



Early Years Policy

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Signed by Head Teacher:

Signed by Chair of Governors:

Date:

This policy should be read alongside the following other school documents:

- *Teaching and learning Policy*
- *Mathematics Guidelines*
- *English Guidelines*
- *Assessment policy*
- *Medium and short term planning*
- *SEND policy*

Introduction

The period from birth to five is one of rapid growth and development (DES)

Early childhood education provides the essential foundation for all future learning. We, therefore, need to provide a socially and emotionally secure environment, with a less formal atmosphere, in which children are able to learn successfully and play purposefully. We need to provide an environment in which they are able to develop their language and mathematical skills and to explore and experiment.

Children learn when:

- They feel secure, valued and confident
- They find learning to be a pleasurable and rewarding experience
- They are supported in school and at home
- They are interested and positive
- Their physical, intellectual, social and emotional abilities are taken into account
- They are encouraged to think about their learning and to develop independence
- They are provided with first-hand experience and appropriate adult intervention
- They are encouraged to use play and talk as media for learning
- Their progress is assessed and recorded and used to inform future planning

Aims

We aim to provide a curriculum that should underpin all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children.

Studley Green is a place where everyone is treated equally, encouraged and respected. We believe that all children should be able to achieve their full potential academically, socially and emotionally. We are committed to our school being a safe and inclusive place where learning is nurtured and encouraged in a happy, caring and fun environment. We all work for our school to be a happy place where good behaviour is expected and all children enjoy their educational journey.

At Studley Green our aim is to maintain a happy atmosphere with co-operation between staff, parents and children, whilst at the same time maintaining good order, a working atmosphere and attitudes of courtesy and respect.

Our aims are to provide a secure, stimulating and positive learning environment where children can:

- Develop intellectually, socially and emotionally
- Develop curiosity in the world around them
- Develop a good moral judgement
- Develop good communication skills
- Become independent learners and creative thinkers
- Become happy and confident learners, with high self-esteem

In the Early Years our aims are to achieve these objectives by:

- Ensuring that each child is equally valued and reaches their full potential
- Providing a safe, stimulating environment, both indoors and outdoors
- Planning for and delivering a broad, balanced curriculum
- Recognising and recording individual children's progress and achievements
- Establishing a positive, on-going partnership with parents and families, acknowledging the vital role they play in their child's education

Equal Opportunities

We aim to create a climate of general awareness of racial, cultural, social and religious differences within the school. Provision is made to ensure that all children, regardless of race, culture or special need have equal access to the curriculum. This will include actively promoting access to areas that can become gender biased . We aim to deal with intolerance by creating positive attitudes where negative ones exist.

Children for whom English is an additional language (EAL) will be supported within the context of the normal classroom activities. Strategies for support include pairing them with other children, providing appropriate language games and activities. Young children generally acquire additional languages with ease; however, if a child is experiencing particular difficulties, specific strategies will be developed in consultation with the SEN department.

Early identification of special needs can minimise difficulties in later schooling. In the Foundation Stage teachers will closely monitor the progress of children with special needs and work with the SENCO to devise a suitable Action Plan in order to support him.

Starting School

We have an excellent relationship with Green Shoots nursery where a majority of our children start their education. The EYFS coordinator works with staff throughout the year supporting them in developing the curriculum. For additional settings the EFYS teachers contact the preschools in Term 5 and arrange visits and set up relationships with preschool staff to make a successful transition. All children are invited in for "taster sessions" to meet with their new Class Teacher, Teaching Assistants and other members of the Class in Term 6. There is also an informal meeting for all new Early Years' Parents, where they are provided with any relevant information concerning the curriculum, the school day, uniform and so on.

Most children are happy to be starting School but we advise that a parent is available for the first few days, particularly for drop-off and pick-up, until the child is content and settled.

Curriculum

The EYFS framework sets the standards to make sure that children aged from birth to 5 learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. In Studley Green we use the Development Matters which is the non-statutory curriculum guidance for the new EYFS framework to support our curriculum. It is a distinct stage and important both in its own right and in preparing children for later schooling. The Early Learning Goals set out what is expected for most children by the end of the foundation stage.

The 7 areas of learning and development are as follows.

The 3 prime areas:

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social and emotional development

The 4 specific areas:

- literacy
- maths
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design

For the Prime and Specific areas, at the end of the Foundation Stage, we assess whether the child is 'on track' or 'not on track' for the ELGs (Early Learning Goals). We will also comment on three types of learning characteristics. A copy will be given to Parents and also to Year 1 staff (see Transition).

Planning

The Foundation Stage employs a thematic approach to learning and, while discrete subject areas are planned, especially Literacy and Mathematics, children are offered relevant, holistic experiences using a variety of approaches, helping them to transfer and extend their understanding.

Each term the areas of learning are organised into termly cross-curricular questions. Teachers use these as a basis for medium and short-term planning. We also take into account the children's interests and make sure these are implemented within the child initiated play.

A flipchart is used to highlight areas of development and interests. This then supports the child enhanced activities which are planned weekly.

The Learning Environment

The Early Years' Classrooms and the outdoor areas are the children's learning environments and should therefore be designed to maximise learning opportunities and reflect children's needs.

Our aim is to provide a positive, stimulating, safe and well-planned environment.

The learning environments look attractive and welcoming to all; they include:

- A book corner
- A mark making area
- A maths area
- A construction area (large/small)
- A small world area
- A carpet area
- An imaginative role play area
- An make and do area
- An investigative area
- Technology Provision
- Display areas
- Sand and Water areas
- Areas in which gross motor skills are developed

Behaviour

At Studley Green our aim is to maintain a happy atmosphere with co-operation between staff, parents and children, whilst at the same time maintaining good order, a working atmosphere and attitudes of courtesy and respect.

Four and five year olds are still learning how to work with and get along with each other, and are finding out what's acceptable and what's not. This is the type of learning which is best shared by parents and school working together. We are tolerant and patient when helping the children get on with each other.

Discipline operates in the first instance through reward and praise, promoting the child's confidence, self-esteem and positive behaviour. Discipline lies in the hands of the EYFS staff and they will deal with problems on the spot. minor matters will normally be dealt with by a reminder of expected behaviour. If we start to notice a repeated pattern of unacceptable behaviour the child's behaviour will be monitored and a behaviour plan will be put in place. We would always discuss this with the parents/Carers.

In cases of persistent and extreme behaviour/incidents teaching staff will record the event and consultation with the SENCO or SLT and parents will take place to discuss next steps and support needed.

We have a positive behaviour board in the classroom which fits in with the whole school behaviour policy.

Assessment and Record Keeping

A baseline assessment is completed during the first term 1 and a similar assessment occurs at the end of each term 2, 4 and 6. The children's progress is tracked in all 17 areas and is used as a means of tracking progress across all the different areas of learning.

Children's progress is monitored and recorded on a daily basis through observation and by gathering evidence in all areas of learning.

Home-School Links

We recognise the importance of parents as their child's first educator and as active partners in their child's continuing education. Regular communication is encouraged and parents are invited to discuss their child's progress with Early Years staff at any time (appointments can be made to discuss issues or concerns in more detail).

The use of Seesaw enables parents to receive photos and videos of their child's learning. Parents have the opportunity to comment and send in learning from home. This tool is also used to highlight areas of development and assist parents at home.

Workshops are also held during the year to inform and support parents, so that they are more able to assist their child's effectively. We focus these sessions on phonics & reading. We also share ideas and activities via Seesaw linked to all areas of the curriculum. Parents are encouraged to come into school to share in our activity days. They are encouraged to support with reading and are invited to our celebration assemblies every Friday.

We send home termly newsletters as well as a topic plan which is available on our website.

Reporting to Parents

As parents are a child's first educator, this will help ensure the best outcomes for the children. The first step of this partnership is a home visit for each family in the first weeks of school. We believe that this enables parents and children to meet members of the Foundation Stage in the place where they feel most at ease, at home.

Foundation Stage staff feed-back on a daily basis to Parents, to discuss pastoral issues and also learning experiences. Staff compile a "Learning Journey" book for each child, which is given to the family at the end of the year. Parents are encouraged to contribute to their child's learning journey by sending emails sharing their learning and experiences at home. Parents are also able to view their child's Learning Journey at any time at drop off or pick up

A Report is completed by the Foundation Stage teachers, which is given to Parents at the end of Term 6.

Transition

Foundation Stage children are given the opportunity to meet their new teacher and to visit their new classroom before the start of the new academic year.

Early Years' and the Year 1 teachers meet, formally and informally, in order to pass on information regarding children, and ensure curricular continuity by regularly sharing expectations and work covered.

The Foundation Stage teachers maintain close links with KS1, thereby smoothing the transition from Reception into Year 1, as well as from Nursery/Pre-School into Reception.

A copy of the end of term report is handed on to the child's next teacher, as is a summary of the Foundation Stage Profile (which shows target areas for completion before KS1 Curriculum Learning Objectives can be applied).

Health and Safety

There is a number of Health and Safety issues specific to the Early Years Unit, for all other issues, please see the Health and Safety Policy.

- Children are to be brought into school and collected by a known adult. In the event that the child's parents are unable to collect their child, a note must be sent into the Class Teacher or a verbal message.
- On educational visits, the minimum adult: child ratio is 1:5
- Resources and equipment are regularly checked and maintained for safety.

- When playing outside in the summer, care is taken with regards to sun exposure. Parents are asked to support us by providing sunscreen and hats as required.

Staff are directed that plastic gloves are to be worn when handling bodily waste (blood, urine, faeces) and gloves and other soiled items must be disposed of in a sealed plastic bag. Parents are informed of any first aid or other assistance administered to their child. There is a member of staff who is trained in Paediatric First Aid.

Links with Local Preschools and Nurseries

By visiting a selection of local nurseries over the last few years, we have established good links with Greenshoots Early Years' Staff also attend Early Years cluster groups within the Trowbridge area.