

## Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Policy compiled by:	Verity Allan, EYFS Leader / Sian McConnell, Lead P
Responsible committee:	Trust Local Committee
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### PREAMBLE

The Trustees, Local Committee and Staff of Sandcross Primary School believe that a child's early education is vitally important and provides the basis for all future learning. We strive to ensure that all of our children are happy, safe, secure and nurtured in order to become 'lifelong learners'. We inspire all the children to succeed and become confident, independent and resilient individuals by planning engaging experiences allowing the children to be problem solvers and risk takers.

### OUR DRIVERS

Our curriculum as a school is designed to challenge, develop and nurture the "Whole Child" with a mission of **"Inspiring Lifelong Success"**. In Early Years the children will become accustomed to our six drivers cycle, adaptation, diversity, interdependence, health and oneness.

Through each topic, our curriculum aims (in green below) are taught every half term. Children will have a driver where all content will flow throughout the learning. Through these drivers, children will develop a deeper knowledge about the world around them and what their responsibility is within it. These drivers are not just for the EYFS but flow through the children's learning throughout their journey at Sandcross.

### OUR CURRICULUM IS:



## **AIMS**

An outline of the provision for children in the Foundation Stage:

- To consider the child as a whole; their social, emotional, physical, moral, intellectual and cultural needs and requirements.
- To develop their knowledge, skills and understanding, by learning from first hand experiences which provide structured and child led activities.
- To build a positive attitude to learning and realise their full potential, through relevant learning experiences and a positive learning environment, which supports the Early Learning Goals and the EYFS curriculum.

## **EYFS PHILOSOPHY**

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year and sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn, develop and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

At Sandcross Primary School we follow, the guidance set out in the Early Years Framework and seek to provide:

- a high quality, personalised and bespoke curriculum which provides inclusion for every child.
- an enabling environment which allows children to make rapid progress from their starting points to the end of the year.
- effective partnerships working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers.
- staff who are knowledgeable of children and how they learn, engaged, nurturing, flexible, fun and good role models.

## **THE EARLY YEARS CURRICULUM**

Effective practice in the EYFS is built on four guiding principles. These provide a context for the requirements and describe how practitioners should support the development, learning and care of young children. The themes are each broken down into four commitments describing how the principles can be put into practice. We decided as a school to follow the development matters as it fits in with our school values and ethos.

## **A UNIQUE CHILD**

In the Foundation Stage, we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. We use praise and encouragement, as well as the celebration of 'Wow moments' to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best.

## **POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS**

In the Foundation Stage, we aim to develop caring, respectful relationships with the children and their families. Both Nursery and Reception staff make home visits for all new children before they join our school. Nursery parents are welcome to join their children in stay and play sessions,

shortly before they begin their year with us. In Reception, we provide several induction sessions for parents and children to come and explore their new environment, as well as, spend time with their new class and teachers.

There are regular opportunities for parents to talk to staff about their child's 'Learning Journey' mainly through the use of Tapestry. This allows for both staff and parents to see photos and make or reply to comments daily. Nursery and Reception parents are also offered a consultation meeting twice a year as well as an end of year report. All children will experience an on-site or external trip once a term with voluntary parental support.

### **ENABLING ENVIRONMENTS**

In the Foundation Stage, we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

The Nursery and Reception environments are set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. Nursery and Reception have their own outdoor areas, which have a positive impact on the children's development. It offers the children the opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active.

Our accessible environment allows the children to free flow inside and outside in order to make links between and access all seven areas of learning independently. Our well planned provision enables the children to develop key skills, whilst taking risks, in order to ensure the children can be successfully challenged and engaged.

### **LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

In the Foundation Stage, we understand that the framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities. Therefore, we use our assessments of children's learning to plan appropriately pitched activities to ensure each individual child is suitably challenged and has the opportunity to practice and apply new skills in a variety of play-based contexts.

### **THE CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE LEARNING**

The Characteristics of Effective Learning, which move through all areas of learning, are:

- **Playing and exploring** - Finding out and exploring; Playing with what they know; Being willing to 'have a go'
- **Active learning** - Being involved and concentrating; Keeping trying; Enjoying achieving what they set out to do
- **Creating and thinking critically** - Having their own ideas; Making links; Choosing ways to do things

These characteristics of learning underpin teaching and learning in the EYFS and form part of the skills and attributes that children need to acquire by the end of their learning journey in the Foundation Stage.

## **SEVEN AREAS OF LEARNING**

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based upon seven areas of learning, divided into three Prime Areas and four Specific Areas.

**Prime Areas of Learning:** Communication & Language, Physical Development & Personal, Social & Emotional Development

**Specific Areas of Learning:** Literacy, Maths, Understanding the world & Expressive Arts & Design

The prime areas begin to develop quickly in response to relationships and experiences, and run through and support learning in all other areas. The prime areas continue to be fundamental throughout the EYFS. The specific areas include essential skills and knowledge. They grow out of the prime areas, and provide important contexts for learning. None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities.

## **COMMUNICATION & LANGUAGE**

This covers all aspects of language development and provides the foundation for literacy skills. We focus on developing children's competence in speaking and listening with an aim to extend and enrich the children's vocabulary through story time, nursery rhymes, role-play and group discussions. Children are encouraged to share their own experiences through talk homework, class assemblies and performances. Children are encouraged to take part in high quality conversations with adults which enables them to use a range of vocabulary and language structures in new and different contexts.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Children are given opportunities to move to music, use equipment, develop and practice their fine and gross motor skills. They develop an increasing understanding of how their body works and what is needed to be healthy. This is done both indoors and outdoors and by working with a wide range of resources. In Reception, the children are given the opportunity to bring their scooters to school and have races or take part in obstacle courses with their peers. Both Nursery and Reception take part in Sports Day with parents welcome to watch. They also have the use of large outdoor spaces with physical equipment. Children are encouraged to take part in these activities to improve both their social and emotional wellbeing. There is also continual access to small world activities, puzzles, threading, weaving to help enhance control and proficiency.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Our school fosters and develops relationships between home, school and the local community in order to make links stronger. We model to the children how to learn to work, share, take turns, manage their emotions and cooperate with others. They are encouraged to be independent and make choices for themselves. They are also taught how to be sensitive to the needs of others and to respect other cultures and beliefs. This enables children to become confident and develop a positive self-image. Children are taught to wait for what they want and therefore learn patience, we are a school that teaches Growth Mindset and that resilience is key to helping the children progress.

## **LITERACY**

In Nursery, children access Phonics, story times, a Write Dance programme and have opportunities both inside and outside to develop their mark making skills. In Reception, children follow the Read,

Write, Inc scheme which helps them to develop early reading and writing skills. Our early writing work encourages correct pencil control, left/right orientation and accurate letter formation.

To encourage both boys and girls to access writing opportunities, planning includes hooks or 'I wonder if...' ideas to ensure this can be accessed effectively both indoors and outdoors. Children have the opportunity to access resources independently in all areas of learning to enhance their literacy skills.

Children are encouraged to develop a lifelong love of reading, this is modelled by adults within the environment throughout the day and children are encouraged to read and share books whenever they wish. Reading areas are exciting, visible and accessible within the environment with daily voting allowing for the children to choose their own story for class based story time. Adults talk with children about things that have been read in books to help children's understanding and comprehension develop. In Reception, children take home one 'phonic' ability book and one 'choice' book which is chosen from the library each week. The children read their 'phonic ability' book to the class teacher weekly. Extra reading is planned in twice a week to support vulnerable learners.

To support all parents and children with the teaching of reading and phonics, we offer parental workshops and online resources.

## **MATHS**

We aim for children to achieve mathematical understanding and a firm foundation for number through practical activities and by using and understanding language in the development of simple mathematical ideas. Early number work is covered through Nursery rhymes and number activities. Children are encouraged to develop their number sense through frequent and varied opportunities in the learning environment, adults support their learning to ensure they have developed secure mathematical vocabulary and knowledge in this area.

Children are encouraged to explore, estimate and problem solve through the use of a variety of resources and our enabling environments. Small group work with the children encourages the use of mathematical language to be extended. Number interventions are used to support children with any misconceptions or development needs.

## **UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD**

All children are given opportunities to solve problems, investigate, make decisions and experiment. They learn about living things, their environment, the world around them and the people who are important in their lives. The children have access to and the opportunity towards developing our own garden and hive area which they take ownership for. Children have regular enrichment activities, these may be visitors from the local community or a trip out to enhance their understanding of other cultures and our ecologically diverse world.

## **EXPRESSIVE ARTS & DESIGN**

We provide opportunities for all children to explore and share their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of art, design, technology, music, drama, dance and imaginative play activities. Children are given opportunities to make paintings, drawings, collages, models and explore with musical instruments. We follow a Charanga music programme which allows the children to have a deeper knowledge and understanding of different musical concepts. Children also learn new songs, rhymes and enjoy singing them with each other particularly on our outside stage areas.

Children are encouraged to use their knowledge of stories and act these out to help further their vocabulary and speech.

### **ASSESSMENT OF CHILDREN'S LEARNING**

Before the children start in our school we carry out home visits for all children and for our Reception intake we also carry out existing Nursery setting visits. This enables us to have a range of information and a clear understanding about each child before they come into our settings.

In Early Years, we use baseline assessments at the start of the academic year in order to assess each child's starting point. This data provides our early years staff with the information needed to support and challenge throughout the academic year. Throughout the rest of the year, we continue to assess the children which enables us to highlight children's ongoing needs or gaps in their learning.

As part of our daily practice, we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform our plans. We record our observations in a variety of ways. Everyone is encouraged to contribute and discussions take place. Significant observations of children's achievements are collated in their own personal online "Learning Journey", through the use of Tapestry which is shared with parents.

Children's progress is discussed with parents at parent consultations and shared with them in an end of year report. The data is also discussed with the Headteacher, SENDCo and Assessment Leaders. A summative assessment of each child is carried out at the end of the year to assess whether or not they have achieved the Early Learning Goals for each area of learning. Children who have not achieved the expected levels at the end of the Reception Year will continue to work against the Early Learning Goals as they move into Year 1. Discussions and meetings are planned for Reception and Year 1 teachers to meet, in order to handover effectively. The children will also have the opportunity to attend a transition day to meet their new year 1 teacher and explore their new environment. Children in Nursery will be equally assessed and the same transition process will take place for them.

### **HEALTH & SAFETY**

Foundation Stage support staff have had either general first aid or paediatric first aid training. Children are taught the safe and appropriate use of equipment and materials. They are taught to be mindful when moving around the school and are aware of safety issues. Risk assessments are undertaken daily for all key areas and before we take the children on any school trips.

**Medical-** Parents/carers are asked to inform us of any foods their child is allergic to or any foods they do not wish their child to eat. A record of this is kept on Pupil Asset and all adults involved are informed. We keep a note of any medical needs, allergies, children who need inhalers, piriton and epi-pens so everyone is aware of individual needs. Parents/carers also complete a health care plan before the children start the academic year.

**Toileting-** Our staff will support and guide children changing, when they are wet or soiled. Staff members are provided with rubber gloves and hand wash for their protection. Soiled and wet clothing is sent home and parents are informed if children have had an accident. For children who are experiencing toileting issues, it may be necessary for an intimate care policy to be put in place. This is completed with the support of parents and where possible or appropriate other professionals.

## **INCLUSION**

We value all our children as individuals irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meets the needs of the individual child and supports them at their own pace so that the majority of our children achieve and even exceed the Early Learning Goals. We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so, work closely with parents and outside agencies.

## **SAFEGUARDING**

Our school takes its child protection responsibilities very seriously and follows the safeguarding and welfare requirements that cover the steps that providers must take to keep children safe and promote their welfare.

We ensure that children taught in Nursery and Reception are able to learn and develop and are kept safe and healthy, so that they are ready for school by providing a safe, secure learning environment that safeguards and promotes their welfare, and takes appropriate action where there are child protection concerns.

In the Foundation Stage, we follow the school child protection procedures under **ECT Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy Dec 2019 and the school's Online Safety Policy 2020** in regards to the use of our portable devices.

## **PARENTS/CARERS AS PARTNERS**

We strive to create and maintain partnership with parents and carers as we recognise that together we can have a significant impact on children's learning. We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child's education and care in numerous ways.

Parental involvement within our school begins even before children start Nursery or Reception with an invitation to visit the school and meet their child's teacher through several induction visits. Parents are invited to contribute to children's assessment by responding to teacher observations or uploading home learning on to Tapestry. This information forms part of our evidence gathering of children's learning throughout the year. Parents are kept informed of any updates or key information from letters sent home, School Rush, notices outside classrooms and half termly newsletters.

## **MONITORING & REVIEW**

It is the responsibility of the EYFS staff to follow this policy. The Senior Leadership Team will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring system. Regular self-evaluation by the Early Years Leader and team will be used to assess the impact of this policy.