



Sandhill Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



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." Early Years Foundation Statutory Framework, 2023

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Aims

At Sandhill Primary School we aim:

- To give each child a happy, positive and fun start to their school life in which they can establish solid foundations on which to expand and foster a deep love of learning.
- To offer each child a wide range of new and exciting experiences and give them the opportunity to consolidate, explore and test them out along with their own, individual experiences.
- To enable each child, through encouragement and high expectations, to develop, to the full, socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally.
- To offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited opportunity for development.
- To encourage children to develop independence within a loving, secure and friendly atmosphere.
- To support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing.
- To help each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and developing the confidence to work towards personal goals.

Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the 2023 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

Structure of EYFS

Sandhill Primary School is a 52 place Nursery (FS1) that offers 15 hours per week to three and four year olds. There are 40 places in Reception (FS2)

Session times:

Nursery (FS1) – 8.30 – 11.30 am session 12.15-3.15 pm session

Reception (FS2) – 8.45 – 3.10 full day

The Curriculum

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- **A unique child** – every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self - assured
- **Positive relationships** – children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- **Enabling environments** – 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
- **Learning and development**– children develop and learn at different rates.

Nursery (FS1) and Reception (FS2) follow the curriculum as outlined in the Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) document.

This clearly defines what we teach. The following policy details the specifics for our setting. The

EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are seen as important and interconnected but three areas are seen as particularly important for igniting children’s curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, for building their capacity to learn and form relationships and thrive. They support children’s learning in all other areas and are known as the prime areas.

The prime areas are:

- **Communication and Language** – Listening and Attention, Understanding and Speaking
- **Physical Development** – Gross Motor and Fine Motor Skills
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development** – Self regulation, Managing Self and Building Relationships

The specific areas of learning develop essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society. The specific areas are:

- **Literacy** – Comprehension, Word Reading and Writing
- **Mathematics** – Numbers and Numerical Patterns
- **Understanding the World** – Past and Present, People, Culture and Communities and the Natural World
- **Expressive Arts and Design** – Creating with Materials and Being Imaginative Expressive

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning. The teachers within EYFS plan activities within the classrooms with these in mind. They highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them. Displays of how children are showing these characteristics of effective learning are evident in both classrooms. These displays are changed on a half termly basis to show current learning.

The three characteristics 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.

Teaching

We ensure there is a balance of adult led and child initiated activities across the day. At different points in the day, the children will receive short bursts of teacher led learning, sufficiently timed for the age of the children.

Much of the time is spent with children self-selecting tasks with adults observing or intervening to extend learning where appropriate. The interaction between the adult and child is essential as the adult's response to children builds understanding and therefore guides new learning.

The adult's role is to continually model, demonstrate and question what the child is doing. In some cases, the adult will ask a child to come and complete a task or game with them; at other times they will participate in a child's game, extending it where possible.

Learning through play is an important part of our Early Years classrooms. We believe children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them. Using children's interests as a starting point, we provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning to help them make sense of the world. They have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own. They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experience at their own level and pace.

Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests and inspire those around them. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. We believe it is important that adults take an active role in child initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating and extending their play. Getting the balance right between, child- initiated play and adult led activities are very important.

Planning

Carefully chosen texts are used each half term as a stimulus to fire imagination and promote the love of reading. We have a two-year rolling programme of texts/topics across the EYFS unit. The topics/texts are flexible to ensure we also follow the children's interests, school themes and local or national events. Every half term, staff plan the next topic, and book visits and visitors that will enhance the learning of our children. Staff plan in more detail on a weekly basis using daily notes, observations and interactions with children to inform where the learning journey should move to.

The outdoor area is as equally important as inside the classroom. As part of the EYFS curriculum, we ensure that children access this throughout the day. We try to ensure that the range of activities outside reflects the different

curriculum areas, and provides different learning opportunities to inside. For example, large guttering and pipes in the water, large construction and the mud kitchen. Staff all attend planning meetings and give input whenever possible. We ensure our planning is objective led and differentiated to meet the needs of all pupils. Groups of children will be identified on planning so that their learning can be moved forward quickly.

SMSC in Early Years Foundation Stage

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, we recognise that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development plays a significant part in their ability to learn and achieve. We therefore aim to provide an education that provides pupils with opportunities to explore and develop their own values and beliefs, spiritual awareness, high standards of personal behaviour, a positive, caring attitude towards other people, an understanding of their social and cultural traditions and an appreciation of the diversity and richness of cultures. All curriculum areas within the EYFS have a contribution to make to the child's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and opportunities for this will be planned in each area of the curriculum. All adults will model and promote expected behaviour, treating all people as unique and valuable individuals, showing compassion and respect for pupils and their families.

Assessment

Assessment is an essential part of learning and development of children in EYFS. It involves practitioners observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations.

On entry to FS1 and FS2 we carry out baseline assessments for each child. Throughout the Early Years the class teacher submits end of term assessment data showing each child's development across the seven areas of learning. This is also analysed by the Foundation Stage Lead and the Head teacher. At the end of FS2, the class teachers assess each child against the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG) and comments on whether their development within each ELG is either 'Emerging' or 'Expected'. This information is also communicated to parents and carers in the child's end of year report and can be discussed further with the class teacher. Parents are also informed as to whether their child has achieved the 'Good Level of Development.'

Equal Opportunities

All members of school are treated as individuals. We aim to meet the needs of all, taking account of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, special educational needs, disability, and social circumstances. All staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect cultural diversity and the need to prepare pupils for life in a diverse and multi-faith society.

Provision is made for all children, including those who require additional support for toileting.

Children who are still in nappies, are changed as and when required. Parents/Carers complete a Home/ School Agreement for Changing children' as their child starts nursery. This agreement allows all EYFS staff to change nappies, following guidelines. Parents/carers are asked to provide children with nappies and wipes and a change of clothing should they need it. Staff change nappies in the designated changing room which consists of appropriate changing equipment.

Working with Parents

We believe that parents and carers are a child's first educator and therefore work very closely to ensure they are involved in what we do with their child at school.

The online Learning Journey 'Tapestry' enables and supports school and parents in sharing learning with each other. Parents can upload photographs of the experiences they are sharing with their child at home. We want parents to feel they can speak to us about their child at any time and feel comfortable in our setting. Our door is always open!

Parents are invited to 'Stay and Play sessions' every term. These events have a focus to show parents what type of activities children complete in school.

Key Person

The Class Teacher and Teaching Assistants are the named key workers for each child in the setting. Their role is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs and to help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with their parents. All adults within the Early Years setting actively seek to form positive respectful relationships with the children in their care. The formation of healthy relationships between adults and children is essential in enabling children's wellbeing now and their future successes.

The role of the key person is:

- To help a child settle in FS1/FS2.
- To help a child become familiar with the setting and to feel happy, confident and safe.
- To develop a genuine bond with the child (and parents).
- Explain routines, class rules and expectations to the child.
- To meet the individual needs of the child and respond sensitively to their feelings, ideas and behaviours.
- Complete observations and assessments on individual children.

SEND

All children and their families are valued at Sandhill Primary School. Children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all provisions available. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. Assessments take into account contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential special educational needs is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage and the schools Special Education Needs Lead is called upon for further information and advice.

Safeguarding

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 the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (2021)

It is important to note that members of staff do not use their mobile phones or personal handset devices in the classroom and are prohibited from taking photographs with their personal handsets. This is in line with our school Safeguarding Policy. Members of staff do, however, use school iPads to take photographs. These photographs are used in children's learning journeys on Tapestry, in class displays and on the school website and Facebook page. All parents are asked to state if they give permission for their child's image to be used on social media through the paperwork in their initial starter packs.

Health and Safety

The Foundation Stage Lead has undertaken risk assessments of the indoor and outdoor areas and equipment and these are carried out daily.

We follow whole school procedures for child protection (see Safeguarding Policy).

In line with the EYFS Statutory Framework 2023, at Sandhill Primary School we undertake;

- A whole school Supporting Children with Medical Needs, including First Aid Procedures and administration of non-prescribed drugs policy ensuring that there are systems in place to ensure that medicines and the systems for obtaining information about a child's needs for medication are kept up to date. Medicines are kept at the school office and a written record is kept each time a medicine is administered to a child and the child's parents and/or carers are informed on the same day.
- Fresh drinking water is available at all times.
- Each classroom has a snack area and fresh fruit is available daily.
- All children in EYFS (up to the age of 5) are provided with a milk carton, on a daily basis. This is kept in the fridge until required.
- A first aid box is accessible at all times and a record of accidents and injuries is kept in the EYFS setting. Children take an accident slip home with details of the incident and also parents are informed at the end of every day/session if a child has had an accident. The whole school accident book is filled in for more serious accidents
- There are two members of staff in the Early Years team who are trained in Paediatric First Aid.
- Health and safety policy and procedures which cover identifying, reporting and dealing with accidents, hazards and faulty equipment.
- A fire and emergency evacuation procedure and policy.
- Appropriate clothing: Staff are expected to wear clothing that supports them in getting to a child's level and playing and engaging with children at floor level.
- Animals and Pets – for health, safety and hygiene reasons, we do not have animals or pets in the setting. Wherever visitors with animals are invited into school, whole school risk assessments are in place prior to the visit

Behaviour

School is a place where learning is paramount and children are encouraged to develop intellectually, socially, physically, spiritually and culturally. This development can only take place in an orderly and well-disciplined environment with high expectations of the behaviour of all its members. (See Policy for Behaviour and Discipline)

Transition

Children are invited to the EYFS unit with their parents to 'Meet the Teacher' the term before they begin Nursery (FS1). This is an opportunity for children to become familiar with staff, the setting and other children in the setting.

When children are ready to move to Reception (FS2) the children will spend a few days in their new classroom in the final week of the summer term.

Educational Visits

All details relating to the health and safety requirements for school visits are outlined in the LEA

Education Visits Handbook. The school follows these recommended procedures. The Head teacher, Deputy Head teacher will ensure that procedures are followed, that all risk assessments are completed and that insurance arrangements are satisfactory.

Monitoring Arrangements

The core purpose of the Early Years Foundation Stage Leader is:

- To support the Head of School in the performance management of staff in the Foundation Stage
- To act as a mentor to staff where appropriate and to organise induction
- To ensure own continuing professional development including attending training opportunities
- To organise the day to day running of the Foundation Stage classes including the efficient management of school resources
- To organise and lead workshops for parents/carers as appropriate
- To work with the Leadership Team to present an accurate and coherent account of the school's performance to a range of audiences, enabling them to play their part effectively
- To be able to stimulate children and colleagues by a positive, active and supportive attitude
- To organise opportunities for pupils in the Foundation Stage when and where appropriate to participate in Foundation stage assemblies/performances
- To challenge and support others in developing professionally, both formally and informally
- To liaise with colleagues in order to support the successful transition of all pupils from the Early Years to Key Stage 1

September 2023

Headteacher signed:

Chair of Governors signed:

This policy is to be reviewed June 2025