



**NEW  
SILKSWORTH  
ACADEMY**

**ALLIANCE • AMBITION • ACHIEVEMENT**

## **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy**

Policy Dated:	February 2021
Adopted by Governing Body:	March 2021
Date of Next Review:	February 2024
Reason for Review/Revision:	As per review cycle
Publication Scheme	Academy website
Version	02
Lead	Early Years Lead - ES

# EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

## Rationale

This policy outlines the teaching, organisation and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) at New Silksworth Academy (NSA). The school's policy for EYFS is based on 'The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2017)'. The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all the teaching staff.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to five years old, when they reach the end of their reception year. At NSA we greatly value the important role that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. However, we also believe that the EYFS is important in its own right, and plays an integral role in preparing children for life and not simply the next stage in their education.

## Aims and Objectives

Through our Early Years curriculum we aim to develop:

- to provide a structured, secure, caring and well-resourced learning environment both inside and out which meets all the individual developmental needs of 'young learners' and underpins all future learning.
- to enable them to become confident, motivated and happy learners, developing the skills and attitudes necessary for their own successful future learning.
- to enable their early development to take place within the caring and nurturing environment of NSA, in line with the ethos and values, which the school upholds and promotes.
- to develop independence and individuality, whilst fostering respect and tolerance for others irrespective of ability, race, creed, gender or background.

In order to achieve the above objectives NSA's school staff and governors will provide a curriculum for the EYFS based on the following principles, which will establish the foundations that underpin all future learning:

- at the core, place the development of positive attitudes and dispositions towards learning and foster the development of positive behaviour and social interaction skills;
- promote and develop personal, social and emotional well being;
- encourage the development of self-confidence and positive self-awareness;
- enable children to develop the skills of attention, concentration and persistence;
- place speech, language and communication at the heart of learning;
- lay the foundations for developing reading and writing;
- develop early mathematical skills and concepts;
- develop an understanding of the world in which children live;
- enable children to be creative in their responses to their world and in their development of skills;
- encourage children to develop their imagination through the exploration of media and materials;
- promote healthy and safe physical development – both gross and fine motor;
- encourage independence and ownership of own learning.

All children require:

- Adults who are sensitive to their differing needs, abilities, backgrounds and previous experiences to teach, support, care and offer equal opportunities for them all to develop.
- Adults who will respect them and value their ideas and opinions recognising that every child is an individual.
- A challenging and diverse curriculum offering ample opportunity to practise and develop skills and learning. This includes rich and positive learning experiences with Page 4 plenty of first-hand experience, varied to include all learning styles and including regular opportunity to explore and learn through practical and play activities.
- Opportunities to make decisions and to take responsibility - both for their learning and behaviour. The curriculum is founded upon offering opportunities for the development of personal qualities, social skills, and positive attitudes towards learning. This includes the chance to make mistakes in a forgiving environment and to realise that making mistakes is a learning experience.

In summary, a well-planned, carefully structured programme of academic and personal development, building on past experiences and achievements - delivered in ways appropriate to their age and stage.

## The Curriculum

The EYFS is a comprehensive statutory framework that sets the standards for the learning, development and care of children from birth to five. The EYFS extends from birth to the end of Reception and the beginning of Key Stage 1. The curriculum should therefore be seen as part of a continuum of learning, which begins at birth, extends throughout the years of compulsory schooling and establishes the young person as a lifelong learner.

Play underpins the delivery of all the EYFS.

The EYFS principles guide the work of all practitioners, there are four themes:

- a unique child
- positive relationships
- enabling environments
- learning and development

The curriculum consists of seven areas of learning - three "prime" and four "specific". These are inter-related and none can be delivered in isolation from the others. The seven areas consist of a total of seventeen Early Learning Goals:

**Prime:** 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, work together, and move through to support development in all areas. The prime areas are:

Personal, Social and Emotional Development -comprising:

- Making relationships
- Self Confidence and self-awareness
- Managing feelings and behaviour

Communication and Language -comprising:

- Listening and attention
- Understanding
- Speaking

Physical Development comprising:

- Moving and handling (gross and fine motor)
- Health and self-care

**Specific:** The specific areas include essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society. They grow out of the prime areas, and provide important contexts for learning. The Specific areas are:

#### Mathematics- comprising:

- Numbers
- Shape, Space and Measures

#### Literacy - comprising:

- Reading
- Writing

#### Understanding the world -comprising:

- People and communities
- The world
- Technology

#### Expressive arts and design comprising:

- Exploring and using media and materials
- Being imaginative

The characteristics of effective learning describe factors which play a central role in a child's learning and in becoming an effective learner. They are vital elements of support for the transition process from EYFS to Year 1. The characteristics of learning run through and underpin all seven areas of learning and development, representing processes rather than outcomes. Information describing the child's characteristics of effective learning will provide Year 1 teachers with vital background and context when considering the child's next stage of development and future learning needs.

#### Playing and exploring – engagement

- Finding out and exploring
- Playing with what they know
- Being willing to 'have a go'

#### Active learning – motivation

- Being involved and concentrating
- Keeping trying
- Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

#### Creating and thinking critically – thinking

- Having their own ideas
- Making links
- Choosing ways to do things

The objectives within the EYFS handbook provide the basis for planning throughout the foundation stage. Medium-term plans are topic based and identify the intended learning outcomes for children during this period. In addition, indoor/outdoor independent learning and adult directed planning are completed on a weekly and daily basis which highlight the objectives for the week and activities children will take part in to achieve these objectives. The school makes use of learning activities outside the classroom, where a planned programme of appropriate activities takes place at all times of year. The above also refers to our practice of cross-curricular teaching and learning which encourages children to make links and practise skills in a relevant and interesting way. NSA's school staff and Governors believe that all individual learning styles should be recognised and honoured in a creative learning environment. The way in which we learn is as important to progress and success as what we learn.

### **Teaching and Learning**

At NSA we are continually developing teaching and learning within EYFS and aim to provide each and every child with a well-balanced, stimulating and meaningful learning experience. We do this by:

- Providing children with a safe and nurturing environment in which they feel safe and secure to learn.

- The regular identification of training needs for all adults working in the EYFS; a range of INSETS within school and through the Local Authority's CPD programme to develop the understanding that Teachers and Assistant Teachers have of how children in early years develop and learn, and how this must be reflected in their teaching; a carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the objectives by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage; well-planned medium term plans and weekly planning based around the seven early learning goals.
- Regular monitoring of our work to evaluate its impact on pupils' progress and their wider social, personal and emotional development.
- Continuous monitoring of teaching and learning to provide feedback for teachers so that they can identify next stages of learning and improve their practice.
- Peer observations across EYFS and Key Stage 1 to develop a better understanding of the curriculum in different year groups, share teaching skills and good practice and enable EYFS practitioners to ensure pupils are ready for Year 1.
- Regular lesson observations and learning walks by leadership and those with subject responsibilities to ensure consistency, share good practice and to provide feedback to promote school improvement.
- Encouraging the partnership between teachers and parents/carers that helps our children to progress in all areas of the curriculum and helps them to feel secure at school and to develop a sense of well-being and achievement.
- Providing home learning opportunities which are appropriate for the age group and engaging for both parent and child.
- Providing supporting and interactive learning environments which provide extensive learning opportunities for children.
- Establishing good relationships between our school and the other educational settings in which the children have been learning before joining our school.

### **Key Person Approach**

The key person approach is aimed at enabling and supporting close attachments between children and practitioners. Attachment provides a sense of security so that children can become confident, independent and capable young learners. In Nursery the Key person is the class teacher or an experienced teaching assistant. In Reception the key person is the class teacher. Their role is to meet the needs of each child in their care and respond sensitively to their feelings, talking to the parents and working in partnership with them.

A key person is:

- A named member of staff who has more contact than others with the child;
- Someone to build relationships with the child and parents;
- Someone who helps the child become familiar with the provision;
- Someone who meets children's individual needs and care needs;
- Someone who responds sensitively to children's feelings, ideas and behaviour;
- The person who acts as a point of contact with parents

### **Assessment**

In accordance with all schools, each child will be assessed in their first half-term at school. Through observation staff will assess their attainment in the three prime areas and the four specific areas against the early learning goals.

On-going assessment (formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process. Staff are involved in daily observations and assessments throughout the EYFS; they include child-initiated tasks and teacher led activities in the inside and outside learning environments. Observations, samples of work and photographs are recorded in each child's 'learning journal' on the Evidence Me app.

Data is entered electronically onto the SIMS data-tracking programme at the end of each term.

The EYFS Profile will be completed at the end of the Reception year; data will be sent to Together for Children (TfC) who will then pass it onto the Department for Education (DfE).

## **Reporting**

The Reception class teachers will report to parents/ carers whether children are "meeting" or "exceeding" expected levels of development, or "emerging" - not yet reaching expected levels - at the end of the Summer term. This is in line with the reporting requirements from the DfE (see above). Within the seven areas of learning there are seventeen statutory "Early learning goals", which establish age-related expectations for children to reach by the end of EYFS. These provide the basis for planning the teaching and learning programme in Reception. Some Reception Year children may begin to work towards the expected standard of a year one child of the National Curriculum when it is judged appropriate for them. This is when their assessment demonstrates that they are "exceeding expectations". Children who do not achieve all of the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception Year continue to work towards them in Year 1. These children will be assessed to be "emerging" in their development. Progress will be shared with parents and carers after the autumn half term, towards the end of the spring term and at the end of the summer term, in accordance with our Assessment, recording and reporting policy. All attainment data is shared with the Year1 teacher for continuity at this time of transition.

## **Induction and Home/School Links**

A Parent information evening is held in June for parents of the prospective Nursery and Reception groups. The purpose of this meeting is to welcome all our families to NSA, to disseminate important information, to encourage discussion and to emphasise the vital importance of home-school cooperation and mutual support. This marks the beginning of the home-school partnership, which we regard as high priority for the benefit of all our children.

Several events take place during the second half of the summer term prior to the child's admission in September; these include stay and play sessions, the summer fair as well as the information evening mentioned above. Parents are welcome to attend all or some of these activities.

Links will be made with the pre-school settings and where practicable the class teacher will make a visit in July. During the early part of September, the class teacher and teaching assistant will arrange a home visit for each child.

Further communication systems include:

- Whole school monthly Newsletter
- Daily opportunity for brief updates at the point of dropping off or collecting children. Anything more than a few minutes' conversation will require an appointment to be made through the school office;
- Opportunities to join the school on a Friday morning for a "Celebration" assembly where children will share their learning and celebrate their achievements. Exact dates will be published on the newsletter and website at the beginning of each term;
- Home/school reading journal;
- Email / telephone via the school office;
- Progress meetings will take place in Autumn and Spring Term;
- Written reports for each individual child will be shared with parent in Summer Term;
- Information meetings and workshops will take place throughout each school year, including the teaching of early reading and early maths skills.

## **Inclusion**

At NSA we believe that all children matter and have equal rights - irrespective of the child's special educational need(s), disability, gender, creed or ethnicity. Consequently, we aim to be a fully inclusive school - as described in the school's Equality Policy. We give our children every opportunity to participate in a wide range of experiences in order to help them to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of each child's learning style, communication needs, disability and range of life experiences when we are planning for their learning. This is outlined in the Accessibility Plan, which is a document outlining how the school intends to meet the needs for all children to access learning and is revised annually.

## **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

The teaching in EYFS supports the social development of our children through the way we expect them to work with each other. We encourage children to work together and provide opportunities for them to discuss their ideas.

## **Equal opportunities**

All children are entitled to the EYFS curriculum which caters for their individual needs, offers equal access and opportunity and enables them to participate fully in all areas of the curriculum. Further reference should be made to the school's Equal Opportunity Policy.

## **Management of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

Role of the Early Years Lead

- Ensure teachers are familiar with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years and help them to plan for teaching and learning within the EYFS;
- Lead by example in the way they teach in their own classroom;
- Prepare, organise and lead CPD (Continuing Professional Development), with the support of the Head Teacher, Deputy Head and Lead Practitioner;
- Work cooperatively with the SENDCO;
- Attend CPD;
- Inform parents;
- Discuss regularly with the Senior Leadership Team, Standards Team and governors the progress of implementing the Statutory Framework for the Early Years;
- Lead, manage and monitor the implementation of the framework, including monitoring the quality of teaching and learning;
- Keep the governing body informed about progress;
- Ensure that the EYFS remains high profile in the school's development work;

## **Monitoring and Review**

This policy is monitored by the governing body, which receives regular reports on the EYFS from the Headteacher. The policy will be reviewed every two years or sooner if necessary.

## **Policy to be reviewed February 2024**

Emma Seaman  
Early Years Lead  
February 2021