

Sowerby Community Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Sowerby Primary School we greatly value the important role that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) plays on 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.

All children begin school with a variety of experiences and learning. It is the privilege of the practitioners working in reception to take on the task of building upon that prior learning and experience. This is done through a holistic approach to learning ensuring that parents/carers, teaching assistants and teachers work effectively together to support children's learning and development.

Aims of our Early Years Foundation Stage

- To provide a stable, caring, stimulating and challenging environment, in which all children gain confidence, self-esteem and independence.
- To nurture a strong partnership with parents, carers and professionals.
- To provide a structured, exciting, purposeful and relevant curriculum that is planned around the individual needs and interests of the children.
- To support learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor provision.
- To fulfil assessment, recording and reporting of children's progress to parents and the local education authority.
- To have regard for the SEND Code of Practice when addressing the needs of those children who may have special needs.
- To provide equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practice for all children, ensuring every child is included and not disadvantaged because of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities or gender.

Learning and Development

There are 17 early learning goals for children to achieve by the end of the Foundation Stage across seven areas of learning. These seven areas are split into prime areas and specific areas. Prime areas are fundamental, work together and are moved through to support development in all other areas. These prime areas are:-

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

Specific areas include essential skills and knowledge to allow children to participate successfully in society. These specific areas are:-

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Planning

Good planning is the key to making children's learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive. Effective learning builds on and extends what children know and can already do. Our planning shows how the principles of the EYFS are put into practice and is always informed by observations we have made of the children in order to understand and consider their current interests, development and learning needs. All practitioners who work in reception at Sowerby Community Primary School are involved in this effective process. Daily team

meetings allow staff to discuss what the children have learnt that day and what their next steps need to be.

Assessment, recording and monitoring

We adhere to the principles of assessment for learning. We analyse and review what we know about each child's individual development and learning and then make informed decisions about the child's progress. This enables us to plan the next steps to meet their development and learning needs.

All practitioners who interact with the child contribute to the assessment process. The children are also encouraged to assess their own learning. Midday supervisors are asked to contribute where appropriate.

We ask after school providers that the EYFS children go to, to complement their learning.

Learning Environment

We do not make a distinction between work and play. We support children's learning through planned play activities and decide when child initiated or adult led play activities would provide the most effective learning opportunities. We believe that it is important for adults to support children's learning through play by getting involved in the play themselves and modelling by example.

We aim to create an attractive, welcoming and stimulating learning environment which will encourage children to explore 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 their independence.

Children are encouraged to become independent learners and to take some responsibility for initiating their own lines of enquiry and investigation.

Induction

All children are admitted to school in September on a full time basis.

In the half-term before children start school the class teachers visit the local pre-school settings to meet the children. Provision for three afternoon visits is planned for those children starting school full-time in September. In addition parents and carers are invited to a 'New Starters Meeting' where a range of school partnership professionals provide an overview of the routines, activities and experiences children will encounter during their first year at school. There is also opportunity for parents and carers to clarify concerns or worries either in an open forum or after the meeting. Parents have the opportunity to see their child's classroom and talk to the class teachers.

Parents are also invited to an 'Open Morning' in the summer term, when our Year 6 and reception pupils escort parents and carers on a guided tour of the school.

On their first day in school children start at 8.30am to allow them to settle in before the rest of the school gets busy. It gives the staff time to talk to the children and their parents and put their minds at rest.

Special Education Needs

Using the outcomes from the 'On Entry' assessments, teachers plan for each child's individual learning and development needs, including those children who need additional support or have particular Special Educational Needs.

As Early Year's practitioners we acknowledge our responsibility in identifying learning and development needs and responding quickly to any areas of particular difficulty. We work hard with parents and staff from other agencies to provide the best learning and development opportunities for the children. (Further details in school SEN policy)

Resources

Children in the reception classes have access to all the school resources, which are labelled and stored in appropriate areas within school. However, within the reception classrooms and the outdoor area there are also specialised Early Years resources that are accessible to the children on a daily basis. Audits of these resources are carried out to ensure quality and appropriateness. All resources are labelled to allow the children to tidy them away easily.

Equal opportunities

All children are given the same opportunities regardless of ability, race or gender. No child is treated less fairly than any other.

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