



EYFS policy

September 2015



INTRODUCTION

“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.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all early years’ providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children’s ‘school readiness’ and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.” (EYFS 2012)

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**;
- children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers; and
- **children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates**. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

Aims of Early Education at Sidney Stringer Primary Academy

- To build children’s repertoire of spoken and written language so that they can become confident and effective communicators.
- To provide a stimulating and inspiring environment which supports developing children’s natural curiosity and their sense of awe and wonder of the world we live in.
- To provide memorable learning experiences through the Sports and arts that provide ‘hooks’ for further learning or an opportunity to apply previous learning, thus supporting a love for learning.
- To build relationships with both children and parents through information evenings, workshops and events.
- To model and support children to develop excellent social skills when interacting with people from a range of ages.
- To build on children’s existing thinking skills, leadership and character development to enable them to become skilled for life.
- To develop each child’s physical skill, particularly in body awareness and hand-eye coordination, so that they have increased control and strength over their body movements.
- To develop each child’s spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness so that they can begin to make individual judgements and develop their own opinion.
- To enable children to have the best in modern technology and to explore how they can improve it.
- To build on each child’s existing problem solving skills and knowledge of number, shape, space and measure.



A UNIQUE CHILD - at Sidney Stringer Primary Academy we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration/ sharing circle times and reward stickers, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

INCLUSION

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children in the Foundation Stage are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school. In all we believe that our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

It is important to us that all children in the Foundation Stage are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children.

ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

For children whose home language is not English, we will take reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning, supporting their language development at home. We will also ensure that children have sufficient opportunities to learn and reach



a good standard in English language during the EYFS, ensuring children are ready to benefit from the opportunities available to them when they begin Year 1.

WELFARE

“Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.”

At Sidney Stringer Primary Academy we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2012. We understand that we are required to:

- Promote the welfare of children.
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children’s stage of development and individual needs.
- Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS- at Sidney Stringer Primary Academy we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

PARENTS AS PARTNERS

We recognise that parents are children’s first and most enduring educators and we highly value the contribution that parents make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts at our school;
- The children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher prior to starting at our school during our “Induction Sessions”.
- At the start of the year we hold a curriculum evening to welcome all the parents with children in the Foundation stage into our school community.
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child’s progress and allowing free access to their children’s “Learning Journey” record books.
- Weekly informative newsletters which are sent home and also displayed in school
- Parents fill in WOW slips if their child has achieved something at home, this is shared with the class and lots of praise given. It is then put into the child’s learning journey.
- Encouraging parents to talk to their child’s teachers about any concerns they may have.



- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents. For example, class assemblies, open mornings, etc.
- Providing space in the child's "Learning Journey" for parents to leave comments relating to the children's achievements.
- There are two formal meetings per year (Autumn and Spring term) at which time the Class Teacher and parent discuss the child's progress and development.
- We send out a Transition feedback sheet at the end of the first half term to monitor parent's views. This is analysed and then any necessary adjustments to transition are implemented.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them.

We have good links with local nurseries. Frequent visits are undertaken by reception class teachers to meet with the children prior to them starting at their new schools. These visits provide the opportunity to discuss individual needs and to meet the children within the nursery environment.

ENABLING ENVIRONMENTS- At Sidney Stringer Primary Academy we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

OBSERVATION, ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING

The planning within the EYFS is based around the individual children's needs and interests as well as following a structured curriculum plan. We plan regularly together to ensure we met the children's varying needs and to meet the characteristics of effective learning.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. These observations are recorded in children's individual 'Learning Journey' booklets and additional work is filed in the children's learning folders. They also contain information provided by parents and other settings etc.

THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The EYFS learning environment is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The environment is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The school has an outdoor classroom. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children the opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all 7 areas of learning.



LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT- at Sidney Stringer Primary Academy we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are inter connected.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. Features that relate to the EYFS are:

- the partnership between staff and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that staff have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;
- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS;
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents;

Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- **playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’;
- **active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements; and
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Play - “Children’s play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children’s development.”

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practice and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Active Learning - “Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.”



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

Creativity and Critical Thinking - “When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things.

Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.”

Children should be given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children’s thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the setting to extend their learning.

AREAS OF LEARNING

The EYFS is made of up 3 prime areas of learning:

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

and 3 specific areas

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive art and design

At Sidney Stringer Primary Academy we ensure that we meet all the areas of learning including:

- **Communication and language** development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.
- **Physical development** involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.
- **Personal, social and emotional development** involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.
- **Literacy development** involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.



- **Mathematics** involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.
- **Understanding the World** involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.
- **Expressive Arts and Design** involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

Transition from Pre -school to Reception

Our aim is to establish a smooth and successful transition to school.

This is facilitated by:

- Visits to feeder pre-school establishments.
- Story/Play sessions that are held in school in the summer for all children prior to starting in September.
- Extra play sessions and visits targeted at children identified as having a need for extra support.
- Liaison with outside agencies.
- Parents attend induction meetings, complete an 'all about me' booklet (to share information about their child with the Reception Team), and are invited to taster sessions and an open evening.
- A staggered start to school over a week to facilitate a smooth transition and provide children with a secure enjoyable experience.

Transition from Reception to Year 1

We aim to continue the children's learning journey with continuity, stability and security. This will ensure the children are ready for the curriculum changes of year 1 and continue to be excited and motivated to learn. This is facilitated by:

- Class teacher and Teaching Assistant liaising closely and sharing EYFS assessment records with the Year 1 teacher through transition meetings.
- A parents information evening preparing them for the changes in expectation from Reception to Year 1.
- The class will have a transition day with their new teacher in their new classroom and have two play visits to the year 1 classroom.