

## **Silverstone CE Primary School**

### **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

#### **Introduction**

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. Our Early Years Foundation Stage accommodates children from the age of 4 to 5 years. In our school we have the capacity for two full-time reception classes. Each class has 30 available places and children who have turned four by the 1<sup>st</sup> September of that school year could be offered a full time place in one of our two reception classes. Each reception class has a full time teacher and a full-time teaching assistant. To ensure best practice and continuity our foundation stage classes work closely together and share planning, activities and an outdoor learning environment.

#### **Aims**

At Silverstone CE Primary School we aim to give each child a positive and meaningful start to their school life, in which they can establish solid foundations on which to develop into independent and fearless lifelong learners.

We will encourage children to develop independence within a secure and friendly atmosphere; to support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing; to help each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and by developing the confidence to work towards personal goals.

Our high expectations will enable each child to develop socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally and to achieve their full potential. We will offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited availability for development through a wide range of new and exciting first-hand experiences that will give children the opportunity to consolidate, explore and test their skills, knowledge and understanding alongside existing experiences. We will ensure that children are kept healthy and safe and that they achieve the knowledge and skills they need to start school.

#### **The Curriculum**

The Nursery and Reception follow the curriculum as outlined in the 2014 Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) document, which is available on the school. This clearly defines what we teach. The following policy details the specifics of our setting.

#### **The EYFS is based upon four principles:**

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

## **A Unique Child**

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 assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

## **Positive relationships**

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships and aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families.

## **Enabling environments**

We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Through observations we assess the children's interests and stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging and achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning.

## **Learning and development**

Our foundation stage has, two reception classrooms and a large outdoor classroom, which is shared. All our learning environments are 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 seven areas of learning are defined so that children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

## **Areas of Learning**

The EYFS is made up of **three prime** area of learning:

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

There are **four specific areas** of learning:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

At Silverstone CE Primary School all the areas are delivered through a well-planned play based approach, with a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. Throughout the foundation stage we plan and continually enhance our provision so that it is an interesting, intriguing and evolving place for children to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in every area at the appropriate developmental level. We use in the moment planning to capture children's individual needs and interests. This gives us the

opportunity to extend their interest, by asking open-ended questions and considering ways to apply this interest to other options within the environment.

Children have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own. They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experiences at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests, inspire those around them and consolidate their understanding and skills. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. Our adults take an active role in child initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating, teaching and extending play, skills and language.

### Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning and the nursery and reception teachers plan activities with these in mind. The characteristics highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them. The three characteristics 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
- **Creating and Thinking Critically** – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

### Inclusion

Our whole school ethos, as well as that of the foundation stage, embraces inclusion. We recognise and respect the abilities and strengths of our children at all levels of development and the wealth of knowledge and experience that they bring from their differing backgrounds and cultures.

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 and we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of individual children, so that children are able to reach their full potential. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds. We aim to 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.

We will provide: a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively; a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued; resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping; challenging activities for all children and for those whose ability and understanding are advanced. We will monitor children's progress and take action to provide support as necessary. Where a specific need is suspected we will liaise with the Special Educational Needs co-ordinator and seek advice from outside agencies, such as the speech and language service and the educational psychologist. We adhere to the Equal Opportunity and Inclusion policies of the school.

## Early Years Pupil Premium

We will endeavour to inform parents about Pupil Premium Funding and identify those who may be eligible for pupil premium support. All extra funding we receive will be used to support areas in which we identify that the child will best benefit. We will track children's progress to ensure that they are making good progress and to ensure that support is adjusted to target specific areas as the child develops.

## Assessment

Throughout the Foundation Stage children's knowledge, understanding, skills and achievements are assessed and tracked using the developmental stages set out in the document 'Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)'.

Our assessment depends on us getting to know our children very well and to this end we gather information from a range of sources; observations of the children in play, in adult led activities, through discussions with parents and carers and through talking to the children. In Reception we use Tapestry to create a digital learning journal that records each child's individual strengths and achievements and to help us to plan for children's next steps in learning.

At the start of Reception children are assessed to determine a baseline, or starting point, for their future learning. Judgements will be based on the adults' observations of children during activities and play. There will not be any form of testing and parent's/carers' views on their child as a learner will be taken into account. Parents/carers will be given information of these starting points and information about next steps at the Parents Evening in the Autumn Term.

The Foundation Stage Profile, the end of year assessment of children's achievements in all areas of learning, is a statutory report. Observational evidence and samples of children's work throughout the school year will be used to assess children as 'emerging', 'expected' or 'exceeding' based on their understanding and achievement of the Early Learning Goals set out in the EYFS curriculum. Parents/carers will be given information of their child's achievements in a written report at the end of the Summer term. This is also used as a basis for discussion on entry to Key Stage 1.

## Transitions

At Silverstone Primary we recognise that starting school and moving up classes has the potential to be a stressful time for both children and parents. To this end we have established a strong procedure for transitions to ensure that our children and parents are as confident and secure as they can be when facing the challenges of each year group.

Our induction into Reception starts in the summer term before the children start school with a new parents evening aimed to provide parents with key information, school expectations, knowledge on our curriculum and assessment and advice on how they can help their child. All parents are offered a home visit prior to their child starting school and a 'Stay and Play' session is also provided for all children to come into school to experience their new learning environment. We endeavour to visit children who attend local nurseries or pre-schools in their settings prior to the summer holidays.

Where Tapestry is being used we transfer each child's learning journey and this is used as part of Baseline Assessments.

As part of the transition to Key Stage 1 a gradual change occurs in the Spring Term with more whole class carpet sessions, more adult led group.

Children in Reception make use of the whole school facilities, such as the hall, library, playground and MUGA for appropriate activities to ensure that children are confident and well prepared for moving around the school and for mixing with older children. Throughout the reception year, when children are ready they are gradually introduced to whole school activities such as assemblies and to using the infant playground. As we move to the Summer Term the daily timetable starts to include more of the structure of the Key Stage 1 day with whole class inputs in mathematics and writing and an expectation for children to complete more formal learning challenges.

At the end of Reception children have the opportunity to meet with their new teachers in their classrooms prior to starting Year one. At the end of each school year teachers have the opportunity to share their knowledge of each child's knowledge, understanding and achievements, including end of year assessment data, with their next class teacher to ensure that all teachers have a well-rounded picture of the children prior to the new school year.

### **Partnership with Parents**

We believe that parents and carers are a child's first educator and therefore work very closely to ensure they are involved in what their child does at school. We want parents to feel they can speak to us about their child and to feel comfortable in our setting. As well as the Stay and Play sessions we offer a social coffee session to our parents to give them the opportunity to share their child's learning environment, have time to talk informally with the staff and to meet other parents. In the second half of the Autumn Term parents are invited to attend our whole school 'Well Done' assembly to share the achievements and successes of the children in the school. We also offer parents learning workshops to provide advice and information on how they can support their child's learning. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to share information about their child, to ask questions and to discuss their child's learning with the teachers.

We believe that all parents have an important role to play in the education of their child. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We encourage parents to share experiences and achievements on Tapestry This information helps to build a well-rounded picture of the child in for everyone.

Formal parents meeting are offered in the Autumn Term and the Spring Term, where parents have the opportunity of speaking with the teachers to discuss their child's progress and development, their next steps in learning .Parents are always welcomed to discuss their children informally.

### **Health & safety and safeguarding**

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. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance (2014) and we adhere to the school's safeguarding policy.

We are a healthy school and our children under 5 receive free milk and all children have access to fresh water and free fruit from a Government scheme. All children who stay for lunch are eligible for free school meals or can choose to bring in a healthy packed lunch.

Each foundation stage classroom has access to their own toileting facilities and we teach the children the importance of hygiene, hand washing techniques and throughout the year we plan cooking activities to give children experiences of a range of healthy food.

See Appendix 1

## **Appendix 1**

### **Parents' Information Sheet - Home Visits**

#### **What is a home visit?**

As the name suggests a home visit is an informal visit to your home by school staff. It is usually carried out when your child has been offered a place at the setting but before they actually start.

#### **Why do home visits?**

Home visits are a really good way for staff to begin to get to know both you and your child and vice versa. It is a great opportunity to spend some time in a relaxed atmosphere, exchanging information and planning your child's start at the setting. You will also have the chance to ask questions and express any concerns you may have. It is not an inspection of you or your home! You are under no obligation to accept a home visit and a meeting can be arranged at the setting if you prefer. All information is considered confidential and will not be shared without your permission.

#### **Who will do the home visit?**

This is usually a teacher and a learning support assistant.

#### **How long will it take?**

The length of the visit is fifteen minutes.

#### **What will happen at the home visit?**

We know that children like to be busy and active! One member of staff will usually get to know your child by playing with them and showing them books or photos of the setting. Your child may also like to share some of their favourite toys or activities. The other member of staff will then have the opportunity to talk with you and any questions or concerns can be answered and discussed.