



EARLY YEARS POLICY

Approved On: 7th December 2021
Staff: Early Years Lead/ Phase Leader
Notes: Statutory
Every 3 years (School Choice)

Next Review Date: Autumn 2024

Headteacher: Mrs Kate Collins



“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.”

**‘Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage Published: 31 March 2021
Effective: 1 September 2021’**

INTRODUCTION

The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage aims to provide care and education for all children in environments that enable them to feel safe and supported and which extends their learning and development. At Sandfield this is in the Reception class when the child is a rising five (the academic year in which they are five). A child brings to school a wealth of learning experiences from home, nurseries or playgroups on which their future is built. The school works in partnership with the home to provide an informed and appropriately challenging curriculum, recognising age and individual needs.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

To inform all those involved in the education of the children at this school about the aims and details of practice for the organisation and management of the early years. This ensures consistent opportunities and expectations for all children.

AIMS

- To present a creative curriculum which inspires curiosity and wonder and recognises the unique child
- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

LEGISLATION

This policy is based on the requirements set out in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) that applies from September 2021

STRUCTURE OF THE EYFS

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of Reception. At Sandfield Primary School, children join us at the beginning of the school year in which they turn 4 years old. Our Reception provision has the capacity to accommodate 30 children in one class supported by the class teacher and a teaching assistant.

CURRICULUM

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2021. The EYFS framework outlines the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning and the 7 areas of Development (CoETL). The CoETL are organised into three primary strands and are essential components towards children becoming self-regulated learners. These are:

- Playing and exploring - children investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’
- Active learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- Creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make

links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

The EYFS framework includes 17 Early Learning Goals within 7 areas of curriculum development. These areas of learning and development are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

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

Communication and language underpins all areas of learning within our early years curriculum and continues to be developed within our provision, teaching, learning and planning methods. The prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. Planned learning supports the progress and development of listening and speaking, enabling children to process information into thinking and understanding. Children practise their physical skills alongside developing social skills, which supports greater independence and higher levels of confidence.

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

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

The 4 specific areas of learning provide a context for development and reflect cultural knowledge and accumulated understanding. They are dependent on learning in the Prime areas. Our continuous provision demonstrates a strong emphasis upon supporting children's understanding of the world along with enabling them to express themselves imaginatively and creatively, using art and design. New learning and topics are adapted to reflect the needs of the children and their interests.

PLANNING

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staff working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas. Staff carefully plan activities which enable children to link personal experiences with new learning, providing a wide range of contexts to revisit, practise, apply, and develop transferable skills and understanding. Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate. In planning and guiding children's activities, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice. Planning reflects the 'unique' child and enhancements are adapted to ensure that children's interests and natural curiosity is harnessed and supported. At Sandfield, the EYFS curriculum is delivered both through child-initiated learning and through adult led activities. At the heart of our curriculum is play and the role of adults in supporting, scaffolding and guiding this play. We also recognise the importance of providing a meaningful language-rich environment. We want our children to be able to express themselves and engage in conversations with their friends and adults and we support this through a curriculum, which is driven by rich and diverse texts alongside our whole school

school programme of Word Aware.

The EYFS team plan alongside Key Stage One and ensure that Sandfield's two year rolling curriculum is reflected in the EYFS long term plan.

TEACHING

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1. Staff interactions with children during planned and child-initiated play, provide rich opportunities for communicating and modelling language, showing, explaining, demonstrating, exploring ideas, encouraging, questioning, recalling, providing a narrative for what they are doing, facilitating and setting challenges.

ASSESSMENT

At Sandfield Primary School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers. This 'progress check' highlights the areas in which a child is progressing well and the areas in which additional support is needed. Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts reception, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). At the end of the EYFS, 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**
- **Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')**

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters guidance) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

Children will be regularly assessed throughout the year using area specific checklists and will be recorded as 'on track' or 'not on track' for that specific area. Based upon the data collected at these checkpoints, planning will be adapted to reflect the needs of individuals and groups of children to ensure that 'no child is left behind'.

Observations and assessments are ongoing and staff identify any key areas of development or difficulty. Observations are recorded using 'Tapestry', an online learning journey. Parents can access this from home and regularly see their child's learning. Tapestry also has the feature for parents to add any specific achievements of their child to their online learning journal. Parents are informed of progress in the early learning goals at parent's evenings and on Tapestry. There are also informal discussions about progress, which occur throughout the year.

Working with Parents/Carers

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers. Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development through Tapestry, Pupil Progress Meetings as well informal conversations throughout the year. The progress check and EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

“Parents are children's first and most enduring educators. When parents and

practitioners work together in early years settings the results have a positive impact on the child's development and learning. Therefore, each setting should seek to develop an effective partnership with parents.” (DfEE 2000)

Parents have an important role to play in the education of their child. We believe that it is important that all early years practitioners work in close partnership with parents and other adults. When parents and practitioners work together the results have a positive impact on a child's development and learning. Valuing and building on children's previous learning helps to promote these partnerships.

Staffing

There is a full time class teacher and two teaching assistants. All staff in EYFS are trained in Pediatric First Aid. The staffing ratio is as follows:

- **At least one member of staff for every thirty children** (where the majority of children will reach the age of at least five within the school year).

At Sandfield, the class teacher will be supported by a Teaching Assistant every morning with an addition Teaching Assistant supporting in the afternoon.

Safeguarding and Welfare Procedures

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by Claire McIlroy (DHT) every 3 years.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with EYFS Statement of Intent