

Early Years Foundation Stage policy



Written by: Annette Blewett and Lianna Hodson

Date: July 2019

To be reviewed July 2021

Spring Meadow Infant and Nursery School - Our vision and values

At Spring Meadow our children are **kind** and **brave** young people who acquire the skills and knowledge they need to succeed and compete in the world in which they live and grow. They are explorers who are **curious** and proactive, always seeking out answers to new questions and ideas. Their kindness and compassion for their fellow human beings enable them to live and grow in a safe and compassionate world. A world in which we all wish to live and grow!

Our EYFS guiding principles

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2017 statutory framework of the EYFS. **There are four guiding principles that shape the practice in our early years settings.**

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be brave and resilient, **curious** and questioning, kind, confident and self-assured from a very young age
- Every child learns to be strong and independent through positive relationships developed through our PSED programmes.
- Every child learns and develops well in enabling environments, in which the experiences meet their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners, parents and carers.
- The EYFS framework covers the education and care of all children in early years' provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

This policy aims to ensure that:

Leaders provide a curriculum that is ambitious and designed to give all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND, the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life.

Consistent use of high quality assessment, consistent and focused planning approaches and high quality teaching and learning. This ensures every child makes good progress from their starting points.

We have close partnership working between practitioners, parents and carers

Every child is included and supported through the equality of opportunity we provide.

Assessment – How we ensure we know what a child needs to learn and what they have achieved

At Spring Meadow Infant and Nursery School, daily assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement and attainment, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape planning. Practitioners also take into account observations shared by parents and carers.

Tapestry provides a platform for teachers to record achievements and provides parents with information about attainment and next steps learning. It is also used to support summative assessment. This data is recorded onto Target Tracker for management purposes only.

Early Development Journals (EDJ) are completed for children with SEND and in receipt of the Pupil Premium Grant. The SEND leader and Early Help team work with the staff to identify areas for development.

At the end of the EYFS a child will be assessed at reaching one of the following standards.

Not yet met the end of EYFS expectations in all 17 aspects	Met the end of EYFS expectations in all 17 aspects	Exceeded the end of Year expectations in all 17 aspects
---	---	--

Most children will meet the expected standard. Some children will exceed and be challenged to work at a greater depth as they move through the Reception Year. Some children have differing needs and challenges and not meet the required expectations at the end of the Reception Year. If this is the case, parents and carers will be kept informed at all times so we can work together to enable the child to make the best progress possible.

Keeping parent informed – enabling parents to support their child

Children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and carers. Parents and carers are provided with a comprehensive body of knowledge about their child through our on-line learning journey using Tapestry, we also provide extended parent consultations to all parents, open sessions for parents to attend learning events during the school day as well as end of year reports.

Planning – this is what we do once we know what every child needs using our assessment information

The Development Matters Document provides vital information about teaching and learning – one of the key areas are the Characteristics of Effective Learning, these are:

- **playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and ‘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

In order to secure these vital characteristics teachers must:

- Provide a long term overview of coverage of all areas across an academic year, these include the appropriate Development Matters statements.
- Produce half term planning mapping out a tailored learning journey, including relevant skills to be developed according to current stages of development for a child.
- Produce short term, weekly planning so that teachers can adapt current learning to meet need based on the assessment information retrieved over the preceding week, as well as responding to the current interests of the child.

Planning in this way secures consistency across the EYFS and ensures the needs and interests of all children are met.

4. Curriculum

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 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 early years curriculum at Spring Meadow teaches key skills through these seven areas of learning, ensuring that there is a clear skills development from Nursery into Reception and then into year one and beyond.

We follow a planned set of topics. Teaching children to read is a high priority and so we use high quality English texts which provide a weekly or bi weekly theme, interwoven with engaging practical experiences, both inside and out. These texts spark children’s curiosity and provide rich opportunities for language development. The provision is then enhanced linked to the theme and also taking account of any interests children have shown. Practitioners support children in identifying their own lines of enquiry by leading them on learning walks around the learning environment to ensure that all children are aware of the rich learning and play experiences on offer and encouraging them to set their own challenges. We also have a designated outdoor learning area, where the early years’ classes have weekly Forest School sessions. Led by qualified Forest School leaders these provide opportunities for children to develop self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation, empathy, and their social skills. These are developed through a variety of activities for example, cooking on open fires, building dens and shelters and looking for and identifying wildlife.

Focused teaching and continuous provision

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of focused teaching and child-initiated activities using our continuous and enhanced resource provision. Practitioners respond to each child’s emerging needs and interest. As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more focus-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1.

Phonics

In nursery phase 1 letters and sounds activities are provided within seven aspects to support the children with being able to: Listen attentively, enlarge their vocabulary, speak confidently to adults and other children, discriminate

phonemes, reproduce audibly the phonemes they hear, in order, all through the word, use sound-talk to segment words into phonemes.

In Reception the Sounds-Write phonic program is introduced. This is a whole school approach ensuring a consistency for all children, enabling good progress from one year group to the next with staff supporting children in the most effective ways. Sounds-Write lessons are adapted to make them engaging and linked to topics and children's own interests ensuring the order of the sounds taught is maintained.

A 30 minute Phonics session is timetabled daily. Teachers provide differentiated phonics activities for teaching assistants working with groups during timetabled phonics.

Phonics sessions are gradually introduced from week two in Reception, with short, active sessions that include songs and movement, designed to be fun and engaging. Once the children are more settled, usually by October half term, the length of the sessions will have increased and also include writing letters. Children are grouped by ability at this point to ensure good progress can be made for every child.

Maths session will begin from week one, initially with songs and rhymes, increasing to a longer whole class session of about 10-15 minutes. In the first few weeks of Reception, children's understanding of mathematical concepts are assessed for the maths mastery curriculum we deliver. This enables teachers to identify which children may need extra input with their mathematical concepts (such as counting 1-1 and subitising) in order to gain a firm grasp of number once introduced.

Reading: Nursery children are exposed to a wide variety of reading books. Teachers use key texts to drive the topic of the week, key reading areas as well as communication spaces enable children to access books for pleasure throughout their time in nursery. Teachers' model how a reader behaves so children can copy these, key new language is identified and shared with the children to enhance their understanding of new words. Story sacks provide resources to support play and a love of reading and parents are encouraged to take these home to enable parents and children to enjoy the reading experience.

Reading: Reception children continue to access a wide variety of reading books in the environment as well as those linked to the current topic. Children are also introduced to banded reading books to begin the journey of learning how to read books using phonic knowledge and key sight vocabulary. However, the love and joy of reading is the absolutely key essential factor and class teachers work to ensure a child is not moved up through the colour banded system too quickly as this can cause understanding of the story in books to be completely lost. Reception teachers provide an informative induction session for parents where the reading process is explained and ways in which parents can support this effectively.

Home activities and learning opportunities:

Nursery children are set home learning challenges. Parents are encouraged to upload photos and comments relating to the challenges onto Tapestry. These are shared and celebrated at school.

Reception have two home challenges each week. One is linked to either Maths or Literacy, the other is focused on a different area of learning. Phonemes and high frequency words are also sent home at a rate that is matched to the child's progress. Banded weekly reading books are sent home with a reading record for parents/carers to complete.

Safeguarding and welfare procedures

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy which can be located on the school's website. www.springmeadow.cambs.sch.uk

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the EYFS leadership team.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board