

# Early Years Policy



## Rationale

Children develop rapidly during their early years: socially, emotionally, intellectually and physically. Children need a safe, secure and friendly environment in order to build a sound educational foundation and to develop as a whole person.

## Definition

Early Years includes the pre-school, nursery and reception classes, and educates children from two years old to the end of their Reception year.

## Aims

- To provide a secure foundation for future learning
- To provide a relevant and progressive curriculum
- To build up confidence and self esteem
- To develop social, emotional, intellectual and physical skills
- To provide a rich and stimulating learning environment

## Objectives

- To build upon what children know and can already do
- To provide a carefully structured and well planned curriculum supporting learning towards achieving the Early Learning Goals at the end of reception
- To use assessment outcomes to support future planning
- To build effective home-school links to support the transition of children into full-time education

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- To ensure that all children feel included, secure and valued
- To provide a range of appropriate activities using both indoor and outdoor facilities
- To ensure that the learning objectives cover all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum and underpin the assessed needs of the pupils
- To have fun and learn through stimulating and enjoyable activities.

## Guidelines and Teaching Strategies

### Admissions

All admissions are made in accordance with our Admissions Policy.

### Admission Procedures for Pre-School and Nursery

- Home visits are offered to all new starters. School data forms are sent out and parents are requested to complete them prior to their child starting.
- Pre-School parents and children are encouraged to have a number of pre-start visits, appropriate to the needs of the individual child.
- Nursery parents and children are invited to a pre-nursery visit in the term prior to them starting.

### Admission Procedure into Reception

- An admissions meeting and school familiarisation visits are held in November when parents are told about the school preference form
- On Transfer Day at the end of the Summer term nursery children join their reception teachers for either a morning or an afternoon session in their new classroom.
- A parents' meeting is held in July to explain all the school routines and procedures. Accompanying leaflets are handed out.

## Staffing

The Pre-School is staffed by a leader who holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification, supported by additional members of staff as required.

The nursery is staffed by a teacher and a teaching assistant who must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification. Each class with reception children in is staffed by a teacher and a teaching assistant.

Student teachers, teaching assistants and support assistants are trained within



the early year's classes. We offer work experience placements to local high school pupils. All staff are subject to police checks and trainees are supervised at all times by permanent staff.

## Working with other Professionals and Agencies

It is recognised that children may need support from sources outside school. Advice and help may be sought from other professionals including: health visitor, the school nurse and doctor, portage workers, speech and language therapists, physiotherapist, and other nursery and play group leaders.

## Classroom Organisation

All Early Years classrooms are organised to provide a stimulating and challenging learning environment. Resources are accessible to the children encouraging independence skills.

## The Outdoor Environment

Learning regularly takes place in our stimulating outdoor environment. All Early Years classes all have direct access to the outdoor environment which is utilised for learning in all curriculum areas. Both reception classes join the main school for playtimes.

## Teaching and Learning Strategies

A variety of teaching styles are used appropriate to the needs of the child, the learning objective and the resources available, which build upon the children's existing knowledge. These include whole class, group, paired and individual work. We recognise that children have preferred learning styles and plan activities to cater for all learners.

## Differentiation

We differentiate for more or less able pupils by:-

- presenting tasks and activities which allow children to respond and be challenged at their own level.
- adapting and modifying the tasks and activities allowing consolidation or extension of concepts and skills.



## Technology

Children are made aware of technology in their setting, in the local environment and in their homes. They are given opportunities to control programmable toys, to use iPads, and to develop their skills on the computer. Digital cameras and iPads are used to record images of the moment, which are downloaded and printed to provide an instant record for the children in the form of class books, stimulus displays, added to the children's Learning Journals or displayed using AppleTV. Interactive white boards are used in whole-class and group work to support learning across the curriculum.

## Health and Safety

The school follows health and safety guidelines published nationally. We also adhere to the school's policies / guidelines on COSHH risk assessment and health and safety.

We aim to develop the children's responsibility towards an awareness of Health and Safety issues through topic or seasonal activities and classroom procedures.

## Equal Opportunities

The school provides equal access to the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum for all children by providing a balance of activities and resources reflecting all children's needs and interests.

- **Gender** - All staff are aware of gender issues and seek to provide mixed or single sex groupings depending upon task. Use of non-sexist materials which promote positive role models are encouraged.
- **Race** - All staff are aware that we live in a multi-cultural society and children should be encouraged to explore contributions made by various cultures and share experiences.
- **Special Needs** - Tasks are differentiated as necessary, enabling all children to participate. All verbal and visual instructions and the use of appropriate resources are used to support learning. All resources and tasks are checked to avoid stereotypes. Additional experiences are provided for those children with specific needs.

## Curriculum

All Early Years children follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum working towards Early Learning Goals in the three prime areas of learning:- Personal, Social and Emotional Development; Physical Development; and Communication and Language; and in the four Specific areas of learning:-



Literacy; Mathematics; Understanding the World; and Expressive Arts and Design. The Early Years team plan together to create a seamless curriculum.

## Assessment and Record Keeping

Assessment is essential in order to establish each child's level of achievement and to inform future planning. Ongoing assessment is carried out on each child based on the Development Bands and on the Profile at the end of reception classes. Data is analysed termly for all cohorts. Learning Journals are set up for each child when they start at Swansfield Park Primary School, forming an ongoing record keeping document throughout their time within Early Years.

## Monitoring

A member of the governing body is nominated with special responsibility for Early Years. Together with the head teacher and Early Year's co-ordinator they carry out regular monitoring visits and a scrutiny of planning and work.

## The Role of the Early Years Co-ordinator

The co-ordinator will:

- continue policy development and the implementation of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum.
- support colleagues in the evaluation and development of planning and record keeping documentation.
- monitor progress through team meetings and lesson observations and advise of any action.
- monitor and maintain resources and be aware of any developments in Early Years education and disseminate to colleagues where appropriate.

## Staff Development

*(refer to staff development policy)*

The Early Years Co-ordinator is responsible for keeping staff informed of new initiatives and resources available.

Individual staff development can be met through appropriate INSET provided by the school, LEA or externally. Dissemination is an integral part of this. Through performance management individual training needs are highlighted.

## Home/School Partnership

We believe that education is a partnership between home and school and





that links are essential for facilitating the smooth transition from home to the school environment. They also serve to reassure parents/guardians and help to establish a trusting and friendly relationship. These links are established in a variety of ways, including:

- The offer of home visits to all new starters
- Information leaflets
- An invitation to pre-visits for parents and children
- An invitation to parents during November of their child's nursery year to an admission and school familiarisation meeting during a working day
- An invitation to a parents meeting in July of their child's nursery year to explain school routines and procedures
- The setting up of the Learning Journals enlisting parental support and involvement, allowing parents to contribute directly
- Termly feedback meetings and reports to provide summative assessment and 'next steps' information
- Inviting parents to comment in reception children's Reading Record book
- Informing parents of current issues and activities on the parent notice boards located outside each room and through half termly or termly curriculum newsletters
- Half-termly stay and play sessions in Nursery
- Inviting parents who are DBS checked to help with school activities
- Inviting parents to give feedback through the school questionnaire
- Inviting parents to attend whole school and class activities such as assemblies and Sports Day.



This policy has been formally adopted by the governing body.

VERSION HISTORY		
VERSION	DATE	DESCRIPTION
Initially adopted	September 2014	Adapted into Swansfield Park First School
Review	14 October 2015	
This Review	27 May 2016	Adapted into Swansfield Park Primary School

APPROVAL AND AUTHORISATION				
	NAME	JOB TITLE	SIGNATURE	DATE
Approved by	Jenny Smith	Headteacher		27 May 2016
Approved by	Bill Grisdale	Governor		27 May 2016

<b>DATE OF NEXT REVIEW</b>	March 2017
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