Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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TO ENABLE EVERY INDIVIDUAL TO SUCCEED IN SCHOOL AND IN LIFE

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Introduction

“All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives, so their experiences in early years 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 provide the foundation children need to fulfil their potential.” (Early years foundation stage statutory framework, effective of 1st September 2025)

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Sutton Park Primary School we greatly value the important role that the Early Years Foundation Stage plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development, however we also believe 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.

This policy is based on requirements set out in the ‘Early years foundation stage statutory framework, Setting the Standards for learning, development, and care for children from birth to five’ document (DFE, effective 1st September 2025, including Annexes A-C)

All children begin school with a variety of experiences and learning. Around half of the children entering Reception will have attended our Nursery. It is the privilege of the staff in Nursery and Reception to take on the task of building upon the children’s previous experiences. This is done through a holistic approach to learning, ensuring that parents/carers, and all staff work effectively together to support children's learning and development.

Overarching Principles

The four guiding principles shape the practice in our EYFS department. 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 in different ways and at different rates.

Aims

We aim to ensure:

- Children have access to a safe, stimulating and caring environment, which is sensitive to the needs of the child, including children with additional needs.
- Children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them a secure foundation for learning, development and good progress through school and life.
- 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.

Structure of the EYFS

Our EYFS covers Nursery (for 3–4-year-olds) and Reception (for 4–5-year-olds). In our Nursery, we follow the statutory Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) requirements for staffing ratios. We ensure a maximum of 1 adult to 13 children.

Each Reception class has a qualified teacher and a full-time teaching assistant to support learning. Where children have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), we may provide additional staff to meet their individual needs. All Early Years classrooms have their own toileting and changing facilities, as well as direct access to a secure outdoor learning area, so children can learn and play both indoors and outdoors every day. The environment is designed to be safe, stimulating, and inclusive, with resources that encourage independence, creativity, and exploration.

In Nursery all children are entitled to 15 hours of free childcare each week during term time. Some families can get an extra 15 hours (making 30 hours in total) if they meet the governments criteria. This usually means that both parents (or the only parent in a single-parent family) must be working and earning the equivalent of at least 16 hours at National Minium or Living Wage. Each parent must also earn less than £100,000 each per year. Parents can check eligibility and apply for a 30-hour code through the childcare choices website. This code must be provided to the school before the start of the funded term to secure the child’s place.

Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest EYFS statutory framework.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that we must teach. All areas of learning and development are important and interconnected. Three areas, known as the prime areas, are seen as particularly important 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

We also support the children in 4 specific areas which help strengthen and develop the 3 prime areas, and ignite the children's curiosity and enthusiasm:

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

Planning and teaching

Our curriculum is informed by the EYFS Framework and the Key Stage 1 curriculum, putting the principles of the EYFS into practice. We have used the EYFS framework to develop our own curriculum, which focuses on building the foundational skills children need to be successful in the next stage of their education. This curriculum feeds directly into the Key Stage 1 curriculum, supporting a smooth and effective transition.

EYFS staff working with the youngest children focus strongly on the three prime areas, which form the basis for successful learning in the four specific areas. As children grow in confidence and ability within the prime areas, the balance gradually shifts towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning. If a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with parents and/or carers and, where appropriate, make an inclusion referral.

We are committed to meeting the needs of all children, including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). We follow the SEND Code of Practice (2015 updated 2023) to ensure children with additional needs receive appropriate support and reasonable adjustments. Where additional support is required, we work closely with parents, carers, and external professionals to create tailored strategies and ensure every child can access the curriculum and make progress.

Each area of learning and development is delivered through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Play is essential for children's development, helping them build confidence as they explore, solve problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play and by taking part in play guided by adults. Staff make ongoing judgments about the right balance between child-led and adult-guided activities, responding to each child's emerging needs and interests through warm, positive interactions.

Assessment, Recording and Monitoring

Assessment is an ongoing and integral part of the learning and development process. Staff observe children regularly to understand their progress and development. These observations inform each child's next steps in learning, address any errors or misconceptions, and ensure that teaching is responsive to individual needs.
Where additional support is needed, staff work in partnership with parents/carers and relevant professionals to address learning and development needs.

Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA)

Within the first six weeks of starting Reception, staff administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) in line with statutory requirements (see Annex B of the EYFS statutory framework).

EYFS Profile
In the final term of the academic year in which a child turns five, staff complete the EYFS Profile for each child. Each child is assessed against the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELGs) and recorded as:

- **Expected** – meeting the expected level of development
- **Emerging** – not yet reaching the expected level

The EYFS Profile is shared with the child's Year 1 teacher to support transition and inform planning for the next stage of learning.

Sharing Outcomes
Parents and carers receive information from the progress check and the EYFS Profile (but not the RBA). In exceptional circumstances, and only with parental agreement, a child may remain in EYFS provision beyond the academic year in which they turn five. In such cases, assessment continues, and the EYFS Profile is completed before the child moves into Year 1.

Moderation and Data Submission
Profiles are moderated internally and in collaboration with local schools to ensure consistency. EYFS Profile data is submitted to the local authority on request.

Monitoring of Teaching and Learning
Monitoring of teaching and learning is carried out in accordance with school policy. This includes learning walks, pupil conferencing, and e-journey learning trails. Monitoring is carried out by the Leadership Team.
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The Learning Environment
We aim to create an attractive, welcoming, and stimulating learning environment which will encourage children to explore, investigate, and learn through first-hand experience. We also aim to make it a place where children feel secure and confident and are challenged to develop in independence.

Learning activities are planned for both the inside and outside areas. These areas are carefully arranged to encourage quiet areas and more active areas within the learning environment. Children are encouraged to become independent learners and to take some responsibility for initiating their own lines of enquiry and investigation.

Transition
We aim to ensure that the children experience a smooth and positive transition as they move from pre-school/home setting to Nursery, Nursery to Reception and Reception to Year 1.

The aim is for all staff to have:

- A shared understanding of what the principles of the EYFS look like in effective practice.
- Understand and value the EYFS.
- Promote best practice for transition by considering the transition experience of the children and effective transfer of information, including the EYFSP and characteristics of effective learning.
- Use information about children to plan a relevant curriculum.

To support this, we provide opportunities for staff to:

- Observe the children in their current groups.
- Take part in moderation activities
- Discuss each child's individual needs.
- Undertake home visits for new children.
- Hold induction workshops for new children and their parents.
- Have regular slots in the curriculum where children visit their new class.

Working with Parents and/ or Carers
We recognise that parents and carers are a child's first and most enduring educators, and that children learn and develop best when there is a strong partnership between home and school. When parents/carers and staff work together, it has a positive impact on a child's development. A successful partnership relies on a two-way flow of information, knowledge, and expertise.

To build and maintain this partnership, we:

- Hold an **introductory workshop** for new children and their parents/carers before they start school.

- Offer **parent workshops** to help families support learning at home.
- Provide guidance on the **school application process.**
- Share an **Information Booklet for Parents**.
- Provide a **curriculum overview** to keep parents informed about current learning opportunities.
- Invite parents/carers to help in Nursery and Reception and accompany children on school visits (where appropriate).
- Hold **parents' evenings** to discuss progress, celebrate success, and share individual targets.
- Provide an **annual written report** to celebrate each child's achievements.

In nursery, each child is assigned a key person who ensures learning and care are tailored to individual needs, supports parents in guiding learning at home, and helps families access specialist support if required. For Reception classes, the class teacher is the designated key person.

For safety, we ask parents/carers to provide more than two emergency contact numbers where possible.

Staff

Staff training

We will:

- Train all staff in safeguarding procedures in line with Annex C of the most recent EYFS framework and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) guidance
- Support all staff to feel supported and confident in implementing our safeguarding policy and procedures
- Renew training every 2 years, or more often when it's needed to help maintain skills; keep up to date with any changes to our safeguarding procedures; or because of any safeguarding concerns
- Outline how training is delivered, and how staff are supported to put it in place, in our child protection and safeguarding policy (available on the school website).
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Our designated safeguarding lead's (DSL's) will:

- Provide ongoing support, advice and guidance to all staff
- Attend a training course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex C of the most recent EYFS framework
- Liaise as needed with local statutory children's services agencies and our local safeguarding partners

Safer recruitment

When recruiting staff, we will follow the procedures set out in the latest EYFS framework guidance on checking the suitability of new recruits, including:

- Obtaining a reference for any member of staff (including students and volunteers) before they are recruited
- Recording information about staff qualifications and identity checks, vetting processes and references

The safeguarding policy, which includes details of our safer recruitment procedures is available on the school website.

Whistleblowing

We make sure that all staff are aware of our whistleblowing procedures; feel able to raise concerns about any poor or unsafe practice; and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.

In the event that a member of staff feels that they need to blow the whistle on misconduct, they should report their concern to the headteacher. If the concern is about the headteacher or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern to the chair of the Interim Executive Board (IEB).

See our whistleblowing policy for details of our safer recruitment procedures and more detail on our procedures for handling whistleblowing (school website).

If an allegation is made in good faith, but investigation finds no wrongdoing, there will be no disciplinary action against the member of staff who raised the concern.

If, however, an allegation is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, we will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the person making the allegation.

Safeguarding and welfare procedures

We recognise that children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure; when their individual needs are met; and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. We follow safeguarding and welfare requirements to provide a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment where children can enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

We follow the EYFS Statutory Framework legal requirements. We also follow the Child protection/safeguarding policy of the school. DSLs are displayed around school and staff are fully trained and aware of procedures for this area.

Risk assessments are carried out for all appropriate activities including off site activities. All staff are involved in this process. Additional risk assessments for the Nursery and Reception are carried out by the Site supervisor.

Personal mobile phones are turned off whilst supervising children. Mobile phones are never used to take photographs of children, staff have school equipment, and this is used. Once the photographs are uploaded, they are removed from the camera. Consent for photographs is obtained from parents/ carers and are stored appropriately.

We comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000 we use photographs taken with permission on:

- The school web site
- The school plasma screen on display
- School Learning e-journeys

Please refer to our safeguarding policy on the school website for further information on child protection and safeguarding procedures.

Staffing Ratios

We make sure that the appropriate statutory staff: child ratios are maintained in our setting to meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety:

For children aged 3 and over:
Where there is a person with qualified teacher status, early years professional status, or early years teacher status, an instructor or another suitably qualified, overseas-trained teacher:

- For classes where the majority of children will reach the age of 5 or older within the school year, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 30 children.
- For all other classes, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 13 children.
- At least 1 other member of staff holds an approved level 3 qualification or has received approval to be included in the ratios at level 3 after attaining experience-based route status.

Paediatric first aid (PFA)

We aim to have all of our staff working within the EYFS paediatric first aid trained. This means that there is always someone with PFA on the premises when children are present, including on school trips. This PFA certificate is renewed every 3 years as required.

Designated safeguarding leads (DSL'S)

Our DSL's are displayed on the safeguarding posters around school. They are responsible for:

- Liaising with local statutory children's services agencies, and with the LSPs (local safeguarding partners).
- Providing support, advice and guidance to all other staff on an ongoing basis, and on any specific safeguarding issue as required.
- Attending a safeguarding training course that complies with the criteria set out in annex C of the latest EYFS framework.

Absence
We are required to promptly follow up on absence. If a child is absent and parents/carers haven't told us about the absence, we will attempt to contact the parents/carers and alternative emergency contacts. See our attendance policy on the website for more information on this.

Oral health and tooth brushing
We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by teaching children about:

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

Safer eating
While children are eating, there will always be at least 1 member of staff in the room with a valid Paediatric First Aid certificate. All children will be within sight and hearing of a member of staff while eating, and seated safely in an appropriate chair and, where possible, in a designated eating space.

Before a child joins our setting, we will get information on their:

- Dietary requirements and preferences
- Food allergies and intolerances
- Health requirements

We will share this information with all staff involved in food preparation and handling.

We will make sure that all staff are aware of the symptoms and treatments for allergies and anaphylaxis; the differences between allergies and intolerances; and that children can develop allergies at any time.

We will consult with parents/carers to:

- Create allergy action plans for their child – with the help of health professionals, where appropriate
    - We will also keep this information up to date and share it with all staff

We will prepare food in a way that:

- Prevents choking
- Meets each child's individual developmental needs
- Is in line with the DfE's Early Years Foundation Stage nutrition guidance

In the event of a choking incident that requires intervention, we will record details of the incident and make the child's parents/carers aware. We will periodically review the records to identify whether we can change anything in our practice to make eating safer and then take action as appropriate.

Administering medicines
Medicines are only administered when essential and with written parental consent, following our 'Medicines Policy' in line with Annex B of the EYFS statutory framework. We record all medicines administered and inform parents or carers the same day.

Accident or injury
We keep a first aid box (which contains appropriate items for children) always accessible.
We keep a record of accident or injuries and any first aid treatment.
We will inform parents or carers the same day of any:

- Accident or injury sustained by the child
- First aid treatment given

We will notify the relevant authority of any serious accident, illness, or injury to, or death of any child while in our care and inform them of the action taken, as soon as reasonably practicable.

Safety of premises
We make sure that our premises, including overall floor space and outdoor space, are fit for purpose and suitable for the age of children we care for, and the activities provided on the premises.

We comply with requirements of health and safety legislation, including fire safety and hygiene requirements.

Toileting and privacy

We make sure that there are:

- Enough toilets and hand basins available for the children
- Suitable and hygienic nappy changing facilities
- Separate toilet facilities for adults

Missing Children

In the unlikely event of a child going missing school policy will be followed. We will:

- Immediately search the school premises, both indoors and outdoors
- Contact the parent/carer.
- If necessary, inform the police.
- Review school security systems
- Make any necessary changes to ensure the safety of children.

Complaints Procedure

If a parent has a concern or complaint school policy will be followed. Details are also provided in the complaints policy on the school website.

Review

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored and evaluated by the Head & SLT and will be reviewed every two years or sooner if national guidance changes.