



## Early Years Policy

*Independent Confident Resilient*

## At Seven Fields Primary School, our vision is....

To create a culture of learning and discovery that is stimulating and enjoyable for both children and staff.

We will achieve this by ensuring....

- an exciting, engaging and enriched curriculum is taught well so all (both staff and pupils) are enthused to learn
- the relationships among learners and staff reflect a positive and respectful culture
- pupils are ambitious for their own aspirations and have positive attitudes to their education by developing their intellectual curiosity
- teachers develop detailed knowledge and skills that enable pupils to learn across the curriculum and, as a result, achieve well
- A consistent and manageable timetable that allows children to engage through a rigorous approach and coherently planned curriculum

At the end of their stay at Seven Fields...

- They will become resilient, confident and independent learners who know how to keep physically and mentally healthy
- We will have known and nurtured each child in a holistic manner
- We will have extended our community relationships and links ensuring they are consistent and organised
- We will have ensured the communication within our school family is positive, balanced and fair
- We will have built upon and shared each other's expertise
- We will have helped our pupils to discover and develop their interests and talents

## Introduction

*'It is vital that we get to know and value all young children. All children learn more in the period from birth to five years old than any other time in their lives. If children are at risk of falling behind the majority, the best time to help them to catch up and keep up is in the early years. Every child can make progress, if they are given the right support. When we succeed in giving every child the best start in their early years, we give them what they need today. we also set them up with every chance of success tomorrow.'*

*Development Matters 2020 - Julian Grenier*

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. In our school, all Foundation Stage 1 (FS1) children begin attending Nursery, either part time using universal childcare or for 30 hours (full time) should parents and carers meet government criteria. Foundation Stage 2 (FS2) or Reception children begin attending school full time at the start of the school year in which they turn five.

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Seven Fields Primary School we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. However, we also believe that early childhood is valid in itself as part of life. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

## Aims

We aim to support all children to become independent and collaborative learners. We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential.

At Seven Fields Primary School, we will:

- Provide a happy, safe, stimulating and challenging programme of learning and development for the children to experience as they begin their journey through school.
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond.
- Enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence as well as resilience.
- Inspire children through an imaginative and immersive curriculum, ensuring that the children are engaged and enthusiastic to learn, that we foster and nurture the children's imagination and curiosity.
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress.
- Develop excellent relationships with parents and carers to build a strong partnership in supporting their children.
- Provide a caring and inclusive learning environment which is sensitive to the requirements of the individual child including those who have additional needs.

*Policy to be read in conjunction with other subject policies, the curriculum policy and the teaching and learning policy.*

- Be prepared for 21st Century Life by ensuring that each and every child is literate and numerate, as well as empathetic towards others, able to be resilient and ambitious to succeed in whatever they set out to achieve.
- Encourage each child to achieve their best in all they undertake, encouraging each and every child to try new things, work hard and push themselves to continue to achieve and to persevere in any activity that is before them.
- Become curious about the world around them and be aware of the wider community, starting with their local community and providing opportunities to experience and learn about other communities and cultures further afield.
- Foster and nurture the children's social and interpersonal skills, ensuring that they have the opportunity to work as a member of a team and can share their experiences and knowledge with their peers.

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 that matches the needs of young children, and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;**

**It provides a rich and stimulating environment;**

**It acknowledges the importance of a full working partnership with parents and carers.**

The Early Years Framework is based on four overriding principles. 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. (See "the characteristics of effective teaching and learning" at paragraph 1.15 of the framework)
- the importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). (SEND policy)

### Intent

At Seven Fields Primary School we believe every child has the potential to achieve. We are fully invested in ensuring that every child has our three core values instilled through our curriculum. These are; Confidence, Independence and Resilience.

In our Early Years it is our intent to provide a curriculum which values and promotes all areas of learning. Children in our Nursery and Reception follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum (EYFS).

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/896810/EYFS\\_Early\\_Adopter\\_Framework.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/896810/EYFS_Early_Adopter_Framework.pdf)

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[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/914443/Development\\_Matters\\_-\\_Non-statutory\\_curriculum\\_guidance\\_for\\_the\\_early\\_years\\_foundation\\_stage\\_1\\_.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/914443/Development_Matters_-_Non-statutory_curriculum_guidance_for_the_early_years_foundation_stage_1_.pdf)

### **The EYFS Curriculum has seven main areas of learning.**

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development
- Communication and Language
- Literacy (Reading and Writing)
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

### **Characteristics of Effective Learning**

The EYFS also includes the Characteristics of Effective Learning. These are regularly assessed through observations and planned for throughout the EYFS.

The three characteristics are:

- ❖ Playing and Exploring – children investigate and experience things and events around them and ‘have a go’
- ❖ Active Learning – children concentrate and keep trying if they experience difficulties, as well as enjoying what they achieve
- ❖ Creating and Thinking Critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between different experiences and develop strategies for doing things

At Seven Fields Primary School we believe our children's early years are a crucial stage for providing the foundations of their life long educational journey to become a successful member of the community. Care and guidance sit at the heart of our school so that the most vulnerable and challenged learner can succeed in a safe and secure environment.

We know that children enter our EYFS from varied life experiences and we plan opportunities to address this. Through our safeguarding, SENCO, family support team and outside agencies, we consider how each child's background and home life may impact their development so we can adjust our provision accordingly.

We build nurturing and meaningful relationships with our children so we can observe and assess closely. Through our observations and adult interactions, we can carefully design, plan and provide learning opportunities or teaching activities that each child needs in order to meet their full developmental potential.

We believe that all children deserve an education rich in wonder and memorable experiences that allows their natural creativity and curiosity to flourish. We provide a stimulating, enriching environment with first-hand experiences based on our children's interests and themes.

Our themes build on the children's prior knowledge, they excite, extend and engage as well as give them further experience of the world around them. We ensure all areas of learning are practical with support and challenge from thoughtful adult interactions, in class sessions, small groups or working with individuals. There is a combination of adult led, teacher taught and child-initiated opportunities that inspire children to explore, investigate and be motivated to continue to develop an independent love of learning.

## Teaching Strategies

We ensure that there is a balance between adult led and child initiated activities across the day. We believe that even during child initiated activities the adults' role and interaction with the children is essential as this helps to build the children's understanding and so guides new learning. The role of the adult is to continually model, demonstrate and question what the children are doing, either through participation in the children's play or encouraging the children to participate or complete a task with the adult. The children are taught through a number of different strategies that are both Early Years based as well as direct teaching and other more investigative project based learning approaches.

As a school we ensure our approach provides a real purpose for learning, ensuring all the teaching and learning is real, inspiring and immersive for each and every child.

We provide time during continuous provision for the children to explore the environment around them. Exploring is an important and integral part of the Early Years curriculum and classroom. We believe that children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them. We use prior assessment of the children's skills and knowledge, as well as the project and immersion as the starting points for these experiences. The immersive feel of the environment inspires the children to learn and investigate the experiences and

opportunities around them. We carefully plan the environment and opportunities within to reflect on what has interested the children, making sure that we provide opportunities to extend and practise the skills they have learned during a theme or through direct teaching. We ensure that each of the different areas of learning are represented in the environment and provide different experiences and opportunities to learn. We believe it is important that adults take an active role in child-initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating and extending their play. Achieving and maintaining the balance between child initiated and adult led activities is very important to us.

Direct teaching – In FS1 we have opportunities throughout the sessions in which each child is encouraged to participate in an exciting activity led by the teacher or Early Years Practitioner (EYP). We concentrate on developing children's speaking and listening skills as this lays the foundations for the phonic work. These activities focus on environmental and instrumental sounds whilst also including rhyme and rhythm.

In FS2, the children participate in daily RWI sessions. This focuses more on learning the letter sounds whilst focusing on blending and segmenting words. Children are given library books weekly to take home and share with their parents. When a child reaches the red group in RWI they will be given a reading book to take home and practice. They may also have some words to take home to explore. We encourage lots of games such as snap, flashcards and bingo to help them with their blending and segmenting. All direct taught sessions are carefully planned and tailored for each class using previous assessments of the children's knowledge, skills and ability. Planning is changed and tailored regularly and in response to the result of taught sessions, ensuring all teaching and learning is relevant and challenging for each child.

#### Visits and Visitors

The part of visits and visitors plays a very important role in the Early Years at Seven Fields, as these are seen as an opportunity to further develop our children's view of their world or community. Each term the children are given the opportunity to widen their experience through either visits to specific areas (e.g. the seaside, local farms or wildlife parks). In addition to this we have visitors invited into the school who are seen as experts in their field. Each of these visits and visitors are carefully planned and tailored to the project the children are actively learning. Any Visitors must go through the 'Visitor' procedures as outlined in the Safeguarding Policy.

## Classroom Organisation

Our Early Years classrooms are created and organised in ways that totally immerse the children into their purposeful play. In addition, these rooms are organised with defined areas with clear resources to ensure that children can access these easily and confidently. All rooms in the Early Years are planned carefully, ensuring that the areas not only continue to immerse the children in their play but also give the children the opportunity to access all seven areas of learning. Classrooms have the opportunity for children to experience writing, mathematics (and Numicon), construction, small world, role play, creative and fine motor skills.

The outdoor area is as important as the indoor environment and is something we continue to develop, creating the links between the indoor and outdoor environments. All children in our Early Year classrooms have access to our forest area to continue their exploring and purposeful play.

## Assessments, Observations and Learning Journeys

Assessment is an essential and important part of the Early Years for children's learning and development. This involves practitioners observing children in a variety of opportunities to gain an understanding of each child's level of understanding. This happens live throughout any taught session as well as during free exploration times when children are embedding and extending any previous learning. These observations and assessments will then be used to shape and alter any future learning.

Observations are taken using Tapestry, which allows us to observe, take photos and make notes while observing what the children are doing or saying. This allows us to build up a picture in a variety of opportunities and areas and comment on what we feel are the next steps for the children. We are then able to share these experiences with the children's parents sending each child's learning journey via email.

On entry to Nursery a baseline assessment is carried out for each child, using assessment from taught sessions and observations captured. These assessments are collated and using Tapestry, this allows us to use all the data and assessments for each child measuring progress and highlighting children that are achieving more than expected or less than expected, which then allows us to tailor sessions, experiences or curriculum accordingly for each individual child. These assessments are updated at the end of each term throughout FS1 and FS2. At the end of FS2 (Reception) each child is assessed against each of the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG). They are assessed as either emerging or expected against the ELG for each of the areas of learning and a report is given to parents informing them about their child's learning and progress. This assessment follows the New Reforms for the Early Adopter framework.



## Role of Staff and Key Workers

In FS1 the children will be assigned a key worker. A key worker is a named practitioner who has responsibility for a small group of children, they are there to help nurture each child and help them feel safe and secure. A key worker will respond to each child's needs and help them settle into the setting.

The role of each teacher is to ensure that each child's care and development is carefully catered and planned for through exploration time, project and other experiences. Each adult aims to develop a positive relationship with each child in the class, as we believe that a happy, nurtured and confident child is a child that is ready to learn. We actively seek positive relationships with the parents as well as the children.

## Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents/carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value being partners with them in their child's education through:

- Talking to parents/carers before their child starts school at our induction meeting.
- Providing a handbook of information about commencing Reception at Seven Fields Primary
- Outlining the school's expectations in the Home-School agreement.
- Inviting new starters to spend time in Reception Class for sessions during the summer term if they are not already in pre-school.
- Providing an induction meeting for parents/carers to meet with staff to discuss school routines, expectations and to answer any questions parents/carers may have.
- Holding a parent consultation early in the academic year to establish how a child is settling into the school environment.
- Operating an open door policy for parents/carers with any queries or concerns. Conversely, if Foundation staff have concerns about the progress of a child, they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss them.
- Written contact through the Reading record and school newsletters.
- Sending home 'WOW' slips designed to enable parents to record outstanding achievements.
- Inviting parents to attend informal meetings about areas of the curriculum, such as phonics or reading.
- Having regular access to their children's online 'Learning Journey' and valuing the on-going contributions that they make to them.
- Offering two parent/teacher consultation meetings per year at which their child's progress is discussed.
- Sending a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of their time in reception.
- Asking parents to sign a generic permission form for visits, food tasting and photographs etc.
- Parents are invited to a range of activities throughout the school year such as assemblies, workshops, Christmas Nativity play and sports day etc.

- Offering opportunities for parents and carers to visit the school on a volunteer basis to assist with the children's learning e.g. hearing readers.

## Transition

Starting school can be a difficult time for young children; we therefore plan this time carefully to support children with the transition and to ensure it is as smooth as possible for each child and that they settle into their new class quickly and happily. If the child is already attending pre-school, he/she will be very familiar with the staff and setting and we envisage a very seamless transition.

Starting Reception – Parents of all children starting in the next academic year will be invited to an Induction Meeting in the summer term to meet their child's new teachers and other key staff and learn more about the Reception curriculum.

This is an opportunity for staff to:

Go through the school handbook

Explain about uniform, PE kit and school dinners/ free school meals

Explain about holidays and absences

Purchase uniform and book bag if requested

Explain the arrangements for the gradual induction into reception

Explain our timetable and events that happen during the week

Inform parents of their role within the school and their child's learning journey

If a child is not already attending our pre-school but will be starting in the Reception Class we organise new class sessions. The children are able to come into school to meet their new class teacher for these sessions during the summer term. They will also spend a transition day in their new class. This means that before they join their new class the Reception environment is already a familiar place to them.

September Intake - When children join the school in September the following procedures will apply in order that they can gradually adjust to their new surroundings:

During the first week, children will attend for a short session in small groups

During the second week, children will attend for the morning in their full class.

During the third week, children will attend until 1pm staying for lunch.

During the fourth week and thereafter, children will attend for the full school day unless the class teacher and parents or guardians agree that it is not in the best interests of an individual child.

## Safeguarding & Welfare

At Seven Fields Primary, we understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2020.

- To provide a setting that is welcoming, safe and stimulating where children can grow in confidence;
- Promote good health;

- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs
- To ensure that all adults who look after the children, or who have unsupervised access to them, are suitable to do so;
- Ensure that the setting, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for the purpose it was intended for;
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for the safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

Keeping Safe - 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. We encourage children to take risks and highlight the importance of keeping themselves safe by teaching them how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See Seven Fields Primary's Safeguarding Children Policy).

Good Health - All children are provided with a healthy snack each day as well as being given the choice of milk. They have access to water at all times.

Intimate Care - "Intimate" care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. However, depending on a child's age and stage of development, they may need some support, for example dressing, wiping their bottom after using the toilet and changing underwear following an accident. In most cases, intimate care is to do with personal hygiene and it is good practise for the school to inform the school nurse of all children requiring intimate care. Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child. No intimate care is to be given without the express written permission of the parent or guardian of that child and all parents and guardians will be asked to provide that permission when their child joins reception at Seven Fields Primary School. (See Seven Fields Intimate Care Policy)

## Impact

Our policy enables pupils to:

- Become resilient, confident and independent learners
- Gain the knowledge and skills necessary to move to the next stage
- Feel motivated and enjoy learning
- Feel secure and valued as individuals
- Ensure that home and school are in harmony
- Work and share with each other

Our policy enables staff to:

- Have a clear understanding of their role and the ethos of the school
- Work on an ambitious curriculum that enable pupils to make progress throughout compulsory schooling

- Access professional learning that enables the effective delivery of the EYFS curriculum
- Have clear aims and purposes when planning
- Observe children closely and prepare learning experiences to meet individual needs
- Work closely with all those involved in the child's education, especially the parents
- Feel part of a team and supported in their work

Our policy enables parents to:

- Feel involved and valued in their child's education
- Understand the aims of our Early Years curriculum
- Be fully informed of school procedures and the progress of their child

### Monitoring and Evaluation

The Early Years will be monitored in line with the whole Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting schedule. It will be the Subject Leader's responsibility to ensure there is quality first teaching across the Foundation Stage. It will be their responsibility to monitor the quality of work produced by the children and ensure end points and outcomes are met. Where there is a concern about the quality of teaching and learning in the Early Years the leader will pass the concern to the Quality of Education Leader.

The Early Years Leader will keep a record of all monitoring activities they undertake and pass these records to the QoE Leader at the end of each term.

### Role of the Subject Leader

It is the role of the subject leader to:

- Monitor the curriculum and set a vision for its intent
- Monitor the quality of teaching and learning
- Ensure the relevant resources are available
- Develop other colleagues subject knowledge and pedagogy
- Manage the computing budget
- Attend appropriate training to keep their own knowledge up to date
- Have enthusiasm for and a love of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Staff Training

As children move up through the curriculum the knowledge needed to deliver high quality teaching becomes more demanding. It is the subject leaders responsibility to use the time given for staff training effectively, in line with the school training guidelines.

The subject leader should also be available to staff on an ad hoc basis to allow for support in delivering key outcomes.

### Equal Opportunities (See also Equality Policy)

*Policy to be read in conjunction with other subject policies, the curriculum policy and the teaching and learning policy.*

Seven Fields Primary School will ensure that all children are provided with the same learning opportunities regardless of social class, gender, culture, race, disability or learning difficulties. As a result we hope to enable all children to develop positive attitudes towards others. All pupils have equal access to the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. Resources needed to support learners or extend learning will be made available.

[Appendix 1](#)

[Appendix 2](#)