



# Policy for Early Years

Approved by	
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Review date	

Signed..... Role.....

Ownership: Improvement committee

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(Ownership: Curriculum Committee)

At Stockbridge our philosophy for the Early Years can be encapsulated by the phrase Preparation and Progression. In planning for the children in our reception class we seek to prepare them to be lifelong learners by providing the right experiences, developing correct attitudes and establishing codes of conduct. Similarly we work to achieve progression through having high expectations, challenging each child individually; monitoring and recording progress regularly. The Early Years Policy sets out to offer a safe and secure environment that will encourage the child to take the fullest advantage of a wide range of presented opportunities and experiences through an extensive and sensitively introduced curriculum.

## **Aims**

- to support and extend knowledge, skills, understanding and confidence,
- to ensure that all children feel included, secure and valued,
- to build on what children already know and can do
- to encourage a positive attitude and disposition to learn and to aim to prevent early failure

## **Curriculum**

Our Early Years' Curriculum is based on the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS: September 2014) and is carefully structured to include provision for different starting points from which children develop their learning, building on what they can already do. Primarily, we focus on the objectives relevant to age starting point of 40-60 months. The EYFS provides carefully structured objectives for children at each stage of their physical, emotional, creative and academic development. The curriculum includes planned and purposeful activities providing opportunities for teaching and learning both indoors and outdoors. As well as activities planned by adults, there will also be opportunities for activities that the children plan or initiate for themselves (child initiated learning). We recognise that children do not make a distinction between 'play' and 'work' and that they need time to become engrossed, work in depth and complete activities whilst also having opportunity to work alongside the teacher or support assistant to develop new skills they may not encounter through child initiated learning.

The EYFS curriculum covers 3 prime areas of learning:

1. Communication and language
2. Physical development
3. Personal, social and emotional development

In addition to these PRIME areas, there are 4 other specific areas of learning:

1. Literacy
2. Mathematics
3. Understanding the world
4. Expressive arts and design

Throughout these 7 areas of learning run the key learning characteristics of:

- ★ Playing and exploring
- ★ Active learning
- ★ Creating and thinking critically

The 7 main areas of learning above are further divided into 17 smaller, specific areas of learning which enable practitioners to plan and provide for individuals needs to a finer level.

Well-planned continuous provision which enables children to choose their learning, both indoors and outdoors, is a key way in which young children learn with enjoyment and challenge. This is supported by a challenging environment as basic continuous provision and challenged through enhanced provision relevant to topic or children's interests.

Through play, in a secure environment with effective adult support, children can:

- explore, develop and represent learning experiences that help them make sense of the world
- practise and build up ideas, concepts and skills

- learn how to control impulses and understand the need for rules
- be alone, be alongside others or co-operate as they talk or rehearse their feelings
- take risks and make mistakes
- learn how to keep themselves in familiar and unfamiliar situations
- think creatively and imaginatively
- communicate with others as they investigate or solve problems
- express fears or relive anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations

## **Planning**

Planning is made on a long term (annual), medium term (termly maps and plans) and short term (weekly or daily) basis. Medium term plans show objectives and progression through the objectives in each term. Each topic has a context and skills planner and rigorous coverage over the EYFS objectives is monitored by the EY leader to ensure no area is omitted throughout the year.

Short term plans relate to enhanced provision relative to the topic as well as detailed session planning for key aspects of learning. These are reviewed after each lesson to ensure learning on a day to day basis is accurate and informed by previous learning.

## **Teaching and Learning**

We recognise that young children do not come into our school at equal points in their social, emotional, physical and intellectual development. During the foundation stage development in each of these areas will vary from child to child and so the strategies used in learning and teaching will be adapted to suit the needs of the child. Learning is a rewarding and enjoyable experience in which they explore, investigate, discover, create, practise, rehearse, repeat, revise and consolidate their developing knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes. Many of these aspects of learning are brought together effectively through playing and talking.

## **Assessment, Recording & Reporting.**

We are an early adopter of the Early Excellence Baseline assessment and use this as a tool to gather baseline information on all of our children within the first 4 weeks of their time in school with us. Thereafter, evidence on individual children's achievements is ongoing throughout this term and entered into the database programme, EYFS Protracker, at October half term. This then enables us to establish a baseline of attainment on entry. Ongoing assessment in the form of photographs, observation notes, videos, planning assessment etc is collected and collated in line with the EYFS Profile Points for each of the 17 sub sections of learning. Evidence is entered into the database with any relevant notes at each half term interval thereafter, ensuring an up to date record and regular analysis is made of children's progress.

In addition to this formal process of assessment, recording and reporting, the practitioner keeps a detailed ongoing log of children's work, WOW moments from home, photographic evidence and written observations to support the knowledge they hold about each child.

The outcomes of this regular evidence gathering are shared with parents during parents' evenings in October, February and July. As we are statutorily required to, we will report a child's progress against the 3 key characteristics of learning in the summer report. In addition, the County requirement to screen all children for Early Literacy Skills, DEST, will take place in the Summer term, usually by the LSA in that class.

By the end of the summer term, the practitioner will judge whether a child is meeting the Early Learning Goal (ELG) for each of the 17 areas (EXPECTED), exceeding this level (EXCEEDING) or not yet reaching this level (EMERGING).

Assessment and screening, recording and reporting are carried out in accordance with the School's Assessment, Recording and Reporting policy.

## **The Induction process**

A smooth transition from pre-school or home into school is imperative for children to be confident learners and to ensure they achieve their best. A planned induction programme of children coming into school over a number of weeks in the summer term forms part of the transition. During this time the children will get to know the classroom and share a story while the parents will be given a series of talks which may include representatives of Hampshire Caterers, the School Association, the Admin. Officer, the Chair of Governors, and the class Teacher. The exact content and pattern will necessarily vary from year to year but will be established jointly by the Headteacher and the Early Years Teacher.

Home and pre-school visits also form a significant part of the children's transition and ensure that a smooth handover occurs of children's current progress and personal, social, emotional development is taken into account from people who know them best. We recognise the importance of the role that playgroups and nurseries play in the preparing children for school and accordingly strive to strengthen the links that we have with them.

Where relevant, inter-agency meetings take place between the School and the pre-school or other outside agencies. This is in conjunction with the SENCo from pre-school (where applicable) and the SENCo from Stockbridge Primary School.

## **Special Needs Provision**

No child will be excluded or disadvantaged because of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, special educational needs, disability, gender or ability. Liaison between School and pre-school settings/home is established early and any concerns about special educational needs are flagged up in the Spring term preceding entry to School. Meetings between outside agencies providing support to either the child or the family are highlighted well before the child starts at Stockbridge Primary School.

## **Early Years Assistant**

At least one Early Years Assistant will be employed to work alongside the Early Years Teacher. This post is defined in the Early Years Assistant's job description. The amount of time worked by the Early Years Assistant will be determined annually by the constraints of the school budget and the number of reception children entering the school. The Early Years assistant will also hold the paediatric first aid qualification in addition to the class teacher to ensure the School complies with health and safety requirements.

## **Safeguarding and Health & Safety**

The safety and welfare of children at Stockbridge Primary School is of primary importance and has a high priority in all planning for children's learning. No adult works with the reception children who does not have a DBS check. Risk assessments are done for various aspects of the classroom and outside areas, all involving children's input. When undertaking an educational visit, risk assessments and a pre-visit are done to ensure children are at the lowest possible risk. Children are encouraged to take part in the risk assessments and also manage their own actions within and outside school as they learn to take care of themselves and people around them. Both the class teacher and the Early Years Assistant are paediatric first aiders in line with government requirements.

## **Admissions**

The pattern for the timing of admission are in line with county policy and the dates will vary from year to year, please refer to the current admissions policy.