



Sutton Park Primary School Early Years Policy



Aims:

At Sutton Park Primary, we acknowledge the statement that....

“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 experience between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is the vital component for life-long wellbeing. Good parenting and high-quality learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up”.

Our Aims...

- Value and respect each learner as a unique individual;
- Recognise and celebrate each learners strengths and achievements;
- Promote high levels of self-awareness, self-esteem, confidence and independence;
- Foster understanding and compassionate attitudes towards others;
- Personalise provision so that it meets the needs and stretches each learner;
- Communicate proactively and openly with parents and carers and all other stakeholders;
- Provide a wide range of memorable, enjoyable and fun learning experiences for all our learners;
- Inspire and motivate our learners to be curious about the world around them;
- Offer a happy, safe and secure environment;
- Fully utilise all the resources in school and the local community to create and sustain a positive and stimulating learning environment that meets the needs of all our learners;
- Work in close collaboration with professional partners, Governors, the Local Authority, OFSTED and other organisations that will benefit learners.

Our vision:

As individuals and as a school we take pride in being the very best that we can be and aim for the highest standards in all that we do. We have high expectations of ourselves and others, this means that all pupils achieve their potential and acquire the skills, attitudes and characteristics to be happy and successful citizens.

We are a school where everyone is warmly welcomed and valued. There is a deeply caring and positive attitude towards all children, parents, carers, staff, governors and the wider community. Relationships with everyone associated with the school are cherished and nurtured so that every member of our school community can feel safe, happy and empowered to make a beneficial contribution.

We all support and encourage one another; are sensitive and understanding; and have an open and honest approach; working together to build effective partnerships and we strive to offer the excellent quality of support and provision our children and local community deserve.

Our EYFS is a place where every child is unique and can begin their lifelong love of learning from our EYFS Curriculum which lays solid foundations for their rest of their learning journey.

Our Values:

We aim to teach our children the value of the following qualities:

- Successful
- Unique
- Tolerant
- Thriving
- Optimistic
- Nurturing
- Persevering
- Aspirational
- Responsible
- Kind

Structure of EYFS at Sutton Park:

Our EYFS Unit comprises of two Little Sparks Nursery groups;

Fireworks:- Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday am and

Sparklers: Wednesday pm, Thursday and Friday and a full time Reception class.

The EYFS team comprises of two qualified teachers (QTS) and four teaching assistants. Mrs Helen Digger is our Early Years Lead across the unit and Mrs Liz O'Connell leads our Nursery.

Intent:

Within the EYFS, we understand that young children are powerful learners and set a broad range of learning opportunities to fulfil their curiosities. As they explore and learn, children are naturally drawn to play, which is why it is at the heart of our EYFS curriculum. We believe that the appropriate mix of adult led and child- initiated play ensures the best outcomes for our pupils. Warm and positive relationships are fostered through quality time with our key worker children and through developing strong relationships with Parents/Carers. Developing each unique child's interests are all features of our daily practise that supports wellbeing, and we provide a Thrive Approach to support our pupil's self-regulation skills. Our staff have high expectations for all children and work hard to help them develop the skills and knowledge to become respectful, independent, resilient and creative learners.

Implementation:

At Sutton Park, we believe that the Early Years are the most important in providing the fundamental building blocks to all aspects of learning. We provide a broad curriculum across all seven areas of the Early Years and believe that the four principles are all equally important; the *unique child*, building *positive relationships* with each unique child and providing the *enabling environments* for their *learning and development* to flourish.

It is during these first years that they develop the skills to recognise numbers, count objects, read and write letter sounds and use these to blend them together to read and write simple words also. Reading begins in Little Sparks Nursery, with books being a central point of learning.

In order to develop pupils' fluency, confidence and enjoyment in reading, we ensure we have a rigorous and sequential approach to the reading curriculum. This begins in Reception and remains a priority throughout the school. We follow the same Read, Write Inc phonics scheme as the whole school and we deliver phonics as an EYFS Unit with specific ability groups being taught at various ability levels daily.

Every EYFS Staff member has their own group of Key Worker children and these groups are given specific time each week with their key worker staff members.

Our children will:

- Develop and explore their vocabulary and interest before learning to read using PAIR books in EYFS, encouraging parental structured discussions.
- Learn to recognise letter sounds (phonemes); to learn how to accurately form each letter, to identify how sounds are created (graphemes), segment and blend to read words accurately using the Read, Write Inc. (RWI)
- Read matched books, either through RWI books or PAIR in Little Sparks Nursery.
- Be exposed to a wide range of texts for all seven areas of our curriculum including sharing class texts, which are voted for by the children.
- Develop and improve their communication and language through speaking and listening activities.
- Learn a deep understanding of numbers to 10 and explore numerical patterns.
- To be provided with opportunities to learn outdoor skills in our Forest School.

- Spend time with their Key Worker and build positive relationships.
- Be provided with opportunities to develop their emotional literacy skills through a Whole School Thrive Approach.
- Develop self-confidence with their own physical development, both fine motor and gross motor skills.

Rationale for our Early Years Unit at Sutton Park Primary

Why do we open our Nursery/Reception doors and when?

We open our Nursery/Reception doors to become an EYFS Unit during our child-initiated time. This is when the children can choose to learn in either Reception or Nursery, supported by adults who scaffold new learning and support recently developed skills and understanding.

The benefit is that the children have a secure sense of belonging from an early age and transition from nursery to reception is seamless.

Children access a curriculum and learning environment which covers a 36-to-60-month age range working at their individual developmental stage. There is no ceiling to what children can achieve; they can extend learning in one area if they are ready, but also spend more time consolidating skills in another area of learning if this is required.

We ensure clear progression in the planned curriculum and resources provided from Nursery into Reception.

All children can choose to learn through their play outside. We have two doors to access our outdoor area, one from Nursery and the other from Reception. Outdoor play is important because this allows children to develop self-confidence, independence and self-esteem. They also develop an awareness of risk taking and new challenges in their play. It's a fabulous way to connect with the natural world also.

We also invite our Parents/carers in to read for two afternoons a week as a unit. This enables our Parents and Carers to ask any questions they have about their child's progression with early reading and for us to have an opportunity to offer advice on how our Read, Write Inc phonics works here at Sutton Park and how they can support their child with this at home.

There are times when we learn separately, such as phonics, snack time, key worker time and story time. This is because we are two separate classes of different age and in reception we are working towards our end of Reception Early Learning Goals whilst in Nursery we are working on Development Matters which is more age appropriate. It is also an opportunity for us to work in smaller groups where we can focus and concentrate more effectively.

Our Curriculum:

At Sutton Park, we plan an exciting and challenging curriculum for our children in Early Years. We plan and deliver the same topic across the EYFS unit and adapt to age appropriate texts.

The seven areas of learning and development (from the EYFS framework), are all important and interconnected. Three areas are particularly important for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, for building their capacity to learn and form relationships and thrive.

The three areas are known as the **prime areas**. These are:

Communication and Language – Listening, Attention and Understanding, and Speaking

Physical Development – Gross Motor Skills and Fine Motor Skills

Personal, Social and Emotional Development – Self-Regulation, Managing Self and Building Relationships. The specific areas of learning develop essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The **specific areas** are:

Literacy – Comprehension, Word Reading and Writing

Mathematics – Numbers and Numerical Patterns

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

Expressive Arts and Design – Creating with Materials and Being Imaginative and Expressive.

We believe a balance of adult led learning and child-initiated play provide our children with the best possible start to their education. During children's play, our early years practitioners interact with the children to stretch and challenge them further. We place a high importance on the **Characteristics of Effective Learning**. These highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them.

The three **characteristics of effective learning** are:

Playing and Exploring – children investigate and explore things through experiences and are willing to 'have a go'.

Active Learning – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy achievements.

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

Impact:

Little Sparks Nursery children will work towards the 3 and 4 year old expectations of the Development Matters document. Our Reception children will work towards achieving the 17 Early Learning Goals by the end of their Reception year. These judgements are based on a combination of adult led and child-initiated learning.

At the end of the Reception year the children will also be assessed on their achievements against the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning.

“Assessments of children's learning are detailed, and all staff contribute to them. The effective assessments ensure that planning builds upon children's learning. As a result, children are making good progress across the early years. Children are exceptionally well prepared for Year 1. “ OFSTED March 2017

Observation, Assessment and Planning:

We use the EYFS supporting document Development Matters (2020) to guide observation, assessment and planning. The prime areas of learning are central to all teaching and the specific areas of learning provide children with a broad curriculum and with opportunities to strengthen and apply the prime areas of learning. This is particularly important in developing language and extending vocabulary.

Planning within the EYFS consists of a yearly planning overview to ensure coverage and progression, medium term planning is based around half termly themes which follow a two-yearly rolling programme. This moves into short term and weekly planning.

These plans are used by the EYFS teachers as a vehicle of interest to deliver the children's next steps in learning and feed into weekly planning. However, the teacher may alter these in response to the needs, achievements, and interests of the children.

Staff are skilled at observing children to identify their achievements, interests and next steps for learning. Practitioners consider the individual needs, interests, and development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all areas of learning and development. These observations and discussions with children then lead the direction of the planning. All staff are involved in evaluating provision and planning changes or enhancements to support or extend children's learning.

Staff share 'Wow' moments of children's progression with Parents/carers through Tapestry, our online learning journal.

Assessment and recording Systems:

On entry to Nursery and Reception, the Early Years practitioners use their professional judgement, based on observations of individuals, to record the starting points for the children's level of development. Ongoing **assessment** is an integral part of the learning

and development process. Children are observed in all areas of the curriculum and significant observations are recorded showing personal achievements.

Children are assessed across the seven areas of learning using the Development Matters age and stage of development bands. When assessing whether a child is at the expected level of development, practitioners draw on their knowledge of the child and their own professional judgement against age related expectations. This information is used to shape future teaching and learning experiences for each child.

We measure the percentage of pupils achieving age related expectations throughout the academic year, put supportive interventions in place if and when needed.

Class teachers use observations to make formative assessments which inform future planning and ensure that all children build on their current knowledge and skills at a good pace.

Summative assessments compare children's attainment to age related expectations using 'Development Matters'. This is tracked using the school's data system to ensure rates of progress are at least good for all children, including vulnerable groups such as those with SEND, Pupil Premium or EAL children. Our assessment judgements are moderated both in school and with other schools in our academy. We also partake in local authority quality assurance sessions to ensure our school judgements are informed and validated.

Statutory Assessments:

Children will complete the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) within the first 6 weeks of joining Reception, regardless of when they join the class, unless they have been assessed previously. The RBA is an age-appropriate assessment of mathematics and literacy, communication and language, that is delivered in English. It is clearly linked to the learning and development requirements of the EYFS. The purpose of the RBA is to provide an on-entry assessment of pupil attainment to be used as a starting point from which a cohort-level progress measure to the end of key stage 2 (KS2) can be created.

Early years Foundation Stage profile:

In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, and no later than 30 June in that term, the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile is completed for each child.

Practitioners must indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are not yet reaching expected levels (emerging) across the seven areas of learning contained in the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage. Each child's level of development is recorded as Emerging or Expected against the 17 Early Learning Goals.

Additional Support:

We recognise the unique practice of nurturing the learning of young children with specific needs and we are aware of the importance of early intervention for children facing specific developmental/learning challenges.

Early intervention ensures all children can access every aspect of the school curriculum.

Intervention can take different forms, from supporting parents, school-based programs to improve children's learning potential, social and emotional skills and additional support at school from appropriate staff (Teachers and support assistants). Support will be offered as soon as possible for children who have difficulty with their learning

We make differentiated provision for all ability levels within school and, if deemed appropriate after discussion with parents/carers, support from outside agencies.

The class teacher is responsible for identifying and planning for individual needs with help from the SENDCO .

Our experienced SEND Coordinator works closely with staff as well as parents and carers to ensure tailored support is available if necessary.

Inclusion:

All children are valued as individuals at Sutton Park Primary School irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability and gender. We ensure that we meet the individual, learning needs of all our pupils through our excellent teaching and learning, providing differentiated work and a personalised approach. We have high expectations for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, ensuring the best possible progress for our pupils through an exciting curriculum.

Safety and Welfare:

Safety and security is a high priority at Sutton Park and it is important that all children in our care are safe. We recognise that 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 caring for them.

We understand that we are legally required to comply with the welfare requirements as stated in section three of the Statutory Framework for EYFS (2021) and have regard to the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', and 'Working Together to Safeguard Children's statutory guidance and the 'Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales'.

Partnerships with Parents and Carers:

We are always available for our Parents and carers at the beginning and end of each school day at the classroom where Parents/Carers can approach us with any questions or concerns that they may have.

In addition to this our Parents/Carers can contact us through their child's Tapestry online learning journal and their Seesaw account (Reception children only) which is also used for home learning.

We strive to create and maintain partnership with parents and carers as we recognise that together, we can have a more significant impact on a child's learning. We meet and

greet the children with their Parents/Carers at the classroom door at the beginning and end of each school day and have a 'Door Open' policy where we are always available. We want parents to feel they can speak to us about their child at any time and feel comfortable in our setting.

As well as the Reception visit days we offer an 'Induction Evening' for Parents/Carers in the summer term before your child starts, an opportunity to meet the staff, view the classroom, tour the school, make a 'Helping Hand' (See transition) and even to taste the food provided for our hot dinners.

Regular communication with Parents and Carers occurs through the use of both Tapestry and Seesaw.

Transitions:

When a child gains a place at Sutton Park primary School, we invite the parents /carers to attend an induction evening at the school where they will get the chance to meet the Early Years Team and to make a 'Helping Hand' for their child. The "helping Hand" supports their transition in the early days if they are struggling with separation, we include one of their Parents/carers on the back of the hand that they have made for them with ease their struggles. Children will then have the opportunity to attend an introductory day to develop familiarity with the setting and practitioners.

We ask that parents drop off their child to enable them to explore independently.

Teachers carry out visits/talk to those involved with the child at prior settings in order to gain an understanding of each child before transition sessions.

In the final term of Reception, the Year 1 teachers will meet with the Early Years staff to discuss each child's development against the Early Learning Goals in order to support a smooth transition to Year 1. The children will also have a number of transition sessions in their Year 1 class with their new teacher before the end of their first year in school.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

It is the responsibility of the EYFS staff to follow this policy. The Senior Leadership Team will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring system. This policy will be reviewed at the start of each academic year and will incorporate the views of all staff concerned. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.