

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy

Sutton Valence Primary School



V3 - 2024

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1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That pupils access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every pupil makes good progress and no pupil gets left behind
- A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers
- Every pupil is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) that applies from September 2021](#).

3. Structure of the EYFS

Intent

At Sutton Valence Primary School our Early Years is designed to ensure all pupils have the opportunities to meet their full potential; no matter their starting points. We work in partnership with parents, carers and other professional settings from the moment pupils are offered a place at our school.

Our curriculum has been designed using the Statutory Framework for Early Years and The Development Matters as a non-statutory supporting document. Our curriculum is shaped by the four guiding principles:

- Every pupil is a unique pupil, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Pupils learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- Pupils 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. Pupils benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- Importance of learning and development. Pupils develop and learn at different rates.

Throughout our curriculum there is a big emphasis on the Prime Areas of learning; Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Communication and Language.

Our Early Years environment is enabling and welcoming to all pupils. Through child initiated learning, pupils are able to explore the indoor and outdoor environments. This encourages our pupils to explore and develop

their skills within the prime areas alongside the specific areas of learning. The pupils will have opportunities to master their social skills, learn to be independent and to increase their overall well-being. Our engaging curriculum maximises opportunities for meaningful cross-curricular links and learning experiences. By following the pupil's interests we support a lifelong love of learning.

Our intent at Sutton Valence Primary School is to ensure that by the end of Reception, all pupils will have made at least good progress from their starting points, and have secured good foundations in all areas of learning to support a successful transition into Year 1.

Implementation

In Reception, we introduce a new theme each half term to provide inspiration for learning, whilst allowing the flexibility for pupils to follow their own interests and ideas through continuous provision. At Sutton Valence Primary School we feel that pupils learn best through a balance of child-initiated and adult-directed activities and the daily timetable is structured for this to happen successfully. The timetable changes throughout the year, taking into consideration the changing needs of the pupils and by the summer term it is adapted to support pupils in getting ready for year 1.

Throughout the day, pupils will take part in adult led sessions followed by child led learning. This enables the class teacher to deliver small focused group work. This means the class teacher can systematically check for understanding, identify and respond to misconceptions quickly and provide real-time verbal feedback which results in a strong impact on the acquisition of new learning. During child led learning, pupils are provided with time to engage in 'exploration' throughout the variety of experiences carefully planned to engage and challenge them within the provision. The curriculum is planned to incorporate the inside and outside areas for a wide range of learning.

Reading and writing is integral to the learning within Early Years therefore, pupils are exposed to plenty of opportunities to mark make and read in all areas of the inside and outside environment. As the pupils progress in their learning journey, mark making becomes writing using phonics. Our aim is to encourage a love of reading right from the beginning of their school journey, so pupils have free access to a wide range of books that link to each theme. Over the pupils' time in Reception, we keep well known and favourite books in our class library for pupils to access and share independently or with each other in order to develop their oracy, vocabulary and comprehension. Through this, pupils begin to internalise new vocabulary, language patterns and begin to retell stories.

Pupils are encouraged to read at home at **least 2** times a week and are listened to regularly within school. Pupils are given books that match their phonic **knowledge following the Little Wandles reading programme**, in order for them to apply their learning with the aim of becoming successful, confident and fluent readers.

Pupils start phonics sessions from their first full week within Reception. We follow the Little Wandles systematic synthetic phonics programme (SSP) which has been DfE approved to ensure consistency across the school. On entry to Reception, the class teacher will observe the pupils' Phase 1 skills and will then implement activities to develop the pupils listening attention skills through continuous provisions. Our phonic scheme starts at phase 2 and will finish in summer term on phase 4.

In Reception, **we follow the NCETM Mastering Number curriculum**. This supports the teacher to plan high quality learning environments and meaningful interactions between adults and pupils to support development of mathematical thinking and reasoning. Pupils learn through adult led sessions using concrete manipulatives and pictorial structures and representations. Pupils are then encouraged to apply and record within their own child-led exploration. Once again the class teacher will provide small focus groups to support pupils who need more guidance. **White Rose Maths is used to supplement Mastering Number for shape, space and measure learning.**

The Wider Curriculum within Early Years is taught through the learning areas; 'Understanding of the World' and 'Expressive Arts and Design.' Staff have a good understanding of how the Early Learning Goals (ELG's) feed into the National Curriculum through our whole school progression documents and planning. In reverse, staff throughout the school, specifically subject leads are also aware of the key ELG's that link to each foundation subject and their progression.

Within Early Years, exciting, purposeful and contextual activities are planned to build on Pupils' natural curiosity. For example, building a boat for their favourite toy enables them to think like a 'Scientist' as they explore a range of materials and test out their own ideas. Building further on our oracy focus, pupils will be

encouraged to employ subject specific language and terminology in foundation subjects, and such vocabulary will be modelled, both verbally and orally, by the class teacher and teaching assistant.

Our inclusive approach means that all pupils learn together, however we support pupils through small focus groups when they are identified as needing support or further challenges. For example our groups may focus on developing speech and language, social skills, fine motor skills, phonics, and mathematics.

Impact

Prior to pupils starting Sutton Valence Primary School, the Early Years teacher, teaching assistant and SENCo spend time speaking to the pupil's parents, visiting previous settings and undertaking home visits. We ask previous settings for learning journey's and development tracking to gain an understanding of the whole pupil and where they are currently working developmentally in all areas of the Early Years Framework Stage (EYFS.) Parents are also asked to complete a Unique Story to share their background and any information they would like us to know or any questions they would like answering. During the first half term in Reception, the class teacher and teaching assistant use ongoing assessments, observations and conversations with each pupil to develop a baseline assessment to identify each individual's starting points and interests within all areas which enables the class teacher to adapt and plan for all pupils.

The RBA (Statutory Reception Baseline Assessment) is delivered by the class teacher within the first 6 weeks of the pupils starting school. This assessment focuses on 'Language, Communication and Literacy,' and 'Mathematics.' The purpose of this is to show the progress pupils make from Reception until the end of KS2.

NELI (Nuffield Early Language Intervention) is an evidence-based oral language intervention for pupils who show weakness in their oral language skills and who are therefore at risk of experiencing difficulty with reading. The assessment informs us if the pupil is at the expected level for their age or requires intervention from trained NELI practitioners. The teaching assistant will deliver this assessment within the first 6 weeks of pupils starting school. Alongside this, pupils will also take part in speech link if the class teacher identifies any speech difficulties, or if there is any known speech difficulties from previous settings. Both assessments have specific intervention programmes tailored for individual needs and will be delivered accordingly. This is monitored and re-assessments take place 6 months later **for speech link and 4 weeks later for NELI**, if little or no progress is made then the SENCO will be involved to support further.

Ongoing observations and discussions with the pupils are used to inform weekly planning and identify next steps for individual pupils. Our aim is for pupils to 'keep up' rather than 'catch up' so we use the Development Matters Non Statutory Guidance to support our judgements and assessments to identify pupils not yet meeting their full potential, however this assessment does not involve prolonged periods of time away from the pupils and excessive paper work. Each half term the class teacher will use their knowledge of the pupil and their own expert professional judgements alongside discussions with the teaching assistant, to identify focus pupils and areas in which they need extra scaffolding to meet their full potential.

Each pupil will have a file for their independent learning and pieces of work to look back on their learning journey within Reception. Alongside these, **Tapestry is used to capture photographs and videos of the children's play and exploration. Parents can also share achievements made at home.**

Through parents evenings and mid-term reports, the class teacher shares with parents whether their pupil is on track or not on track to meet the ELG's by the end of the year. Through discussion, parents are encouraged to support their pupil at home to consolidate the skills they have learnt in school in order to meet the ELG by the end of the year.

In Summer, Term 6, the EYFSP (Early Years Foundation Stage Profile) is completed by the class teacher who gives a professional judgement to whether the pupils have met each of the 17 ELG's. Pupils will be assessed as either 'emerging' or 'expected.' Whilst there is no judgement to state if a pupil is exceeding beyond an ELG, teachers, have a duty to provide a narrative for both parents and the Year 1 teacher.

Impact is also evident through our successful transitions into Year 1. EYFS staff have a good understanding of how ELG's link to the National Curriculum, and through our robust planning and delivery across the spectrum of subjects – both core and foundation - pupils leave the EYFS stage with the skills, knowledge and confidence to continue their journey into Year 1 successfully.

4. Curriculum

In Sutton Valence Primary School, we use the Development Matters guidance to support us to meet the requirements of the latest version EYFS statutory Framework that applies from September 2024.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building pupils' capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

- **Communication and language**
Listening, Attention and Understanding
Speaking
- **Personal, social and emotional development**
Self-Regulation
Managing Self
Building Relationships
- **Physical development**
Gross Motor Skills
Fine Motor Skills

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

- **Literacy**
Comprehension
Word Reading
Writing
- **Mathematics**
Number
Numerical Patterns
- **Understanding the world**
Past and Present
People, Culture and Communities
The Natural World
- **Expressive arts and design**
Creating with Materials
Being Imaginative and Expressive

We ensure that our environment and delivery of the EYFS curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning.

- **Playing and Exploring** - Pupils investigate and experience things, and 'have a go.'

Through play, the pupils explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practice and build up ideas, learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other pupils as well as independently. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

- **Active Learning** – pupils concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements.

Active learning occurs when pupils are motivated and interested. Pupils need some independence and control over their learning. As pupils develop their confidence, they learn to make decisions. It provides pupils with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

- **Creating and Thinking Critically** – pupils have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Pupils should be given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning. Adults can support pupils' thinking and help them make connections by showing interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open ended questions. Pupils can access resources and move around the classroom freely and purposefully to extend their learning.

4.1 Planning

The Early Learning Goals provide a summary of the knowledge, skills and understanding that all young pupils should have gained by the end of reception year. Our Long Term Plan clearly sets out the expectations for the end of Reception and an overview on how this is spread across the school year.

The planning objectives used to build our curriculum within the Foundation Stage are taken from the Development Matters. The class teacher uses national schemes of work, where appropriate, to support their planning for individual pupils. Planning is based upon termly themes with discrete phonics, maths and reading directed teaching. However, planning, which is based upon a different topic which is identified as vehicle of interest to deliver the pupils' next steps in learning, also therefore responds to the needs, achievement and interest of all pupils. Where a pupil may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

Our medium-term planning identifies the intended learning each term in all areas linked to the seven areas of learning and development. Weekly planning for **Phonics** and Maths sets out specific skills needed to be taught in order to meet the Early Learning Goals (ELG) by the end of Reception. Continuous Provision planning is ongoing each week so it can be adapted to the interests and needs of all pupils.

4.2 Teaching

The Foundation Stage classroom is organised to allow pupils to explore and learn securely and safely. Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each pupil's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

There are specific areas where the pupils can be active, be quiet, creative etc. Pupils have access to both inside and outside areas across the day; this has a positive effect on the pupils' development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and in different scales than when indoors. The pupils can explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. All areas of the curriculum can be explored outside.

In the final summer term the balance shifts towards more adult-led activities to support and prepare pupils for a more formal learning approach, ready for year 1.

5. Assessment

At Sutton Valence Primary School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff **interact with and** observe pupils during child-led learning to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These **interactions** are used to shape future planning. Further information regarding assessment through feedback and marking can be found in the Feedback and Marking policy on the school website.

Pupil's level of development is recorded using the Development Matters age-bands. During the first few weeks, the teacher assesses the ability of each pupil using a baseline assessment. These assessments allow

us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual pupils and groups of pupils.

Pupils are assessed termly against the 17 areas of learning by the class teacher and will decide; on a best fit judgement, whether the pupil is on track or not on track to meet the Early Learning Goals by the end of the year. The Development Matters non-statutory document is used to support these judgements. The information from the termly data supports the class teacher when planning adult-led activities to ensure pupils not on track have the best opportunities to catch up.

Tracking grids are updated at the end of each long term to provide a summary sheet for the class which feeds into the assessment and tracking process.

We also use tracking grids to see the progress of phonics development after each term. This gives a clear overall picture of the pupils who need support to secure specific letters, sounds or develop their blending skills.

Within the first 6 weeks that a pupil **starts reception**, the class teacher will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

At the **end of the EYFS**, the class teacher will complete the EYFS profile for each pupil. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their pupil.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters [guidance](#)) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

6. Working with parents

We recognise that pupils learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their pupil's progress and development through parent evenings, mid-term and end of year reports. The EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their pupil's knowledge, understanding and abilities at the end of Reception. The teacher will also make comments on each pupil relating to the Characteristics of Effective Learning.

The class teacher is the key person for all pupils in the class. The class teacher will support parents and/or carers in guiding their pupil's development at home by sharing termly newsletters with home learning tasks, updating the class webpage with what is currently being taught within the classroom, alongside websites and useful information.

The key person/class teacher also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

Parents are guided to support their child at home through workshops and observing adult led sessions for phonics and maths. In addition, parents are invited to attend 'stay and play' throughout the year. Tapestry is used to share 'WOW' moments and key learning with parents.

7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by expanding the Early Learning Goal: Personal, Social and Emotion Development: Managing Self. This is planned into the curriculum over several terms so that it can be revisited and built upon.

Pupils explore how to stay healthy by:

- Learning about healthy food and drink – and how much fruit, vegetables and water should be consumed each day.
- Keeping clean, hand washing, shower/bath, brushing our teeth.

- Exercise – we also take part in Balance Education And Movement (BEAM) programme alongside P.E lessons.
- Bike safety – all pupils will take part in a week of Bike ability in the summer term.

We identify who keeps us safe and explore the professionals around us, such as police, doctors and teachers. We explore how they help us and keep us safe. We look at road safety, sun and water safety and learn basic skills in order to keep ourselves safe.

We explore the effects on our bodies if we do not keep ourselves safe and healthy.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our Child Protection policy.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Headteacher and The Governors every 3 years.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See Child Protection policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See Supporting Children with Medical Conditions policy and Health and Safety policy
Administering medicines policy	See Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See Emergency Evacuation procedure
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See Child Protection policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See Child Protection policy and Collections policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See Complaints policy