



South Gosforth First School
'Roots to grow and wings to fly'

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy
October 2023

	Staff: To read and offer feedback To implement policy	Governors Approve	Accessibility Website Saved to teachers drive
Date	October 2023	October 2023	October 2023
Review Date	October 2024		

Members of staff responsible:

- Mr Adams (Head Teacher)
- Miss Blackburn (Deputy Head Teacher)
- Mrs Burnett (EYFS Lead)

Rationale:

In the Early Years at South Gosforth, we aim for our children to be happy, excited and motivated to learn through rich and challenging learning experiences; opportunities to explore and take risks, and first-hand experiences.

We have high ambitions for all our children and recognise that children have different starting points to their learning. We plan according to children's stage of development so all can thrive and develop. We aim for children to be well-rounded individuals who are independent, resilient, and confident in themselves and with others.

This policy is based on requirements set out in the EYFS Statutory Framework 2021.

Intent:

Our Curriculum Intent and Key Drivers at South Gosforth First School are:

Character - *What type of people we are.*

Culture - *How we learn about the world and all of the people who live in it.*

Creativity - *How we use our imaginations.*

Challenge - *How we make ourselves better every day.*

Reception Curriculum Intent:

- To enable our pupils to reach the Early Learning Goals at the end of their Reception year.
- To provide a curriculum that encourages independent, happy learners and develops children's knowledge, skills and understanding.
- To create stimulating indoor and outdoor environments which support learning.

The EYFS is based upon four overarching principles:

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**;
- Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between Early Years staff and parents/carers;
- **Learning and Development**; children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

Implementation:

EYFS Framework

The curriculum is centred around children's interests with a balance of child-initiated and adult-led learning. Children work and play independently, with a strong emphasis on choice and being able to sustain concentration on projects, as well as joining a variety of focused adult-led activities.

The EYFS framework explains how and what children will be learning to support their healthy development and provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.

The EYFS specifies requirements for learning and development and for safeguarding children and promoting their welfare.

Children will learn skills, acquire new knowledge and demonstrate their understanding through **7 areas of learning and development**.

Children should mostly develop the **3 prime areas** first. These are:

- **Communication and Language**
 - Listening, attention and Understanding
 - Speaking
- **Physical Development**
 - Gross Motor Skills
 - Fine Motor Skills
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**
 - Self-Regulation
 - Managing Self
 - Building relationships

These prime areas are those most essential for a child's healthy development and future learning.

As children grow, the prime areas will help them to develop skills in **4 specific areas**. These are:

- **Literacy**
 - Comprehension
 - Word Reading
 - Writing

- **Mathematics**
 - Number
 - Numerical Patterns

- **Understanding the World**
 - Past and Present
 - People, Culture and Communities
 - The Natural World

- **Expressive Arts and Design**
 - Creating with Materials
 - Being Imaginative and Expressive

Planning

Our EYFS curriculum is a top-level plan of everything we want the children to learn. We also plan our curriculum to fulfil the whole school Intent.

Planning to help every child to develop their language is vital; the development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Our EYFS curriculum is ambitious and carefully sequenced to ensure children build on their learning over time. Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable them to develop and learn effectively. We use the EYFS Framework to inform planning. Teachers plan together around topics which inspire and engage the children, whilst also allowing flexibility to incorporate the children's interests and stage of development. Whole class teaching, as well as small group adult directed activities are planned daily to ensure that children's needs are immediately responded to. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate. In planning and guiding children's activities, teachers reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

Teaching and Provision

At South Gosforth First School, the EYFS curriculum is delivered through a balance of child initiated play based activities and adult led and supported tasks. Our EYFS Unit covers two class bases, an Imagination Station for role play, storytelling and small world activities, a Creation Station for 'messy' activities and an outdoor area. The children are organised into two Registration groups but get plenty of time to learn and play together across both classes.

Each day, the children will have two Busy Play sessions. During these sessions, the children have the opportunity to choose where they would like to play in the EYFS Unit and can move freely from one area to another. Both classes mix together so the children are able to form friendships across the whole unit.

Children in the EYFS learn by playing and exploring, being active, and through creative and critical thinking which takes place both indoors and outside. It is very important that they develop social skills, such as turn-taking, sharing and independence, which help them greatly in the next stages of their learning.

With this in mind, to help develop children's problem solving, creativity and collaborative skills, we complete Play Project frameworks to enable children to lead their own learning through play. The children plan ideas for what they can make and create, draw, build and message related to our theme or a theme of their own choice.

Phonics

At South Gosforth First School, we believe that all our children can become fluent readers. Phonics teaching and learning are a key part of the Early Years Foundation Stage and help to develop both early reading and writing skills.

We teach phonics through Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised, which is a systematic, synthetic phonics programme. We start the teaching of phonics as soon as the children are full time in Reception and follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised progression, which ensures children build on their growing knowledge of the alphabetic code, mastering phonics to read and spell as they move through school. The sessions are delivered daily and build up from 10-minute lessons to 30 minutes. There are keep-up sessions following the phonics sessions for any children needing additional practice. Keep up sessions match the structure of the whole class session using the same procedures, resources, and vocabulary but in smaller steps with more repetition. These sessions are delivered by a Teaching Assistant or School Based Tutor. The children are assessed using the Little Wandle assessment documents every six weeks to identify gaps in learning that need to be addressed. Teachers will also monitor progress and identify children who need additional support through ongoing daily assessments in class.

Early Reading

As part of the Little Wandle Programme, the children engage in three reading practice sessions a week. These sessions start as soon as the Little Wandle Phonics sessions begin in the Autumn Term, initially using wordless books. Each reading practice session is delivered by a trained teacher or teaching assistant and children use books which are matched to their secure phonic knowledge using the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised assessments. The sessions have a clear focus, so that the demands of the sessions do not overload the child's working memory. The sessions focus on one of the three key reading skills: decoding, prosody and comprehension. Following the three reading practice sessions in school, all pupils will read the same Collins Big Cat E-book at home to further develop their fluency and comprehension skills.

All pupils in Reception will have 1 further phonic reading book per week which is directly matched to the pupil's individual phonic ability. This book will be selected from our school phonic reading scheme. Parents and carers are given a daily guide for how to support their child when reading their phonics book in order to develop confidence and fluency.

As well as group reading practice sessions, children who have been identified as needing extra support with reading in Reception are heard to read one to one with either their teacher or teaching assistant three times a week. There are extra opportunities for these children to also read one to one with a Reading Buddy volunteer.

We aim to instil a love of reading in every child. Throughout the day, there are repeated and prolonged opportunities for children to read books, share books and tell and retell stories, some of which may also be linked to current topics and themes and from our whole school reading spine. Teachers choose the texts that they share with children very carefully to ensure that they include high quality, ambitious vocabulary for pupils. Children will hear a range of stories and poems from a number of different authors, so that they can begin to develop a love of reading and express their opinions of the books that they are exposed to.

There are attractive story telling / role play areas in our Early Years unit with a range of books on display. Every week, pupils will have the opportunity to select a library book from our school library which they can take home and read in addition to their home school reading books. These could be fiction, non-fiction or poetry books.

Early Writing

At South Gosforth First School, we help our children develop as writers through direct teaching of writing and by providing lots of opportunities for them to practise their skills regularly right across the curriculum.

Before children start to 'write', we spend time developing the children's gross motor skills. In order to develop gross motor skills, we do lots of 'BIG' activities with the children like 'Squiggle Whilst you Wiggle'. Alongside gross motor skills, we then help the children to develop their fine motor skills and dexterity. In order to develop fine motor skills, we encourage the children to do mark making, use chalks, tweezers and pincers, thread on string, follow and overwrite on wavy lines and use play dough.

Teaching the children to form letters is the next step in the process of early writing and this is done as part of the phonics session which all of the children do every day. When the children learn a particular grapheme, they learn how to form it correctly through modelling by the teacher. Children also get lots of opportunities to do this through their busy play too through the enhancements which we put out for the children to use.

One of the teaching approaches which we use at South Gosforth First School is called 'Talk for Writing'. This structured approach to the teaching of writing, involves the children learning simple story structures off by heart to 'internalise' them, creating story maps and then innovating them to write sentences for their own story.

Maths

Practical maths activities, number recognition and counting are incorporated into our daily routines in Reception. In addition to this, we deliver daily whole class maths sessions and weekly small group maths activities which are adapted to provide support and/or challenge appropriate for each group of children.

We use White Rose Maths progression and planning documents to plan activities which develop problem solving skills and provide challenge to prepare the children for Year One and the Key Stage One Curriculum. We also deliver the Mastering Number project which aims to secure firm foundations in the development of good number sense for all children in Reception and support them with developing fluency in calculation and a confidence and flexibility with number by the time they leave Key Stage 1.

Maths challenges linked to our learning are set out in our areas of continuous provision. Opportunities for active maths and problem-solving activities are provided through use of our outdoor area.

Assessment

During the first six weeks of the children's time in school, all children will be assessed using the new national Reception Baseline Assessment. This provides an on-entry baseline of pupil attainment and helps to inform teacher's planning for the first half term.

Early Years practitioners are required to pursue daily rich activities to support each child's educational development across the seven areas of learning. To plan for successful learning, we continuously observe children to identify their interests, explore how they learn, and monitor their progress in each area of learning and development. This progress is recorded on the school's Insights tracker system at the end of each term.

In the final term of the year, a profile will be completed for each child to assess if the children have achieved the Early Learning Goals in these areas. This provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their attainment against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. The children will be observed and assessed through their play and activities in order to gain insights and make reasonable judgements against the Early Learning Goals. We will use the terms 'emerging' (not yet reaching expected levels of development for age) or 'expected' (reached expected levels of development for age) to describe our judgements.

Partnership with Parents and Carers

We believe that parents and carers are a child's first educator and our partnership with parents means that families have the opportunity to work closely with our Early Years practitioners to support children's transition into the setting and throughout their year in Reception. We would like parents to feel secure in the knowledge that their child is well cared for and happy at school.

Our parents are welcome to be actively involved in their child's learning in school and are able to share learning experiences through 'stay and play' sessions, contributions to our online learning journey 'Tapestry' and parent/carer workshops. A Family Consultation Evening is held in the Autumn and Spring Term to discuss children's progress. We value this time, not only to share and celebrate the children's experiences at school, but also to hear from parents/carers and address any queries or concerns.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the governing body of South Gosforth First School.