

Stockbridge Primary & Pre-School



Policy for Early years foundation stage

Approved by	Full Governing Body
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Children's early years are the foundation and cornerstone to future success both personally, socially and academically. At Stockbridge Primary & Pre-School, we are aware that we have the golden opportunity to support children and their families at this early stage as children can join us from the term after they turn two and stay with us, in most cases, for their entire primary journey.

Our policy has been carefully created to ensure we maximise every child's own lived experience and that we take a holistic approach to their journey with us through the Early Years. Wide range of choices and rich, real life experiences within a safe and secure environment and with trusted, known adults are critical for success and happiness. Our school mission to shape life-long learners begins the minute a child joins our school and sets them up for future success. Rightly, our families hold high expectations of us as educators and we too hold high expectations of children and their families so that we work together on this journey with the child at the centre.

Aims of our Early Years Foundation Stage provision:

- Give children the strongest foundations to learning and life
- Act as a hub for families so that collectively we help children thrive in their whole life
- Build on what children know and can do so that every child benefits from a wide range of real life experiences
- Act as a place of safety with trusted adults and equip children with skills to keep themselves safe
- Ensure every child is encouraged to achieve better than their best and see themselves as lifelong learners

Induction process

Our admissions policy for school is detailed in the annual policy for school admissions for Year R onwards and sets out the statutory process of admission into the main school.

Children are welcome to join pre-school from the term after they turn two. Pre-visits to the setting are encouraged so that parents are making an informed choice. Once a place is secured (see charging policy), a transitional process begins to help settle the child:

1. The pre-school manager contacts the family and arranges a home visit. This is a pre-requisite for every family and helps us oversee safeguarding, familiarity and builds initial trust and relationships between the school and home.
2. Stay and play visits are arranged, a minimum of 2, 1 of which the parents must stay, over the period of a week. Additional stay and plays can be arranged depending on the needs of the family and child; these will be chargeable through either funded hours or paid hours by the family.
3. The pre-school manager will be in contact with any previous or shared setting prior to the child starting with us so that we can learn what best approaches to take in order to settle the child quickest and address any needs the family has.
4. Sessions start – funding is then claimed from this point onwards or from when additional stay and plays were arranged, depending on the arrangements.
5. Within the first month, updates on Class Dojo are more regular than they will be in future. The pre-school manager will check all 2 year olds within their first 6 weeks to ascertain whether the legal 2 year old check has been undertaken by the health worker. (see section on 2 year old checks).

When children enter Year R through the main round applications, induction begins the week of notification.

- School leadership write to each family to welcome them, provide dates of stay and plays and September start details, which helps families be organised and offers security for all concerned. Parents have 2 weeks to formally confirm their place with the school or risk losing it, in line with guidance and deadline dates set by HCC.
- Home visits are booked and undertaken. These are undertaken by mid-June for all children.
- Pre-school visits are booked and undertaken, scheduled to begin after all home visits and before future induction sessions.
- Four stay and plays are arranged for the end of July. Parents stay with children for the first session and then drop them off for the remaining sessions but parents remain with the Head teacher who then provides induction sessions for parents on practical aspects of school life.
- On one or more of these stay and plays, buddies, from further up in the school will meet their new Year R buddy and play with them so that these bonds are formed early.
- Induction continues into September for this cohort. In the first three to five days, children will stay for the morning and lunchtime. Afternoons, on these days, are flexible; parents will declare on the first day their plans for whether children stay all day or partial days for up to the first five days. This leans on the parents' knowledge of their own child and how well they are coping with the transition.
- Phonics and maths induction sessions for parents continue throughout September so that parents are clear how and what their children will be learning.

Whether joining pre-school or school, families who have input from outside agencies such as children's services, occupational therapists, speech & language therapists or others or if the children have special education needs or involvement from the paediatrician, the SENCO from either setting will formally meet with the child's family to information gather. The school or pre-school SENCO will also meet with the SENCO from the previous setting, if there is one, and additional meetings and familiarisation visits will also take place if deemed necessary by the school.

Special Educational 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. It is important to us that every child here is valued and known, understood and loved.

Initial assessments and observations of play and interactions, input from parents and discussions amongst staff may lead to us considering the need for additional and different support to ensure children thrive and have their needs met both socially and academically in school. Provision might need to be adapted or supported. As soon as this becomes necessary, the pre-school manager or class teacher will arrange to meet with parents more formally and discuss and share thinking and concerns. The SENCO will join this meeting. Permission may be sought for external professional guidance or signposting offered to outside providers eg. Opticians or GP.

Wave 2 provisions, where the environment or provision is slightly adapted eg. Visual timetable, placemats, short interventions etc, will be put in place, initially for a term. Parents will be informed and involved at this time so that they are fully aware of the support their child is receiving and able to contribute to encourage shared working.

Should provisions that are additional and different need to continue after this time, a personalised learning plan (PLP) with SMART targets will be put into place to support the child more formally and shared with the parents. This begins the plan-do-review cycle and the

SENCO is then involved. These PLPs are reviewed at least once each term. They may then be placed on the SEN register.

Home & school partnership

Parents are critical to a child's success and have already undertaken huge role in their child's early education. We rely on parent knowledge and support to help a child thrive.

Formal methods of communication

Parent teacher meetings are held once a 'big' term and are a formal way to review and reflect on a child's progress and achievement. This first meeting of the year, usually in early October, also in school focuses on how well a child has settled and allows any issues to be raised by either party in a more formal setting. Pre-school and school meetings are offered at the same times with the exception of preschool children who have just joined the setting and have been informally advised that we have no concerns. An appropriate formal meeting will be arranged within 6 weeks of them starting.

Dojo is our main form of communication about what children are learning once in the setting. Informal communication. Learning journey evidence from both home and setting is important and should be posted on a child's profile.

A dojo story may communicate something the whole class or cohort have been engaged with.

Informal communications

Dojo messaging service is used for informal communication for practical aspects such as 'my child's lost his gloves' or 'he's had a bad night's sleep'. All absences, formal concerns, complaints should be through the school office; adminoffice@stockbridge.hants.sch.uk Staff engage with parents on the playground or at the pre-school door at the beginning or end of the day. Parents may be asked to book an appointment time for something more in depth or private.

If issues are significant and may require privacy or a little longer or if you know they don't pick up, the key worker or class teacher may phone parents to give them a heads up so that they are aware of issues.

Safeguarding

This section should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding, Child Protection and ... policies.

The safety and welfare of children and their families is of primary importance and has a high priority in all planning for children's learning. Risk assessments undertaken for various aspects of classroom and provision. Children are also encouraged to take part in the risk assessments and encouraged to manage their own actions and risk assess for themselves within and outside the classroom environment as they learn to take care of themselves and people around them.

Children thrive when in a safe, known and trusted environment and our settings work hard to be this safe space. Children are known to staff, as are their families and staff are well trained and always vigilant to changes in children's behaviour or presentation. These are key indicators of concern. Despite knowing families well, staff exercise professional curiosity through sensitive conversations and monitoring in order to safeguard children from harm. We will never shy away from making referrals to outside agencies should we feel a child is at risk.

Staff are DBS checked, whistleblowing policy, paediatric first aid trained and receive regular training and checks so that decision made are well informed with research and exemplary practice.

As much as staff protect children, in line with our aims, it is important children have a growing awareness of how to keep themselves and others safe. Children support risk assessments and are supported in risky play, developing a growing awareness of dangers and how to manage them. (see forest school risk assessment and woodwork area risk assessment). Staff challenge 'secrets' and make it OK to tell an adult. We understand that young children are exploring themselves and the world around them and staff guide them to do this in appropriate ways. We will do this in conjunction with NSPCC and the pants programme as well as our Jigsaw RPHSE programme.

Staff engage with the safeguarding toolkits available through the Hampshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership board.

Curriculum

The EYFS statutory framework clearly states that the EYFS is about what children learn as well as how they learn. The educational programmes:

1. **Communication and language**
2. **Personal, social and emotional development**
3. **Physical development**
4. *Literacy*
5. *Mathematics*
6. *Understanding the world*
7. *Expressive arts and design*

(**bold = prime areas** *italics = specific areas*)

set out WHAT should be taught. The HOW is exemplified in the characteristics of effective learning (detailed in Development matters);

1. Playing & exploring
2. Active learning
3. Creating and thinking critically

We recognise that in Early Years, children have a very narrow view of the world and whilst it is important to explore this, it is our role as educators to broaden their horizons and provide opportunities to explore the wider world. The Early Years foundation stage statutory framework for group and school based providers (Oct 2024) is the national standard for education provision in the early years.

Our curriculum is a 2 year rolling programme to ensure children do not revisit old learning year on year as some are with us for 3 years throughout the whole of our Early Years provision (2 years old to 5). Very broad themes guide provision and enable children to take it in whatever direction their individual interest lies. Ourselves features in both years, in both Autumn terms because this helps us settle and welcome new children and make the setting personalised to the children in each cohort.

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Year A	Ourselves	Special times	Fairy tales	Growing (Animals)	Transport	Water
Year B	Ourselves	Light	Superheroes	Growing (plants)	Homes	Food

Each of the topics above has been designed with breadth at its heart so that children's interests and existing knowledge within the topics can be taken into account. Although the topic acts as a guide, it should not limit what is offered to children in line with their interests.

For example, if a child is fascinated by dinosaurs, the child's key worker should make every effort and setting staff, to accommodate this interest and further it. As Maria Montessori stated, "The goal of early childhood education should be to activate the child's own natural desire to learn." This can only come through his or her own interests, sometimes sparked by an adult.

Seasons is a longitudinal study which runs throughout the year, encouraging children to take notice of and interest in their surroundings as they change throughout the year. Welly Wednesdays for Year R and daily access to the meadow garden for pre-school are standard practices, which must be maintained throughout the school year. On the afternoons, Year R may also choose to use the meadow garden if pre-school are not accessing it at that point. To support this, each setting has its own sets of wellies and sallopettes to ensure children are appropriately dressed when accessing the outdoors in all weathers. Knitted hats and mittens are also available.

Communication, language and literacy

Language is at the heart of this curriculum and development of this is carefully tracked using development matters to support practitioner's judgements of a child's progress. Exposure to new words, using vocabulary to explain experiences and interventions to support when language is not developing is critical to our provision.

Reading is the foundation to success for all children. Through reading, children will explore new worlds, adventures, find something of themselves in what is read and shared and develop an interest in how language works through rhymes and patterns. Developing vocabulary is a key factor in success for all children and the vehicle we use to develop vocabulary, a love of books and getting writing going is 'Drawing Club' in Year R and 'Story Dough' (the pre-cursor to drawing club) in pre-school.

Little Wandle is our chosen phonics scheme and we begin the foundations of this in pre-school using the LW foundations plans. This continues through into Year R where children learn the graphemes and alternative graphemes for the 44 sounds in the English language. Guided reading begins after October half term in Year R, following the first half term of phonics acquisition. A focus author is introduced each half term in both pre-school and school so that children have exposure to lots of books, styles, patterns and knowledge.

In addition, drawing club clearly sets out five books per half term that children will get to know well. These books feature in our reading corner and are freely available to children so that, once taught, they can retell the story, and develop their vocabulary. They will feature poetry, nursery rhymes, fairy tales and non-fiction. This is in line with the recommendations set out in the DfE 'Reading Framework' (Sept 23).

Top 10 milestones

Each year, for each specific cohort, 10 critical elements of the Early Learning Goal or age appropriate development stage are highlighted that the cohort are presenting as needing more development than others. These are deemed critical to each cohort's success and essential for preparation of the next stage of his or her journey. Each element of the chosen top ten is then broken down into milestones so that practitioners are clear about the smaller steps children need to take in order to achieve the significant top 10 goal. Children are assessed against these as the year progresses and milestones may be tweaked, added to or removed as

practitioners learn more about the children's development in these areas. Children's learning is not linear and milestones should not require this linear progress in order to achieve them. It is imperative that these are adjusted within the first month of children beginning in the setting and in Year R, should be informed by the baseline assessment outcomes.

Appropriate play

Children naturally act out their own lives through their play. Interactions with others often mimic their own lived experiences and play can help them make sense of the world around them. Our setting

Food and healthy habits

Essential skills in food, healthy eating and hygiene begin at an early age. Children should be encouraged to eat a healthy, balanced diet and parents supported in providing this, especially when children are experimenting with different foods and textures and tastes. The preparation kitchen in pre-school is the nominated suitable facility for food preparation. The door to this area must be firmly closed at all times, even when an adult is working in there and at no time should a child ever be allowed into that area. All staff receive level 2 food health and hygiene training on a bi-annual basis.

Snack in pre-school

Independence is encouraged by washing hands, choosing utensils, pouring own drinks, verbally communicating preferences and preparing foods where practical and clearing away.

Snack is offered mid-morning and mid-afternoon and the 'snack bar' is opened for approx. 40 mins at each time with children selecting their snack during this time – who accesses it is tracked by staff and anyone who hasn't accessed it is then required to come and partake before the snack bar closes.

Fruits, vegetables and a carb option are always offered and milk and water are freely available. Water is freely available throughout the day.

Snack in Year R

School fruit, home snack, and milk (until 5 years old – can be purchased afterwards) are taken after morning playtime. 'Snack and chat' happens after play when children re-enter the classroom so that we can monitor safe eating practices (section 3.36 of Statutory framework). Water bottles are used throughout the day in Year R and can be topped up at any time. Children are not allowed to 'wander' with them but must have them on the carpet or stood at the sink area.

Lunchtimes

'Learning plates' are plates with that day's lunch choices and may be offered to any child who would like to try that day's lunch. This does not apply to children with allergies who may only eat what their parent or the school kitchen have specifically provided for them.

Children in school and pre-school independently choose lunch on the morning during self-registration time. In pre-school, all children sit together with adults and eat lunch. Use of a knife and fork is encouraged and always one of our top ten for 4 year olds.

Year R eat in the dinner hall with their buddy and under the supervision of lunchtime staff who get to know the children well. There is free access to the salad bar for all children who have a hot school meal. Water is freely available by the cup for all children.

Calm corners (Regulation stations)

We realise that children are learning constantly about the world around them and, at times, this may be overwhelming for them or they require a quiet space to retreat to, in order to absorb the changing world around them and cope with any 'big feelings' which seem

unmanageable to them. Staff use the THRIVE vital relational functions (see behaviour policy) to support children in moments of dysregulation and each Early Years space has a regulation station. This is an enclosed, quiet space with sensory toys, included weighted teddies, which children can retreat to in moments of overwhelm. This is not 'time out' but 'time in' and an adult should support the child at this time; the adult may also sit silently with them – they should never be completely alone at these times.

At no time, other than if a child's safety is immediately at risk, should physical restriction ever be used. This includes holding a child's hand and dragging them with an adult anywhere. Under no circumstances should corporal punishment or isolation of a child ever be used. Use of these may constitute disciplinary or misconduct procedures.

Shared resourcing

By the way the curriculum is organised, it requires shared use of all resources. Staff can achieve this by accessing the stored resources both in the early years shed on the field along with classroom-stored resources together. This needs to be done prior to the topic starting; good practice dictates that this is in the fortnight before each half term when staff from both settings access the resources together to decide which ones are used in each setting. Consideration will be given to the age appropriateness, independent access and prior use of the resources.

Planning

"Effective planning involves mapping out, chunking down and thinking about how the elements of the learning sequence are linked together" (Robert Coe, 2015).

In early years, a planned continuous provision details the provision that should be available all of the time for children. This includes resources that can be transferred into any part of children's learning and in any topic.

Enhanced provision should be carefully planned and attributed, where possible, to each individual child. Deciding what goes out to enhance learning every day should reflect the child's interests and learning the day before. THIS element must be planned each day on daily plans in Year R and across a week in pre-school (because not all children are in each day). Provision should not be activity driven but learning driven – how does what is out in the setting reflect the children's prior learning from the day or week before and how does it move them on in their learning are the key considerations for practitioners.

Topic overviews should map out the areas of learning in the setting and what specific learning will be required to be covered in line with the top 10 and ELGs as well as children's individual needs.

Assessment

Assessment informs teaching and learning practice and should be an ongoing, informative process, undertaken every time a child has an interaction with an adult. The adult assesses a child's comprehension, language, physical capability and much more when interacting with each child and should adjust the provision accordingly.

Assessment of children should also take into account how well they are doing at home and therefore weekly updates to parents via dojo should be made so that the parent has the opportunity to comment on or upload additional evidence for staff to use to support provision for their child. Where possible, updates to Dojo will focus on children's progress towards the top 10 milestones they are working on or separate targets they may have from their PLPs. There is no statutory requirement to keep lengthy journals or evidence of learning but it is good practice and therefore our school and setting policy to have at least one weekly update

for a child to facilitate discussion and partnership sharing between the setting and home. In addition to this, pre-school and school may choose to send a general setting update with photos of the activities and learning children have undertaken each week.

Two year old check

When children are between 2 and 3 years old, they will receive a 2 year old check from their health visitor, which may or may not include input from the setting. We will always attempt to liaise with the health visitor so that a holistic view of the child is shared however, due to time and staffing constraints, this is not always possible or may have taken place before the child joins us.

The pre-school staff visiting the home before starting at our setting will always establish with the parent whether this check has been undertaken, no matter what age the child joins us at. Regardless of whether the child has had their official 2 year old check or not, we will always provide a 2 year old check update in the final term that they are 2. This is mapped out on a proforma in appendix A. and meets the requirements of the statutory framework paragraph 2.8.

Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA)

The RBA is a statutory piece of assessment, which has to be undertaken before the end of the first 6 weeks a child is in school. In our setting, we try to undertake this as quickly as possible after the child has initially settled in the setting and has a relationship with the teacher. Only the teacher carries out the RBA and results are uploaded immediately, in real time, to the DfE. Statutory guidance on taking the RBA is in Appendix B.

Results from the RBA are gathered before October half term and used to inform the shaping of the Top 10 for the Reception cohort. They are also updated in the school's self-evaluation so that they can inform actions for Early Years that academic year.

Early Learning Goals (ELGs)

These are the summative judgements made on each child at the end of their Reception Year. They link to each of the seven educational programmes and their respective 17 sub categories. We report to parents on each of the 17 sub categories in our end of year report and they are the focus of February parent teacher meetings so that a child's progress can be assessed by both throughout the year.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- ✓ Intimate care policy & soiled child risk assessment
- ✓ Safeguarding policy
- ✓ Child protection policy
- ✓ Acceptable use of IT policy
- ✓ Behaviour and bullying policy
- ✓ GDPR
- ✓ Administration of medicines policy
- ✓ First aid policy
- ✓ Health & Safety policy