



Early Years Policy

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Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the academic year in which a child has their fifth birthday.

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 March 2021.

The four guiding principles of the EYFS shape all practice at SLS:

- The Unique child (every child is a competent learner from birth, who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured);
- Positive Relationships (children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person);
- Enabling environments (the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning)

- Learning and Development (children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates and all areas of learning and development are equally important and inter-connected).

Intent

At Scotton Lingerfield we follow the statutory framework and guidance and use our experience to observe, plan, teach and reflect.

We provide a broad and balanced Early Years curriculum: -

- That utilises carefully planned adult-directed experiences, child-initiated activities and allows for planning to occur in the moment whereby we can allow the child to lead their own learning in a direction driven by their interest
- Includes first-hand experiences and purposeful interactions between adults and children
- Has regard for the skills and attitudes the Key Stage One curriculum will demand

A child's first experience at school is extremely important to us and we strive to create an atmosphere that is happy, positive and where challenges can be overcome confidently or help can be sought.

Through our calm, nurturing setting we foster a love of learning and develop enquiring minds through careful questions such as, I wonder...? What if...?

The characteristics of effective learning provide a framework that is used to structure our own reflections on effective learning. We want our children to be motivated to learn and to develop independence, resilience and confidence. We see our environment as the third teacher and we aim to provide a rich, inquisitive environment which sparks natural curiosity and we utilise open-ended resources to foster creativity and deep engagement.

We aim to promote emotional well-being by building positive relationships and working in close partnership with our families and other professionals to support every child to develop and learn.

Implementation

Teaching

- Has a carefully planned curriculum which aims for all children to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the EYFS. We have a high expectation of children's behaviour and attainment.
- Creates adult and child-initiated opportunities that will encourage children to explore, create, investigate, rehearse, practise, repeat and discover
- Effective pedagogy is a mix of different approaches. Children learn through play, by adults modelling, by observing each other and through guided learning and direct teaching.
- Develops the Characteristics of Effective Learning
- Utilises a play-based approach whereby teachers carefully organise enabling environments for high-quality play. Sometimes, they make time and space available for children to invent their own play. Sometimes, they join in to sensitively support and extend children's learning.
- Shows awareness of the different ways and rates by which children develop and learn; that there are many factors affecting achievement including ability, emotional state, age and maturity, and how this informs teaching strategies.
- Recognises the importance of emotional well-being and fosters strong relationships to achieve this

- Places value on outdoor learning and uninterrupted play by providing extended periods of time in self-chosen play
- Includes observing *how* a child is doing something rather than *what* is produced.

Learning

- Through a comprehensive induction programme from a child's nursery setting and/or home to reception we ensure prior learning and development is valued and the transition into School is supported.
- We encourage cross-curricular links to ensure a seamless transition into Key Stage One by building on previous experiences and planning those for the future.

In the EYFS children are learning when they:

- Collaborate and learn from one another through shared experiences
- Are supported to set their own challenges in their physical environment and in their learning
- Access resources independently
- Use their senses to explore and investigate
- Develop persistence and positive attitudes to learning as detailed in the Characteristics of Effective Learning.

Play

We place high value on play and the learning it brings. We firmly believe that play is a tool for learning.

Language development is central to self-regulation: children use language to guide their actions and plans. Pretend play gives many opportunities for children to focus their thinking, persist and plan ahead.

Through play, children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules thereby developing emotional resilience and self-regulation.

Children have the opportunity to think creatively and problem solve alongside others. They express fears or relive anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations as well as re-enact positive experiences building self-awareness and self-esteem.

Inclusion

In consultation and working collaboratively with parents/guardians the school's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) will advise on provision for children who may experience barriers to their learning, which may relate to sensory or physical impairment, learning difficulties or emotional or social development in line with the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice (2014) and the school's SEN/Inclusion Policy.

We aim to meet the needs of all our children by: -

- Setting realistic and challenging expectations. We aim for all children to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the EYFS. We achieve this by planning for different learning styles, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with

disabilities or medical needs, children from all social and cultural backgrounds as well as children with diverse linguistic backgrounds.

- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contributions of all children are valued.
- Using resources, which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping which all children have equal access to.
- Monitoring children's progress and providing support where necessary, within the resources available to the school.
- Providing specific targets detailed in Individual Support Plans (ISP) and following external therapy or support programmes of work such as Speech and Language
- Working collaboratively with families or carers, the SENCo and other professionals such as Speech and Language Therapists, Educational Psychologists and Parent Support Advisors

The EYFS Curriculum

The EYFS programmes of study are statutory and important in their own right as a basis for developing essential skills such as listening, speaking, persistence and collaborating with each other. The three prime areas cover the knowledge and skills which are the foundations for future progress, and which are applied and reinforced by the specific areas. All areas of learning are equally important and are interlinked.

The Development Matters and the Early Learning Goals guide our long-term planning together with the termly topics.

Weekly Planning focuses on day-to-day organisation of activities. It takes into account that children's learning is not necessarily sequential and that they may need time to consolidate, repeat and extend their learning in their own way. All planning is evaluated on an on-going basis and adapted in response to the children's needs and interests.

Assessment

Assessment is about noticing what children can do and what they know. It is not about lots of data and evidence.

During the children's first half term, we assess each child's development and learning attainment against the criteria set out in Development Matters observation checkpoints. Through observation, we discover the unique personality and interests of each child.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and use this information to ensure future planning reflects individual or group needs.

Formative assessment in the Foundation Stage is continuous and takes the form of observations, examples of child-initiated work and samples of dated work from books and photographs. The teachers and teaching assistants use Tapestry to make observational records and record examples of work.

We have termly parents' meetings take place to ensure parents/carers are informed of their child's progress and next steps in learning.

Working with significant adults

We recognise the importance of working alongside parents and other significant adults during a child's education. We do this through: -

- Giving the children the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school.
- Hosting induction meetings and providing detailed information about Numeracy, Phonics and reading
- Providing formal meetings for parents during the school year to discuss children's progress.
- Welcoming parents to discuss any concerns with the teacher and/or teaching assistants.
- Working to build good relationships with families to promote a regular two-way flow of information.
- Sharing helpful videos such as for the pronunciation of letter sounds

The Environment and Resources

A rich and varied environment is actively planned for and continuously developed with varied multi-cultural and inclusive resources to encourage exploratory play-based learning and challenge. The learning environment encompasses both indoor and outdoor provision, which are of equal importance. Children are encouraged to experience all areas of the learning environment in all weathers. We encourage children to plan their own selection of activities balanced with adult initiated activities.

Impact

- The majority of children in Reception reach the ELG by the end of Summer
- Children develop the characteristics of effective learning which helps them through the rest of school and in particular ensures they are ready for their next stage of learning
- Children develop the ability to manage risks
- Children enjoy being independent in managing themselves and their learning
- Parents are happy with their child's progress
- Parents feel part of the school community
- Practise is improved year on year
- Everyone is included
- Children have high levels of well-being and involvement

Safeguarding

We follow whole school procedures for reporting accidents and follow the whole school procedures for child protection (see separate policy). Debbie Calvert is the Designated safeguarding lead and all concerns are reported to her via CPOMS.