



Southfields Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Statutory policy approved by the Head of EYFS delegated by the Full Governing Body

Date agreed: January 2025

Review Date: January 2027

This policy, having been presented to, and agreed upon by the whole staff and Governors, will be distributed to:

- All teaching staff
- School governors

A copy of the policy will also be available in:

- The Staffroom
- The Head's office
- School web site

This will ensure that the policy is readily available to visiting teachers, support staff and parents.

Southfields Primary is totally committed to social justice and improving life chances for potentially vulnerable children. It is dedicated to sharing its work and findings beyond the school to improve outcomes for as many children as it can reach and has a particular specialism in Speech and Language development.

1. Intent

It is our intent to provide every child with a rich and exciting Curriculum that offers carefully planned learning experiences with the aim to lay a secure foundation for future learning. We aim to provide our children with knowledge, skills and experiences in a hands-on, holistic way so that all learning is embedded in a meaningful context. We do this through a personalised, flexible curriculum that allows children to be present in the moment and see and experience the wonders of nature and the world through their own eyes. We engage children in learning from the very start and expect our children to leave us as happy, confident and skilful communicators who are curious about the world around them. We want them to thrive and be prepared with the skills and passion to educate themselves throughout the rest of their lives.

It is our intention to provide a communication rich curriculum which develops language, specifically teaches vocabulary and fosters a love for reading whilst filling the children's hearts and minds with a sense of incredible awe and wonder.

“Curiosity is the fuel for discovery, inquiry, and learning”

Our Curriculum and ethos is built upon a culture of curiosity through magical moments, a carefully planned enabling environment full of rich learning opportunities and clear connects with nature and the wonders of the great outdoors.

“The best classroom and richest cupboard is roofed only by the sky” McMillian

We believe that the outdoors is the best place for children to learn. The natural world is a magical learning environment that enables children to be natural born scientists and inquisitive learners. Their instinct to investigate, explore and make sense of their world is nurtured by a wide range of outdoor learning spaces, an unlimited supply of open-ended natural resources and adults who are seen as Co-Discoverers, encouraging children's inquisitiveness.

“Look deep into nature and you will understand everything.” Einstein

We aim to create a nurturing, safe and caring community which fosters a strong sense of belonging and self-worth. By listening to children, developing their communication skills and giving them the time and freedom they need, we aim to develop their own character, personal development whilst developing curious thinkers! We believe that if all children can become effective communicators and learners, this will prepare them for future success.

As outlined in the 'Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage':
'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.'

2. Statutory Framework of EYFS

We adhere to the 'Statutory Framework of the EYFS'. We will adhere to the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage* and the 2020 Development matters and the overarching principles.

The four Overarching guiding principles which we will use to shape practice in our early years 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)
- 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).

3. Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve the Early Learning Goals.

All seven areas of learning and development are important and interconnected.

Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive, both in the EYFS and into Key Stage 1.

These three areas are the prime areas:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Children are also supported through the four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied:

- Literacy
- Mathematics

- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice.

Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

1. **Playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.
2. **Active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties.
3. **Creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which they can explore, think creatively and be active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

4. Implementation

We will facilitate these aims in the following way:

4.1 Parents as Partners in learning

Many of our children will have already begun their journey through the Foundation Stage. Through a thought out transition plan, we find out about and recognise their previous learning and the experiences they've had at home or in previous settings. Information is shared to ensure that new learning builds upon and strengthens their previous understanding. Parents are valued as first educators and every effort is made to inform them of the EYFS curriculum whilst providing them with the tools to continue school learning at home. Parents are also encouraged to inform school of their child's interests and achievements at home as these are an essential part of each child's learning journey. We use Class Dojo to aid communication links as well as daily interactions on the door. Other strategies used to engage all parents include workshops, stay and play sessions and a variety of school events throughout the year.

4.2 Wellbeing

We implement a thoughtful transition to school that:

- Prepares parents and children well with planned visits, information to parents through the school prospectus, meetings and an induction pack
- Provides opportunities for parents and children to have pre-school visits
- Offer visits by the Reception teachers to local feeder pre-schools and nurseries in order to build strong links between settings
- Builds positive relationships with families before the children start using Class Dojo.

- Provides each child with a learning pack including resources and a special toy mouse that supports children's wellbeing.
- Allows children to begin their life at Southfields with a careful transition programme of settling in days whilst also working closely with parents to accommodate individual children's needs.

Our daily routines support children to settle in and become confident, resilient, happy learners. Highly skilled practitioners use their knowledge of how children learn and underpin their practice by using the Characteristics of Effective Learning. By supporting children to have high levels of wellbeing will in turn lead to high levels of engagement and child development and the ability to create and think critically.

***“learn how to learn! Nothing is going to narrow their minds. The essence of teaching is to make learning contagious, to have one idea spark another.”
Marva Collins***

4.3 Enabling Environment

Our learning environment is set up to develop appropriate skills, foster a love for learning and allow children to investigate, explore and make sense of the world around them. A vital aspect in the development of essential knowledge and skills is the use of continuous provision. This means that children are using and developing taught skills through well-defined enchanting learning spaces that provide invitations to learn.

Continuous provision practice and principles support children to develop key life skills such as independence, innovation, creativity, enquiry, analysis and problem solving. Our open-ended natural resources are carefully considered and are used to provide challenge, curiosity and to match the children's interests. In our environment you would expect to see a wide range of open ended and authentic materials and resources to spark curiosity and develop communication.

4.4 Nature and the great outdoors

The learning environment is also an extension of the outdoors. We highly value the use of outside spaces and the wonders of nature. Therefore, natural materials are used in all areas of learning as well as the use of a wide range of outdoor learning spaces we have on offer.

We want our children to experience nature and the world through their own senses so we ensure our doors are always open and provide a free flow approach inside and outside to allow children the space and time to explore. We provide a wide range of experiences through a variety of outdoor spaces such as a construction, sand and water area, mud kitchen and a forest school.

We use nature and the seasons to provide opportunities for children to be curious and inquisitive.

4.5 Teaching and learning

We use a flexible topic based approach to pin learning outcomes to. We do however adapt these topics and steer learning based upon children's interests.

Each termly topic is enhanced through a variety of first-hand experiences (visits and visitors). These give all of the children a shared experience through which to explore and develop language, knowledge and skills and to bring their learning alive. We engage parents in our learning through a range of groups and events, sharing learning on Class dojo and providing home learning support and communication through Class Dojo.

Floor books are used to document the learning journey and observations of pupils across EYFS.

Mathematics

The maths curriculum is taught through daily dedicated sessions as well as through the continuous provision. These sessions are carefully planned using concrete resources and built upon prior learning and real life experiences across the year. We use Mastery number to support our curriculum planning and delivery.

Literacy

Drawing Club opens up a magic world of tales and stories to children whilst enriching their language skills, developing their fine motor skills and spending time with them. Drawing club immerses children into a world full of imagination. Based around a wonderful blend of picture books, tales and animations, it involves a short period of time together as a whole class followed by time with the children to explore their ideas and creativity which is adaptable to the pupils needs and interests.

- Immerse children in the world of story and show them the joy of who you are
- Share a treasure trove of vocabulary with children to open up the playground of language to them
- Give yourself the opportunity to create a library of progress that can be astonishing
- Develop children's creativity and imagination to show them that they are extraordinary
- Give your children age-appropriate practice that is highly engaging and grounds children in the joy of book snuggling.

Phonics

We follow the SSP 'Little Wandle'. At Southfields we believe that the teaching of a high quality systematic synthetic phonics programme is the approach to becoming a fluent reader and writer. We teach phonics using the 'Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised' to plan and teach our daily Phonics lessons. In Phonics we teach children that the letters of the alphabet represent different sounds and that these sounds can be put together in different combinations to make different words. Children are taught to recognise these different combinations so they can use them in their reading and writing. Phonics is implemented within the provision and provides repeated practise of taught sounds.

4.6 High quality books

The use of high-quality books is an intrinsic part of our provision, inside and outside the classroom. Great books stimulate talk and extend language whilst also fostering a love for reading. We have built the EYFS curriculum around quality texts, carefully chosen to meet the needs and interests of our children. Particular attention has been given to supporting the development of children's language in talk and sustained shared thinking and planned to support the using and applying of language across all areas of learning. Texts, artefacts and characters are added to the continuous provision to allow children explore, enhance their understanding of the stories and develop their creative thinking.

“Reading can take you places you have never been before.” Dr Seuss

4.7 Adults as Co-Discoverers

We see adults as Co-Discoverers - encouraging children's inquisitiveness. Positive relationships and good communication play a vital part when planning for individual needs. Every child has the support they need to flourish. Planned activities and high quality interactions aim to foster good communication, and social relationships where children learn to co-operate and listen to others. They do this in pairs, small groups and whole class groups. We use daily guided activities to scaffold and model learning, allowing children to develop their next steps in learning.

Through observation and discussion, learning priorities are identified for all children to ensure good progress is made. Staff in the EYFS observe, listen to and engage in play with children to facilitate learning and act as Co- Discoverers, modelling, engaging and providing questions and comments for children to ponder and enquiry. They make regular observations of the children's learning to ensure their next steps are met. We regularly assess where the children are, using 'Development Matters' and then ensure our planning, adult interactions and learning environment; including continuous provision, support children to reach their learning priority. We will include interventions for groups or individuals if and when necessary.

Various strategies are employed in learning and teaching that can be adapted to suit the needs of the children. Young children's learning is developed by offering experiences which can consolidate their knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes. Teaching should enable children to make connections in their learning and be actively led forward as well as helped to reflect on what they have already learnt.

Guidance is given on effective learning and teaching in the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage* and this will be used for planning an appropriate curriculum.

5. Assessment

Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support. In the Early Years Foundation Stage assessments are ongoing. At Southfields all EYFS practitioners observe the children and record their progress in order to plan and prepare new learning experiences which will enable them to develop well. The Early Years Outcomes document enables practitioners to make best-fit judgements about the children in order to share the summary of their development at the end of their reception year.

These observations form an integral part of the children's development and throughout the year and will form the basis of the 'EYFS Profile', the teachers will meet with parents regularly to discuss children's progress and set their new targets.

Formal individual parents meeting will be arranged in the Autumn term and again in the Spring term. At the end of the year (June), the teachers will complete the EYFS Profile which will provide a well-rounded picture of each child's knowledge; understanding and abilities; their progress against expected levels; and their readiness for Year One.

The EYFS profile consists of items of information: the attainment of each child assessed in relation to the ELG descriptors alongside a short narrative describing the three characteristics of learning. This will reflect the ongoing observations, any relevant records held by us, discussions with parents and carers, and any other professional who has relevant information. Teachers will indicate whether a child is meeting the expected levels of development, or not yet reaching expected levels - emerging.

6. Moderation

Moderation occurs regularly throughout the year with both in school and with other schools.

We collect data from assessments on entry using observations and practitioner knowledge as a baseline and on exit from the Reception year to measure progress. Arbor is used to track the children through the year and is sent electronically to the LA Early Years team. This data and evidence is used as a basis for the Statutory end of year reports to parents.

7. Safety including safeguarding and welfare requirements

The safety and welfare of our children is paramount at Southfields Primary School. We have robust policies and procedures in place to ensure their safety.

In Reception we provide a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to take risks, follow rules and stay safe. We comply with the welfare requirements set out in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage and understand that we must:

- Promote the welfare of all children;

- Promote good health;
- Manage behaviour effectively and appropriately;
- Ensure all adults working with children are suitable to do so;
- Ensure that the environment is safe and all equipment and furniture is fit for purpose;
- Ensure all children have a challenging and enjoyable learning experience.

We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious fruit snacks, access to water throughout the day, allocating significant time for physical development and following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident.

The EYFS staff hold the Paediatric First aid qualification, which is a statutory requirement of the EYFS.

The Child Protection Policy is in place to ensure the safety of all stakeholders at Southfields Primary School. Implementing this policy alongside all staff is a dedicated safeguarding team which includes Designated Safeguarding Leads. Staff have access to the 'My Concern' safeguarding system to log any concerns regarding any aspects of safeguarding and behaviour. All staff are vigilant in reporting concerns.

8. 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 meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace so that most of our children achieve and even exceed the Early Learning Goals.

We work closely with the parents/carers of our high achieving children to ensure that their individual needs are met and their talents fostered. We ensure that these children are challenged appropriately to reach their full potential.

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/carers and outside agencies. We have a designated full time Inclusion team in school who supports us with any additional needs a child may have.

9. Monitor and Review

Governors will work alongside the EYFS Leads to ensure the policy is being followed to successfully deliver the planned outcomes. This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis as part of our ongoing Curriculum Monitoring programme, and as changes with National initiatives occur. Please see full termly reports from the EYFS Leaders to find out more about pupil outcomes and teaching and learning standards within the EYFS.

Miss E Wilson and Mrs C Barsby
EYFS leaders
Agreed by the Governors