

SOUTHMERE PRIMARY ACADEMY

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

Reviewed and updated: August 2016

Next review: September 2017

Our basic principles

This early years foundation stage policy is based upon the principles of:

- A unique child – every child is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Positive relationships – children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- Enabling environments – children learn and develop well in enabling environments in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents/carers.
- Learning and development – children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. Including those with SEN or disabilities.

The statutory requirements – the law under which we operate

Our practice at this school is based on the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) which sets the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five, including children with special educational needs.

The EYFS seeks to provide:

- Quality and consistency in early years settings.
- A secure foundation through learning and development opportunities.
- Partnership working between practitioners and with parents/carers.
- Equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

The framework is underpinned by a government order and regulations:

- The learning and development requirements are given legal force in an order made in 2007 under section 39(1)(a) of the Childcare Act 2006.
- The safeguarding and welfare requirements are given legal force by regulations made under section 39(1)(b) of the Childcare Act 2006.

The current version of the statutory framework became effective in September 2014. Its main provisions are:

- **A progress check at age two** – we have children at this school who are under the age of three. We are obliged by law to review their progress at some stage between age two and three. We provide a short written summary of this check to parents and carers.

- **Statutory areas of learning** – we follow the statutory areas of learning and development (educational programmes). These consist of seven areas which must shape activities and experiences for all children under five in all early years settings. There are three prime areas and four specific areas. We work towards the early learning goals – these are goals that all providers must help children work towards, that is, the knowledge, skills and understanding which young children should have acquired by the end of the academic year in which they reach the age of five. There are 17 early learning goals.
- **Assessment** – we carry out the statutory assessment arrangements. These are arrangements for measuring progress and requirements against the 17 goals, which we report to parents/carers.
- **EYFS profile** – we carry out the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile process before the child goes on to year 1.

In addition,

- We monitor carefully the balance between play and teaching – all providers are responsible by law for making ongoing judgments about the balance between play and teaching and between adult-led and child-led activities.
- We make provision when a child has English as an additional language – the framework explains clearly the reasonable steps providers must make when English is a child's additional language. It specifies how a child's skills in English should be assessed.
- We carry out all the statutory safeguarding and welfare requirements, covering child protection, the suitability of EYFS managers, staff qualifications, staff to child ratios and the safety or suitability of premises. We also have a policy for administering medicines to children in our care.
- Children are provided with meals and snacks that are balanced and nutritious and which are prepared and served in a well-equipped hygienic setting. Staff who serve food have appropriate training in food handling.

School practice – how we apply the law and look after our children

Our aims

As an integral part of following the EYFS framework, we also recognise that:

- In addition to a relevant curriculum, effective education requires practitioners who understand and are able to implement the educational programme requirements.
- Effective education requires understanding that children develop rapidly during the early years – physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially.
- Children feel included, secure and valued by addressing and meeting their individual needs.
- Early years experiences build on what children already know and can do.

At our school, we aim to ensure that:

- By working closely with parents/carers, no child feels excluded or disadvantaged.

- Our early years curriculum is carefully structured.
- We provide opportunities for children to engage in activities planned by adults and those that they plan or initiate themselves.
- Our practitioners observe and respond appropriately to the children.
- We provide well-planned, purposeful activities and appropriate intervention to engage the children in the learning process.
- The learning environment is well-planned and well-organised in order that children have rich, stimulating experiences.
- Our practitioners provide high quality care and education to ensure effective learning and development for young children.

How we work

The Two Year Olds are led by the Two Year Olds provision leader and our team of practitioners. The foundation stage is led by our foundation stage leader with a team of teachers, assistants and nursery nurses. Information about all these practitioners is displayed in school.

What we teach – the foundation stage curriculum

Some children attend this school from a very early age and they are in our pre-school groups. The practitioners working with these very young children are guided by the early years foundation stage framework, gradually working towards the early learning goals. Each child has a named key person, who is most closely involved with their development and progress.

At age three, children move to the foundation stage and we also admit further children at this stage. The foundation stage covers the development of children between the ages of three and five years. The reception year is the final year of the foundation stage. All children at the foundation stage continue to work towards the early learning goals. Throughout the foundation stage each child has a named key person.

The early learning goals are divided into the seven areas of development, which are:

The prime areas

Communication and language

- Listening and attention.
- Understanding.
- Speaking.

Physical development

- Moving and handling.
- Health and self-care.

Personal, social and emotional development

- Self-confidence and self-awareness.
- Managing feelings and behaviour.

- Making relationships.

Specific areas

Literacy

- Reading.
- Writing.

Mathematics

- Numbers.
- Shape, space and measures.

Understanding the world

- People and communities.
- The world.
- Technology.

Expressive arts and design

- Exploring and using media and materials.
- Being imaginative.

We value each area of development and appreciate the importance of learning through play in achieving the early learning goals relating to each area. Our planning is structured to reflect the different ways in which children learn and develop. We provide a balance of activities that children can initiate themselves and those that are teacher directed. We provide opportunities for teaching and learning both indoors and outdoors. We are aware of the rich experiences that children come into school with and are prepared to extend these appropriately.

Assessment

As part of the teaching and learning process, staff members assess each child's development in relation to the phases of development and early learning goals, as documented in the EYFS framework. Assessments are made throughout the early years foundation stage on the basis of planned observations and knowledge of the whole child. All seven areas of development are included in the assessment. We use Tapestry to capture the evidence we use in making assessment judgements.

Progress check at age two

When a child is aged between two and three, his/her progress is reviewed and we send to parents/carers a short written summary. This will cover development in the prime areas and will identify the child's strengths as well as any areas where progress is less than expected. We will discuss with parents and carers how this summary of development can be used to support learning at home. The summary can also be useful in informing health visitors when they carry out the healthy child programme health and development review. There is no prescribed or standard format, so we have developed our own document, after consulting with parents, practitioners and other professionals working with children in our area. The check is normally carried out by the child's key person and arises from ongoing observational assessments carried out as part of everyday practice.

Internal assessment

We also assess each child internally on a regular basis. Parents are provided with a written report of the child's progress against the early learning goals at least once a year and they are given an opportunity to discuss the report with staff. If we are concerned at any stage that a child is not progressing as they should, the key person will contact parents and suggest a meeting.

Progress check at age five

In the final term of the year in which the child reaches five, and no later than 30 June in that term, we will complete the foundation stage profile for each child. We use the methodology outlined in the DFE document entitled 'Assessment and Reporting Arrangements (ARA) published in 2015, which contains details on assessing and reporting the EYFS profile. New Early Years Foundation Stage Profile handbook was issued in 2016 and we follow the requirements in that handbook meticulously.

The profile provides a way of summarising children's achievements and provides important information for parents and year 1 teachers. It ensures that each child leaves the foundation stage with their strengths acknowledged and next steps for learning identified. We will assess each child's level of development against the early learning goals and indicate whether the child is meeting expected level or exceeding expected levels. If a child has not yet reached expected levels (known as the emerging level), we will highlight those areas where further progress is needed. Judgements are made on the basis of cumulative observational evidence recorded over the course of the year. We use the recommended form of assessment ratings, which are clearly explained on the report received by parents or carers.

Assessment ratings

- 1 Child who is at the emerging level at the end of the EYFS.
- 2 Child who is at the expected level at the end of the EYFS
- 3 Child who is at the exceeding level at the end of the EYFS

Parents can request a full copy of the EYFS Profile on their child's progress, free of charge, if they so wish. There are no national achievement or attainment tables for the EYFS. However all state funded providers of early years education are required to submit EYFS profile data and contextual information to the LA and the LA in its turn is under a statutory requirement to submit data to the DFE. Independent schools and registered childminders who are not state funded can be requested to submit data by an LA. We receive a visit every four years from a moderator who ensures that we carry out our profiles consistently with national requirements. In other years, members of our staff attend a moderation meeting to ensure that there is consistency amongst local schools.

Additional assessments are made of children with special educational needs and if they have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan, there are reviews of their plan at least once per year.

Ofsted

We are subject to regular Ofsted inspections of our delivery of the EYFS and reports of those inspections are publicly available. Our most recent inspection was on 29th 30th November 2016 and the report can be accessed on-line or hard copies are available.

Transition to year 1

Our staff work closely with year 1 teachers to ensure that our children have a seamless transition into year 1 of their statutory education. Teachers meet together to discuss and expand on the EYFS profile and these conversations form part of the effective learning narratives that accompany each child entering year.1. We also supply additional information about each child's attainment to help the

year 1 teacher to have a fully rounded picture of each child's attainment in order to plan the curriculum.

Other requirements

As we stated above, the early years foundation framework also contains requirements of the standard of provision and facilities for the children. These are also subject to Ofsted scrutiny and inspection. We fully comply with these requirements, as outlined below.

Staff

All our staff are fully qualified to carry out the role assigned to them. We are especially careful to ensure that we have sufficient staff with the appropriate qualifications to meet the statutory child to staff ratios for each age group. We follow exactly the DFE regulations concerning the ratio of staff to children and the level of qualifications required.

All staff have enhanced disclosure and barring service (DBS) clearance and are fully trained in our safeguarding policy and procedures.

Each child has a named key person whose role is to ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs and to offer a settled relationship for the child as well as keeping regular contact with parents/carers.

Premises

Our premises and equipment are organised in a way that meet the needs of pupils and in particular provide maximum possible access for children with disabilities. We offer statutory levels of provision for outdoor play. Nappy changing facilities are more than adequate for the numbers of children in the school. We have a special room where staff and parents can talk in privacy.

Records and information to parents

We keep careful records of progress as indicated in the assessment section of this policy. There are also confidential medical records which are held in such a way that the privacy of each child is properly protected.

We ensure that there is a two-way flow of information about each child between us and their parents/carers. We report on:

- Progress (see the section above on assessment).
- The range and type of activities provided for the children.
- How we support children with special needs or disabilities, especially if they have an EHC plan..
- The kinds of food and drink we offer to children.
- The name of the child's key person and how to contact us in an emergency.

We hold meetings when parents/carers can come to meet their child's key person and other members of staff who are involved with that child. We also hold information meetings when a key professional will conduct question and answer sessions on subjects of interest.

We have a written complaints procedure for addressing concerns or complaints from parents and/or carers. We also make available to parents and carers information on how they can contact Ofsted if they believe we are not meeting our statutory obligations.

Child protection

Our practice is fully in line with the guidance and procedures of the Local Safeguarding Board. We also follow all the statutory guidance contained in the DFE document 'Working together to safeguard children' (March 2015) and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2016).

- All our staff are carefully selected and have obtained an enhanced criminal records disclosure.
- All members of staff have the appropriate qualifications, training, support and skills.
- A member of our staff is designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding the children in our care.
- All our staff are trained to identify safeguarding issues when they arise and will respond in a timely and appropriate way.

Links to whole school policies

Whole school policies apply to the pre-school, foundation and primary sections of this school.

The foundation stage policy operates in line with other whole school policies, which address the important issues of:

- Behaviour.
- Special educational needs.
- Academically more able children.
- Health and safety.
- Child protection.
- Equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory policies as well as the prevent duty.
- Transition between phases.