



# EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

Approved by:	Standards Committee	Date: 15/11/23
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'Equal opportunities lie at the heart of all that we do at Silverwood School. We are committed to ensuring that every member of the school community is given the same chance as any other to access the services and support of the school'.

This policy is designed to meet the needs of all pupils, working through pre-formal, semi-formal and formal curricula. It is inclusive of students who function at early/preverbal levels of language and communication, through to those who express themselves verbally and in writing. The policy is designed to be child-centred and to make sure as far as is possible that pupils understand what is happening in their lives, why, and what options are available to them.

### **Aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum**

1. To provide quality learning experiences for all the children. Learning will be through practical and play activities, which are structured, balanced, relevant to the child and related to the real world.
2. To provide a curriculum which takes account of, and responds to, the children's developmental needs and allows them to make progress related to their differing abilities. "What the child can do" will be our starting point.
3. To ensure the children have positive experiences of success at their own levels in order to give them confidence and motivation for learning in the future.
4. To support pupils to achieve the following outcomes staying safe, being healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic well-being.
5. To provide a curriculum which promotes the 'Early Learning Goals' identified by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority *in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile*, and which dovetails with the National Curriculum.
6. To provide a curriculum based on four key principles identified in the EYFS
  - A Unique Child
  - Positive Relationships
  - Enabling Environments
  - Learning and Development
7. To provide a curriculum which provides equal learning and development opportunities for all the children.
8. Create a partnership with parents to support and enhance the development of the children.

### **The Curriculum**

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (**EYFS**) classes at Silverwood School we aim to provide a broad, balanced, differentiated curriculum which addresses the children's social, emotional, physical, intellectual, moral, and cultural development within a safe, secure, stimulating environment. Our curriculum enables the child to learn and develop skills, attitudes and understanding in these areas of learning:

The prime areas being:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development (**PSED**)
- Communication and Language (**CL**)
- Physical Development (**PD**)

The specific areas are:

- Mathematics
- Literacy
- Understanding the World

- Expressive Art and Design

Throughout the EYFS we plan activities to give children learning experiences and opportunities to work towards the Early Learning Goals and prepare them for the National Curriculum where appropriate.

Teaching and learning will take place within the classroom and outside areas. Within these areas children will participate in a variety of activities, both with an adult and independently.

### Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also include the characteristics of Effective Learning. In the EYFS, teachers plan activities with these in mind. They highlight the importance of a child's attitude towards their learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them.

The three characteristics are:

- Playing and Exploring
- Active Learning
- Creating and Thinking Critically

### Communication

Communication and Language is a prime area of the Early Years curriculum and is fundamental to children's development. It is the foundation of relationships and is essential for learning, play and social interaction. We understand children need to be able to understand and be understood. A Total Communication approach is used to support children with a range of communication needs, for example being non-verbal, in liaison with Speech and Language Therapists and Specialist Communication Practitioners.

### Transition into School

EYFS pupils transition into Silverwood School from a range of settings including pre-schools, specialist settings and from home. Transition into school begins during term 5 of the previous academic year. A Transition Into School Meeting (TISM) is held for all pupils to understand the needs of each child before they start school, and to share information. Where possible staff visit existing settings and the child's home. Resources such as transition books are shared and individual timetables are created to support the move to school. Stay and Play visits and a phased induction are offered to all pupils and families.

### Play policy

We believe that play, both indoors and outdoors, is the fundamental way in which young children learn. Play can be enjoyed and challenging. When playing, children behave in different ways.

Sometimes, their play will be boisterous, sometimes they will describe and discuss what they are doing, and sometimes they will be quiet and reflective as they play. Through play, children will be developing skills across all the Prime and Specific areas of learning, working towards achieving the Early Learning Goals.

In a secure environment with effective adult support, children will be able to:

- Explore, develop, and represent learning experiences that help them make sense of the world
- Practise and build up concepts, ideas, and skills
- Learn how to control impulses and understand the need for rules
- Be alone, be alongside others or co-operate as they talk to rehearse their feelings
- Take risks and make mistakes
- Think creatively and imaginatively
- Communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems

- Express fears to relieve anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations

Adults in the setting will support play by:

- Planning and resourcing a stimulating environment
- Supporting children's learning through planned play
- Extending and supporting children's spontaneous play
- Extending and developing children's language and communication in their play.
- Listening to all forms of children's communication and their ideas and taking these into account when developing play and planning.
- Narrating children's play.
- Asking questions about children's play.

### **Planning, recording and assessment**

Topics are planned so that children will experience activities within each topic as they progress through the EYFS and Infant Classes. Topics may be altered to take into account children's interests. The long-term planning identifies each of the Prime and Specific Areas of Development as identified in the Early Years Outcomes for each term. This ensures that all curriculum areas are covered whenever a topic or activity is planned. Adult focused and independent activities are planned on a weekly basis. Children have the opportunity to work in each of the learning areas within the classroom and outdoors. Whole class, group and individual activities are used to develop skills in all areas of the curriculum, as appropriate.

Pupils are assessed using the Silverwood Early Years Assessment Profile (SEYAP) in the Reception Year and this continues within Year 1.

The Foundation Stage Profile is completed at the end of the Reception year. Staff completing the profile will attend annual moderation meetings.

Assessment is carried out through a mixture of informal observation, interaction with the child, the use of the information on record sheets and regular discussions with all staff. We observe the children working independently both indoors and outdoors. Records of such observations form the child's Learning Journey.

Children's development and progress is tracked through observations of embedded learning. This is generally seen through child-initiated activities during active learning sessions. Assessment against the development stages are carried out at key points during the year. These are updated on a regular basis to monitor progress and inform planning. Samples of the children's work are kept. Every child has a learning journey on Evidence For Learning which contains examples of their achievements and work throughout the year.

Information gained through recording and assessment will be shared with parents, other school staff and outside agencies as appropriate. Parents consultation evenings are held as an opportunity for parents to discuss their child's progress. Parents can contact the staff at any time; all children have a school link book to keep in regular contact.

### **Progression**

There are clear expectations for progression. Lower School Children working within the later phases of the Early Years Outcomes will work for longer periods on more formal adult led activities. They work in larger groups than the children working within the earlier phase of the Early Years Outcomes. The children working in the later stages are expected to play and learn with less adult support than that of the children working at the earlier stages. All pupils' individual abilities are taken into consideration and they are offered activities that are at an appropriate level to meet their developmental needs. Therefore, some younger

pupils are provided with similar or the same activities as some older pupils to meet their needs and vice versa.

## **Equal Opportunities**

### **Aims**

- To ensure that no child is excluded or disadvantaged because of ethnicity, religion, culture, family background, disability, gender, home language, special educational needs or ability.
- To ensure that all the children feel secure, included and valued.
- To establish feelings of respect and trust with all children and their parents or carers.
- To treat each child as an individual and provide equality of opportunity
- To encourage self-confidence and a positive approach to learning in all children.

During transition into school activities, we will talk to the child and the parents about key events and experiences at home. These may activities linked with religious and cultural heritage. Staff will use this information when planning and carrying out activities within the Foundation Stage to ensure that familiar experiences are used as starting points for learning.

When planning, setting up and altering the rooms, outdoor areas, displays and equipment, the staff will aim to create an environment that encourages a positive attitude to learning. This will include:

- Keeping the environment free from any discriminatory practice or stereotypical images
- Valuing the local community and environment as a source of learning opportunities
- Using displays, resources and equipment that reflect the community in which the children live as well as the wider world.
- The curriculum will include activities to encourage children to respect their own cultural background and beliefs and those of other people. These will include:
  - Activities relating to a wide range of religious, ethnic, and cultural festivals
  - Telling stories, listening to music, and looking at pictures and videos from a range of cultures and religions

### **Role play activities that reflect a variety of cultures**

Discussions with and between the children about the similarities and differences in their experiences and the reasons for those similarities and differences.

We will ensure that all children are given support to participate in activities, experiences, visits and discussions and to ensure that all children are listened to carefully and with respect.

We will carefully consider the need for equality of opportunity when planning activities and experiences. When necessary, we will modify activities or provide additional equipment or materials to ensure children are not excluded.