we understand that we are legally required to comply with the welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2021. We understand that we are required to:

- Promote the welfare of children.
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so and that all staff and volunteers are subject to full vetting and safeguarding procedures.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.
- Report any incidents to the school's designated safeguarding leads.

Planning and Assessments

In planning and guiding what children learn, practitioners must reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and adjust their practice appropriately. All adults are to make informal observations of children at work and play to contribute towards formative assessments for each child. These occur while the learning is happening and inform teaching in an ongoing basis. They are then used to plan for activities based on child interests. Teachers are to use these formative assessments within their planning cycle. There are 3 stages of planning that are the responsibility of the teacher.

- Long term planning - These plans show curriculum coverage over all areas of learning during the Foundation Stage and show progress in the skills that are being learnt.

- Medium term plans- These cover a term or half term period and cover the skills, concepts and knowledge to be taught through a specific unit.
- Short term plans- These show on a daily/ weekly basis how skills have been broken down to a specific learning objective. They show how staff deployment and how a balance of teaching strategies is being delivered. The needs of specific groups or individuals may be highlighted on these plans. Teachers are to plan challenging tasks based on systematic and accurate assessments of children previous skills and needs. Plans are to be shared on a regular basis amongst the team. Planning needs to be flexible and responsive to the needs of the children. Teachers are also expected to keep summative assessments on each child in the Foundation stage. Each child will have an on-entry assessment, this will be in the first six weeks of starting. The children are then tracked termly on the school tracking system. There will be an end of year report that is shared with the next teacher and the parents. There is also a transition meeting for each child between the teachers.

When making all judgments practitioners should consider The Characteristics of Effective Learning for each child and how these influence how the child learns.

These are:

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically

At the end of Reception, the Foundation Stage Profile is submitted for each child using the statutory early Learning Goals. An end of year report is shared with the year one teacher and the parents. There is also a transition meeting between the Reception and Year One teachers.

Assessments :

Progress check at 2. When a child is aged between two and three, a two-year check is carried out by a professional. This progress check must identify the child's strengths and any areas where the child's progress is less than expected. If there are significant emerging concerns, or an identified special educational need or disability, practitioners should develop a targeted inform planning to support the child's future learning and development involving parents and/or carers and other professionals (for example, the provider's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) or health professionals) as appropriate.

Assessment at the start of the reception year – The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is a short assessment, taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts reception. Assessment at the end of the EYFS – the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, and no later than 30 June in that term, the EYFS Profile must be completed for each child. Each child's level of development must be assessed against the early learning goals. Practitioners must indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). The Profile must be completed for all children, including those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). Reasonable adjustments to the assessment process for children with SEND must be made as appropriate. Early years providers must report EYFS Profile results to local authorities, upon request.

Play and Exploration

Through indoor and outdoor play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They have the opportunity to practice skills, develop ideas and think creatively alongside other children as well as individually. The children communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems in an environment, and this enables them to take risks and use trial and error to work things out. We plan and resource challenging environments where children's play can be scaffolded and extended through the expertise of our staff.

Active Learning

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

Creativity and Critical Thinking

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

Enabling Environments

Children learn through having an interesting, stimulating and a safe environment and the time with which to explore it. A well set up learning environment is a powerful additional teacher. There are three aspects of the learning environment. These are the emotional environment, the indoor environment and the outdoor environment. All are to be equally valued and

planned for by staff. A wide range of independent play opportunities need to be provided through stimulating and well-resourced areas such as:

- sand
- water
- role play areas
- writing and mark making areas
- maths area
- book area
- music
- small world play
- construction

Areas need to set up with a clear purpose for learning. Children need to have as much access to the outdoor classroom as possible. Reception children have access to their outdoor areas that are resourced for their own specific use. There needs to be a match in the learning opportunities between inside and outside provision. Displays need to promote, support and reflect children's current interests and learning. There needs to be a balance between self initiated and adult led learning on display and all displays need to be changed to maintain interest and celebrate children's learning.

Positive Relationships

Respecting Each Other

Every interaction is based on caring professional relationships and respectful acknowledgements of the feelings of children, their families and the staff within the setting.

Friendships and relationships are an important part of every child's early development. At South Wingfield Primary school we commit time and provide opportunities to support children as they learn how to understand and manage their own feelings and become more caring towards others. We actively promote British Values incorporating the overriding principles of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, tolerance and mutual respect.

Parents as partners in learning

In the Foundation stage to achieve smooth transitions between home and school a series of visits are planned for both the child and parents. These involve the child coming for stay and play sessions in the setting, the parent coming for a welcome meeting with members of the class one team and a visit by the setting staff to their pre-reception setting. All of these are intended to make both the child and the parent feel as confident as possible when they start. Parents are encouraged to take an active role in their child's learning. The classroom doors are opened at 8.45. If a parent wishes to discuss a particular issue with a member of staff this is not dealt with in class time. They can make an appointment before or after school, whenever the member of staff is able to offer. Parents are encouraged to share information about their child. This is gathered through informal discussions that may be recorded as part of the child's formative assessment and home- school forms that parents are asked to fill out. Translations into home languages will be offered when available. Information is regularly given via letters, our class page and school emails. There are parent meetings and workshops to explain ways that parents can support learning at home. Parents will also get information on their child through parent teacher meetings each term and an end of year report.

Staff training and development

All staff in the Foundation Stage have access to training through the professional development and training offered via the school. This occurs through whole school training sessions, phase meetings and individual observations and written feedback. External training programmes will be offered when appropriate to an individual's training needs and in line with the school development plan.

Photographs / Videos

At the beginning of the year parents / carers are asked to give permission for their child to be photographed / videoed during their time at school. We use these images in the classroom on displays, on Class Dojo and on the school website. (Looked After children will not have their photograph displayed anywhere without prior permission.)

Medical Needs

Any illnesses or allergies will be recorded on each child's registration form. A care plan will be drawn up with the support of the school's SENCO if deemed necessary. Any medication, i.e. inhalers, epi pens etc, will be stored in the first aid cupboard. Non-emergency medication will not be administered by School staff. Staff will complete any relevant training in administering emergency medications.