

# Early Years Foundation Policy

THE STATUTORY FRAMEWORK FOR THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE, PUBLISHED MARCH 2021 STATES THAT:

**'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.'**

At Swansfield Park Primary our intention is to provide the children in our care with the best possible start to their lives and we aim to nurture children with a passion for lifelong learning. In order for this to happen, children are welcomed into our stimulating, safe and happy learning environment to lay the foundations for their future success. They access a curriculum that is well sequenced and adaptable to suit individual and cohort needs. It has a clear structure and intends to teach children about their immediate world including nature, the relationships they are building, the imaginations they are developing, the questions they are asking and the key skills they are learning in order to be ready and excited for their onward school journey. It has effective communication at its heart and seeks to ensure that all children develop the ability to articulate themselves with confidence and aplomb. This is encapsulated in our pledge to our children and their families:

## Our Pledge

**To enable children to learn best, we will provide them with:**

- high expectations of achievement for all
- outstanding teaching
- sustained shared thinking
- time to plan, explore and reflect on learning
- appropriate challenge and questioning
- inspirational environments and resources
- collaborative learning opportunities
- support to develop learning mindsets
- exciting and memorable experiences

***This pedagogy is at the heart of staff practice, is shared with parents and carers on a regular basis and is visible within our Early Years department.***

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## Introduction to the Early Years Foundation Stage at Swansfield Park Primary School

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of their reception year. At Swansfield Park Primary, we offer the following provision:

- **Pre-school provision within Cherry Class for children from 2 years of age.**  
This includes 15 hour funding from the term after a child's 2nd birthday (where applicable)
- **Nursery provision within Apple Class.**  
This includes 15 hour funding, 30 hour funding (where applicable) with the possibility to stretch entitlement over 51 weeks of the year with our out of hours Tic Toc Club and the option to pay for additional sessions
- **Reception Class provision within Pear or Plum Class.**

## Teaching and Learning Strategies

Exploration and play are at the heart of teaching and learning within our setting.

Children are taught using a variety of styles which are appropriate to their needs.

Fundamentally, the teaching and learning is based within practical experience with an emphasis on the visual, the auditory and the kinaesthetic. This includes a commitment to developing early thinking skills and children regularly take part in sustained shared thinking, philosophical and enquiry led discussions which may or may not be linked to themes being explored at that time. Children regularly work as a whole class, in pairs and small groups, independently, collaboratively and on a one to one basis with adults. We recognise that children have different interests and every attempt is made to 'take the learning' to children's interests and preferred pursuits.

The teaching and learning is guided by the key principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage :

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

Within these principles, the teaching and learning is firmly based within the 7 areas of learning and development. Initially, particular importance is placed upon the prime areas which are crucial for building capacity to learn, forming relationships and thriving. As children progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage, it is usually possible to establish more of an equal balance between the prime and specific areas.



### **Prime Areas:**

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

### **Specific Areas:**

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

We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum facilitates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

### **Playing and Exploring:**

Children have opportunities to experience and investigate on a daily basis with an emphasis upon 'having a go'.

### **Active learning:**

Children have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements

### **Creating and Critically Thinking:**

Children are encouraged and supported to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

These characteristics are discussed and referred to regularly with children as they plan, do and review their learning.

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## **The Learning Environment**

At Swansfield Park Primary school, the learning environment encompasses indoor and outdoor space and both are equally important. We take pride in our learning environments and ensure that they are well organised, interesting and appropriate spaces for young minds to develop. We aim to provide a range of spaces that children can use:

- to explore and learn securely and safely.
- to be active
- to be quiet and reflective
- to work collaboratively
- to work individually



- to be creative
- to stimulate language and literacy development
- to foster early mathematical skills
- to develop fine and gross motor skills

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## Quality First Teaching and SEND Provision

We recognise that some children need additional support and so timely and specific interventions are used to address particular needs and barriers to learning. These may take place within the continuous provision or adult-led activities which children access during their day or as identified provision which takes place over and above the continuous provision and adult-directed activity. All of this is provided as part of the commitment to quality first teaching.

If a child requires support beyond this we work collaboratively with parents / carers and professionals from the early years inclusion team and health. We use the Northumberland Early Years Inclusion Toolkit to identify and set personalised learning targets and to follow a plan, do, review approach.

Children with complex needs are assessed and a request for consideration of statutory assessment ([COSA](#)) is made to the local authority. An Education, Health and Care Plan ([EHCP](#)) is written to outline a child's needs, define the learning objectives and provide the necessary resources to support the child's learning.

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## Planning

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum provides the basis for planning throughout the Foundation Stage. Planning in all Early Years classrooms is detailed at three levels

### Long Term Planning:

Our [EYFS](#) curriculum is underpinned by a long term plan that maps the journey from 2 year old provision to the end of the reception year. This is available on the school website.

### Medium Term Planning:

Medium term planning details skills, knowledge and possible activities across the seven areas of learning that are needed to secure the Development Matters statements relative to classes of children. Medium term plans are revised each year to ensure that they meet the specific needs of each cohort. Planning at this level highlights opportunities for outdoor learning and philosophical/sustained shared thinking. Opportunities for mastery of mathematical and literacy skills are also made explicit in nursery and reception planning.

Medium term planning is used as a guide by staff within Early Years and there is always the flexibility to follow the interests of the children as the half term progresses. Medium term plans can be found on each Early Years class page of the school website

### **Short Term Planning:**

Staff plan their teaching and stimuli for continuous provision on a weekly basis. Opportunities for adult-led activities are documented as well as opportunities for children to practise learnt skills independently and to work to their own agenda through stimulating resources and starting points for continuous provision. Deployment of teaching and support staff is made explicit. Planning at this level is a guide and offers flexibility when delivering children's next steps in learning as well as responding to their personal, social and emotional needs as they arise.

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## **Assessment and Record Keeping**

*See also the school's **Assessment Policy**.*

Timely and effective assessment is at the heart of the teaching and learning process in order to establish what a child can do and what they need to learn next.

Within Early Years at Swansfield Park, assessment is carried out at three levels:

### **Short Term Assessment:**

All Early Years members of staff are responsible for observing children as they interact in child initiated, planned, adult led and independent activities, making sure that progress and next steps are recorded on the School 360 Early Years App. Staff also use the Development Matters statements to identify areas in which to challenge and extend a child's current learning and development. In addition to this, assessments against 'I can' statements are made in reception on a weekly basis in topic work, writing and maths.

For children in reception, writing is regularly assessed using the school's visual writing criteria (appendix 1).

### **Medium Term Assessment:**

On a termly basis, Early Years staff make an overall judgement about whether a child is meeting age related expectations. This information is reviewed by class teachers, the Early Years lead and the [SLT](#) and forms the basis for ongoing intervention and planning. Staff across pre-school and nursery provision use the Northumberland School Readiness Passport as a method of recording assessments and this too is monitored by the Early Years lead and the SLT.

Children in reception are assessed against the Read Write Inc phonic bands on a termly basis and progress is monitored by group leaders and the SLT to determine the appropriate groupings.



## Long term assessments:

Within the Early Years Foundation Stage, staff use a broad range of evidence to inform starting points and to make end of year judgements.

A two year old check is carried out between a child's 2nd and 3rd birthday and this reviews progress and provides a written summary to parents/carers. This also highlights any significant emerging concerns.

Statutory Baseline Line Assessment is undertaken within the first 6 weeks of a child's reception year.

End of year judgements for reception children are made against the Early Learning Goals. Children's achievement is then reported to the [LA](#). This information is communicated to parents in an annual end of year written report.

Assessment at all levels is monitored by the SLT and work scrutiny and termly data tracking informs future priorities. Assessment data is also used by School Improvement Partners and Ofsted to challenge school leaders, holding them to account for pupil progress and school performance locally and nationally.

## Record Keeping:

In nursery, each child has a personal folder containing information about their achievements and other work that the child has completed to support the judgments made and documented in their School 360 Learning Journey. When a child moves into reception, this folder is passed on to the child's next teacher and is maintained for one school year before going home. In pre-school and nursery, each child's progress is documented on the School Readiness Passport at 24, 30, 36 and 42 months, culminating in the ready for reception assessment during the summer term before a child begins their reception year. Each child in reception has a blue folder which stays with them throughout their time at Swansfield Park Primary School. This folder contains examples of their work from the school year, next steps documents and summative reports which have been shared with parents. These folders are kept in the child's current classroom and are transferred to their new class at the end of the school year. A sample of reception children's books are kept for one school year as evidence of work and progress.

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## Admissions

*All admissions are made in accordance with our **Admissions Policy***

### Admission Procedures for Pre-school and Nursery

- School data forms are sent out and parents are requested to complete them prior to their child starting. All data held complies with [GDPR](#) requirements



- Home visits are offered to all new starters to nursery provision
- A pre-start visit (additional as required according to the needs of the child) is offered to all children and their parents/carers before beginning in pre-school and nursery provision
- A Parent's Guide document is given out

### Admission Procedure for Reception

- A transfer day is held at the beginning of July for new starters to nursery or reception to try out their new class
- A new to reception parents' meeting is held in July to explain all of the school routines, procedures and to introduce key members of staff. Accompanying leaflets are handed out

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## Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers

At Swansfield Park Primary, we recognise the benefit of excellent communication and working relationships between school and parents and carers. We establish and develop these relationships in a number of ways:

- An invitation to all prospective parents and carers to have a personal introduction and guided tour of school with the Head Teacher
- Home visits before starting in nursery provision
- Visits to pre-school and nursery for all new starters
- A termly class newsletter with details of the curriculum, class organisation, procedures and important dates
- A weekly class blog (on the class page of the website) detailing the week's learning and achievements
- Access to the long and medium term plans on the class page of the school website
- Access to the children's online School 360 Learning Journal with the option to add observations and achievements from home
- Termly feedback meetings and reports to provide summative assessment and 'next steps' information
- Termly 'stay and play' sessions in nursery provision
- Opportunity to be 'secret storyteller' in nursery provision
- Invitation for [DBS](#) cleared parents to support in school and on school trips
- Invitation to school events such as sports afternoons and Christmas performances
- Timely parents meetings to give out key information, for example, new starters meetings and helping your child with reading meetings.





## Staffing

The Pre-School is staffed by a leader who holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification, supported by additional members of qualified staff. The nursery is staffed by a teacher and a teaching assistant who holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification. They may be supported by additional members of qualified staff and trainees. Reception classes are staffed with a teacher and a support assistant. They may be supported by additional members of staff as necessary.

When teaching staff are timetabled for Planning, Preparation and Assessment time, classes are taught by a Higher Level Teaching Assistant.

Student teachers and teaching assistants are trained within the Early Years classes. We offer work experience placements to local high school and college pupils. All staff are subject to police checks. Trainees are provided with an induction and are supervised at all times by permanent members of staff while on placement.

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## Health and Safety

See also ***Health and Safety Policy***.

At Swansfield Park Primary school we understand that we are legally required to comply with the safeguarding and welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2021 which require us to provide a setting that:

- is welcoming, safe and stimulating so that children can grow in confidence
- promotes good health;
- manages behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs;
- ensures that all adults who look after the children, or who have unsupervised access to them, are suitable to do so;
- ensures that the setting, furniture and equipment are safe and suitable for the purpose they are intended for;
- maintains records, policies and procedures required for the safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

The school follows health and safety guidelines published nationally and adheres to its own policy and guidelines relating to [COSHH](#) risk assessment and health and safety.





## Intimate Care

See ***Intimate Care Policy*** for practice and procedures.

At Swansfield Park Primary School, we recognise that when working with very young children, it is often necessary to tend to their intimate care needs and that this needs to be done safely, appropriately and professionally. We have defined intimate care as any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out a procedure to intimate personal areas which most people usually carry out for themselves, but some children are unable to do because of their young age, physical difficulties or other special needs.

Only permanent members of school staff carry out intimate care and this policy is shared as part of the induction process for new Early Years staff.

All staff working within the Early Years Department have access to the Intimate Care policy.

## Equal Opportunities

See also ***Equal Opportunities Policy***

Swansfield Park Primary School, we provide equal access to the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum by providing a broad balance of activities and resources which reflect children's differing needs and interests. Within this, particular attention is paid to:

- **Gender:** All staff are aware of gender issues and seek to promote the use of non-sexist materials and language and ideologies.
- **Race:** All staff are aware that we live in a multi-cultural society and that children should be encouraged to explore contributions made by various cultures.
- **Special Needs:** Quality First Teaching enables class teaching to meet the needs of individual learners. Additional resources and expertise will be sought as necessary to ensure that all children have access to high quality education and an equal chance to succeed.

## Continued Professional Development

See also ***Staff Development Policy***

All staff working within the Early Years Department are offered opportunities for continued professional development (**CPD**). Staff development through **INSET** meets the planned and strategic needs of the Early Years Department and the school. Through annual performance management, staff are encouraged to identify and discuss their own priorities for continued professional development with the Early Years team leader. Staff are also encouraged to consult the LA E-Courier and the EYFS training document on a regular basis to identify opportunities for CPD.



## Monitoring and Evaluation

It is the responsibility of the Early Years Foundation Stage leader to produce an annual action plan in order to plan, monitor and evaluate the development of provision within school. This plan is also monitored regularly by the Early Years link governor.

On a termly basis, the EYFS leader, alongside the SLT, is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the quality of the provision through lesson observations, learning walks, work scrutiny, data analysis and planning reviews.



### Visual Assessment Criteria for Writing for EYFS and KS1



Great sounding out!

WOW! - use of good descriptive language



Finger spaces



Connecting words

- T Full stop and capital letter



Writing red words

Achievements are  
recorded in a  
heart



Neat writing

Areas for development  
are recorded in the  
thought bubble

3

Try to write 3 sentences  
We call this the 3 sentence challenge!

This policy has been formally adopted by the governing body.


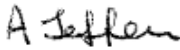

### VERSION HISTORY

VERSION	DATE	DESCRIPTION
Initially adopted	December 2018	Adapted into Swansfield Park Primary School
This Review	September 2021	Updates by AMG

### ACRONYMS

<b>EYFS</b>	Early Years Foundation Stage
<b>COSA</b>	Consideration Of Statutory Assessment
<b>EHCP</b>	Education, Health and Care Plan
<b>EYFS</b>	Early Years Foundation Stage
<b>SLT</b>	Senior Leadership Team
<b>GDPR</b>	General Data Protection Regulation
<b>DBS</b>	Disclosure Barring Service
<b>COSHH</b>	Control of Substances Hazardous to Health
<b>CPD</b>	Continued Professional Development
<b>LA</b>	Local Authority

### APPROVAL AND AUTHORISATION

	NAME	JOB TITLE	SIGNATURE	DATE
Approved	<b>Jenny Smith</b>	Head Teacher		September 2021
Approved	<b>Angela Jefferies</b>	Chair of Governors		September 2021
 <b>7</b>	<b>DATE OF NEXT REVIEW</b>		<b>Autumn 2022</b>	

[www.swansfield.northumberland.sch.uk](http://www.swansfield.northumberland.sch.uk)