Southbury Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

January 2024

Signed:

Bradley Jones, Chair of Governors

Signed:

Rebecca Panteli, Headteacher

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's agreed policy review schedule.

Our Vision

At Southbury Primary School, we aim to provide every child with the skills to become a happy, independent and curious lifelong learner. Our priority is that our provision provides a high level of engagement and active learning through a range of skill based activities.

Our Principles

At Southbury Primary School, we want all of our staff and parents to work together to enable all the children who pass through the school to reach their full potential and beyond in a safe, happy and caring environment.

Key Requirements

“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”. *Statutory Framework for the EYFS DfE 2023*

The overarching aim of the EYFS is 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. It seeks to provide:

- Quality and consistency, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- A secure foundation through planning for the learning and development of each individual child, and assessing and reviewing what that have learned regularly
- Partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- Equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported

Structure

At Southbury Primary School, we have a Terrific Twos Provision, which currently offers 10 afternoon places. Our Three Year Olds' Nursery offers 30 morning places. We also offer places, where possible, for families entitled to 30 hours funded care. We also offer one Reception class, offering a total of 30 places.

Curriculum

At Southbury Primary School, we recognise that every child is unique. We understand that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. We want our children to be independent and self-motivated learners, encouraging the children to adapt their work, think critically and take risks with their learning.

We acknowledge that we are laying the foundations for our children's educational journey and that we are endeavoring to ensure that they are ready for the next steps in that journey.

At Southbury Primary School, our Early Years Provisions follow the educational programmes as outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework document that applied from September 2021. A copy of which can be downloaded here:

EYFS statutory framework for group and school based providers (publishing.service.gov.uk)

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development that are equally important and interconnected. However, three areas known as the Prime Areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The Prime Areas of Learning and Development are:

1. Communication and Language – this area focuses on the development of children's spoken language, acknowledging that this underpins all of the areas of learning and development. It advocates language rich environments where children are frequently read to, talked to and encouraged to become comfortable hearing and using a rich range of vocabulary

2. Personal, Social and Emotional Development – this area focuses on building relationships, managing feelings and emotions and provides support for children to learn to self-regulate. This is critical for very young children in all aspects of their lives and provides a secure platform from which they can achieve at school and later in life. There is also a focus on staying healthy and managing their own needs

3. Physical Development – this area focuses on the development of the child's physical control, both in their gross motor skills and in fine motor skills. It provides opportunity to develop core strength, co-ordination and balance allowing children to develop proficiency, control and confidence

The Specific Areas of Learning and Development

4. Literacy – this focuses on reading, writing, comprehension and encouraging the development of a life-long love of reading. Children are taught pre-reading skills and pre-writing skills in the early stages of the EYFS, then they are taught phonics, enabling children to decode and recognise the written word

5. Mathematics – this area focuses on learning through practical activities and on developing a strong grounding in number as the foundation essential to excel mathematically. It supports children's understanding and spatial reasoning skills across all areas of maths, including shape, space, measure, looking for patterns and relationships, spotting connections and generally being willing to 'have a go' and not being afraid to make mistakes

6. Understanding of the World – this area focuses on the development of children's knowledge and understanding of their physical environment and their community. It forms the foundations necessary for the later work in year 1 in Science, Design and Technology, History, RE, Geography and ICT.

7. Expressive Arts and Design – this area focuses on the development of the children's imagination and their ability to communicate and express ideas and feelings in creative ways. It incorporates exploring and using media and materials. Creativity is fundamental to successful learning.

These areas are not delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other to support a rounded approach to child development; the development of the whole child is crucial. All of the areas of learning and development are delivered through planned, purposeful play and learning opportunities, with a balance of adult and child-led activities.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

Through regular interactions, we will discover children's interests and assess what they know. Also, fundamental to our practice is to assess how children learn and the variety of different rates that they are learning at. The Characteristics of Effective Learning support our practitioners to do this. They are:

- Playing and Learning – children investigate and experience things and events around them and are willing to 'have a go'

- Active Learning – children concentrate and keep trying if they experience difficulties, as well as enjoying what they achieve.

- Creating and Thinking Critically – children have and develop their own ideas, they make links between different experiences and develop strategies for doing things.

Planning

Through careful planning, teachers ensure that there is a balance of adult-led and child-initiated learning opportunities across the day. During child-initiated activities, the adult's role is to show an interest in the children's ideas, build conversation, facilitate and share ideas, model different skills and ascertain children's levels of well-being and engagement in their learning. Timely interactions with the children are essential as this helps to build their understanding and therefore guides new learning. This then informs planning and ensures that the topics covered reflect the children's fascinations and interests at that time. By being flexible, this allows the learning opportunities to be adapted and changed to take into account unexpected occurrences, allowing what is currently happening to become an integral part of learning.

Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated learning opportunities. Practitioners respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. As children move through the EYFS at Southbury Primary School, the balance of adult-led and child-initiated learning opportunities changes in preparation of the more formal learning in year one.

Direct Teaching – At specific times during the day, the children will take part in teacher-led activities. In our Nursery, these take the form of very brief carpet sessions relevant to the stage of development of the children and include opportunities for singing, rhyming, counting and listening to stories. For some nursery children, who are ready in the summer term, they will be provided with short sessions of phonics. In our Reception Class, these will take the form of daily phonics and daily maths/counting opportunities. Our teacher led sessions are carefully planned and tailored for the children in the class using previous assessments of the children's knowledge, skills and ability. These sessions are continuously adapted in order to ensure that they are relevant and challenging for every child. Southbury Primary School undertakes the teaching of phonics using the Little Wandle programme.

Learning through Play

"It is paradoxical that many educators and parents still differentiate between a time for learning and a time for play without seeing the vital connection between them." - Leo F. Buscaglia

Children's play reflects their wide-ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. Children learn best from activities and experiences that they have initiated and playing with peers is important for their development. We carefully plan to provide an enabling environment and offer purposeful play and learning opportunities to reflect the children's interests and to inspire them further, whilst also making sure that they have the opportunity to embed, extend and practise the skills they have learned through direct teaching. Constant opportunities are provided for children to be able to make their own decisions and choices to support them in becoming independent, confident and happy learners.

Through play, children explore and develop learning experiences, helping them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand rules. Children see the high expectations we have in every aspect of our day and they delight in trying to meet these. 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. Giving children the opportunity to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, allows them to discover connections and come to new and better understandings of the way to do things. With adult support, this enhances the children's ability to think critically and ask questions. Adults support them in making connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to choose to work inside or outside during their independent learning time.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting of Progress

At Southbury Primary School, ongoing teacher assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Assessment takes a variety of forms in order to gain in-depth knowledge of each child's level of understanding. Information may be collected in a variety of ways including photographs, examples of independent and supported work, parental conversations, information from other professionals, 'in the moment' or 'snap shot' notes, learning stories and play partnering and most importantly, the practitioner's knowledge about the children. This is not an evidence-gathering exercise rather an opportunity to provide some examples that might be added onto Tapestry to document the children's educational journey.

Using all of this gathered information, alongside spending quality time interacting with children, practitioners will make decisions regarding their level of achievement, interests and learning styles.

Within the first six weeks that a child starts Reception, practitioners will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). This is a mandatory assessment, which will be undertaken once the children have settled in. Children are then monitored during regular meetings ensuring that they are making the progress they should so that they are 'On Track' towards meeting the Early Learning Goals.

To support the decisions practitioners make regarding children's learning the school use a variety of non-statutory guidance in correlation with the school's 'Point in Time' documents.

Progress is shared with parents/carers with settling in reports in the autumn term, during 'Focus Week' meetings in the spring term, end of year reports and Story Cafés.

Assessment/Parent Communication:

	Autumn	**Spring**	**Summer**
Nursery	Settling in Reports	Focus Weeks	Reports
Reception	Parents Evening	Focus Weeks	Reports

At the end of the EYFS, pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development (GLD)
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

This is shared via Tapestry and is moderated internally and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS data is submitted to the Local Authority.

Partnerships with Parents/Carers

Southbury Primary School recognises the huge importance of establishing effective relationships with parents/carers in ensuring that children achieve their full potential. We recognise that parents and carers are their child's/children's first and most enduring educators, and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, as well as their future role, in educating their child/children.

Parents/carers are always welcome at Southbury Primary School. We provide a variety of opportunities for working together. Play and Stay sessions, staggered entry to school, Story Cafés, Phonics Workshops, Learning, Story Times, Special Week Meetings and practitioners being available at the end of every day once the children have left.

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

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 around them.

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general through our curriculum, for example by talking to the children in an age appropriate way about;

- The effects of eating too many sweet things and how moderation is best
- The importance of brushing their teeth

- The importance of mental health and well-being
- The importance of E-safety

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by The Early Years Leader. Areas for development will be incorporated into the School Improvement Plan as necessary.

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	All policies can be found on the school website www.southbury.enfield.sch.uk
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See Southbury Primary School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See Southbury Primary School Health and Safety Policy
Administering medicines policy	See Southbury Primary School Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See Southbury Primary School Health and Safety Policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See Southbury Primary School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See Southbury Primary School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy See Southbury Primary School Charging and Remissions Policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See Southbury Primary School Complaints Policy