



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Aims:

Excellence in the Heart of the Community

'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.' (EYFS Statutory Framework 2012)

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is based on four principles:

- A unique child
- Positive relationships
- Enabling environments
- Learning and developing

A Unique Child

At Sedbergh Primary School we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and independent. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates and with different learning styles. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration/ sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We welcome and encourage the diversity of individuals within school and do not discriminate against children because of differences and encourage children to see difference as a positive value. At Sedbergh Primary School we believe that all children matter and are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school. Children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all provisions available. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and we do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning. In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds. We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

Assessments take into account contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential special educational needs is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage and the schools Inclusion manager is called upon for further information and advice. Appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the school's Inclusion policy for SEN.

Welfare

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See Whole School Safeguarding Children Policy). "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."

At Sedbergh Primary School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2012. We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare and safeguarding of children.
- promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.

Positive Relationships

At Sedbergh Primary School we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts Nursery and Reception in order to detail how we aim to work with their child; and we can talk to parents about their child before their child starts in our school;
- children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher together with their parents before starting nursery during a home visit.
- the children's online learning journey which parents can have access to at all times from home or they can come into school and use our computers.
- parents adding photos and comments to their child's learning journey to share the experiences and learning that takes place at home.
- offering parents opportunities to talk about their child's progress. There is a formal meeting for parents twice a year at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private. Parents also receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year. Throughout the year they will also receive their child's next steps and possible ideas to support learning at home.
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns by providing a quiet and confidential area.
- support children through the transition from pre-school to Nursery and then to Reception with the children attending school through a staggered intake. This is also to support staff and parents in getting to know each other as well as the children.
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: stay and play sessions, assemblies, school visits, concerts, and fundraising events.
- providing parents an opportunity to celebrate their child's learning and talk to their child about what they want to do at school through termly reviews which will inform planning and provision;
- written contact through news books as well as the acknowledgement that parents can ring school to contact their child's teacher.
- communication through reading diaries
- providing welcome booklets at the start of Nursery and Reception

Teaching Staff

Mrs Jones is the class teacher in Reception and Miss Healey is the Nursery class teacher. However, during PPA and the teachers absence the replacement teacher or TA takes on this role. Mrs Bowman is a Senior Early Years Teaching Assistant and Mrs White recently joined the team as Nursery Teaching Assistant.

Enabling Environments

At Sedbergh Primary school we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's' development. We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident,

secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

The planning within the EYFS follows the achievements, interests and needs of the children, following careful observation of each child and discussions with the parents of the children. As a basis, the planning follows the Dimensions curriculum to stay in line with the rest of the school; however, topics may vary or change depending on the interests of the children. Regular planning sessions with the children also take place. We make regular assessments of the children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs.

Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. These observations are recorded in the child's online Learning Journey, long observation sheet or are put on the Learning Wall. Adult led activities are assessed on a daily assessment sheet, as well as written feedback in Literacy or Maths books and verbal feedback being given. All children have next steps in their books or on their scrap book wall.

On entry into Reception a baseline assessment is carried out in accordance with the Early Excellence Baseline assessment. The assessment is mainly carried out through observations and mini assessment tasks, and then an online tick sheet is completed by the class teacher. An overall score is generated for each child, which is then converted into our school's tracking system on scholar pack. The scholar pack tracking is continued throughout the year. The Nursery teacher tracks children's progress using the scholar pack system.

The Learning Environment

Both Nursery and Reception are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, but also areas of quiet and rest. At Sedbergh Primary School we believe that play based learning is paramount and each room is set up in learning areas where children direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities provided by staff. Children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently where staff will enhance play and extend as needed to further individual learning. Reception children are also given their own challenge book to extend their independent learning and areas in the room are differentiated to suit all abilities.

Learning and Development

At Sedbergh Primary school we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand they are interconnected.

Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning and development of which three are "prime areas," and four "specific areas." The prime areas are

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development.

The specific areas are

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the world and
- Expressive arts and design

"Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Play is used as an essential part of children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. There is an on-going judgement to be made by practitioners about the balance between activities led by children, and activities led or guided by adults. Practitioners must respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. As children grow older, and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1." (Statutory Framework for EYFS 2012)

Planning children's activities will reflect in the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. At Sedbergh Primary School we support children in using the three characteristics of effective teaching and 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; and
 - **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.
- (Taken from statutory framework for the EYFS 2012)

In the Early Years Foundation Stage we also look closely at the Leuven scales for involvement and well-being, and assess these regularly through observations.

Religious Education is also taught in the reception classes in accordance with Cumbria guidelines.

Teaching and Learning Style

At Sedbergh Primary school we are dedicated to making the teaching we deliver as effective as possible. To achieve this we:

- set high expectations for attainment and progress.
- have good understanding of how children develop and learn.
- promote a positive partnership between teachers and parents so that children feel secure and develop a sense of wellbeing and achievement.

- make careful assessments and observations, including information provided by parents and other settings.
- identify children's progress and next steps (which are share with parents) and plan our provision and activities to meet children's individual needs and interests.
- provide activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities.
- carefully plan a curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goal throughout the EYFS.
- provide appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment.
- use a range of approaches that provide first hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication.
- encourage children to communicate and talk about learning and to develop independence and self-management

Class Organisation

At Sedbergh Primary our Foundation Stage is made up of an individual nursery and Reception class that work together at least once a term for special events e.g. concerts, theme days, sports day. Children are admitted into the Nursery in the September after their 3rd birthday for 5 mornings per week. Children are admitted into Reception in the September after their 4th birthday and become full time by the October half term.

Nursery

The classroom is situated at the front of the school with a designated entrance and corridor to enter our setting. We are able to provide places for a class size of 26 children with a full time teacher and teaching assistant.

Transition

From Pre-school /Feeder settings/home

During the summer term prior to a child's entry into the Nursery year, the following procedures have been put into place to ensure successful transition.

- Parents are invited to a meeting to ensure they know about school procedures and allocation of classes and can express any concerns they may have.
- During the spring and summer term staff will visit Sedbergh Playgroup to introduce themselves to the children and get to know them in a familiar setting.
- The children are invited to visit the Nursery class with Sedbergh playgroup and will come in small groups over a few weeks during the summer term. Children joining from other settings will also be invited to visit the class. The number of visits will depend on the child's needs and how much information gathering is required in order to support the child's transition.
- Children requiring extra support will have additional visits regardless of their setting. Often these children will have been identified as requiring additional support or are part of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) process.

During the autumn term each child will be provided with a home visit to re-familiarise themselves with the adults and to give book folders etc. needed for Nursery. All children will be part of a staggered intake to allow children to become familiar with the class and routines of the day. It also allows teachers and TA to observe the children's abilities and interests.

Reception

The classroom is situated at the back of the building and shares an entrance with Key Stage 1. We are able to provide places for a class size of 30 children with a full time teacher and part time teaching assistant.

Transition

From Nursery Class to Reception Class

Over the school year Nursery children are involved with many events throughout school and are often with Reception in joint events. This allows them to become familiar with the staff, classroom and routines in Reception and throughout the school.

During the summer term prior to a child's entry into the Reception year, the following procedures have been put into place to ensure successful transition.

- Parents are invited to a meeting to ensure they know about school procedures and allocation of classes and any concerns they may want to express.
- During the summer term Reception staff will take a Nursery session to become more familiar with children's abilities and interests.
- The children will visit the Reception class to have a session with the teacher and TA and to familiarise themselves with routines. The number of visits will depend on the child's needs and how much information gathering is required in order to support the child's transition.
- Children requiring extra support will have additional visits regardless of their setting. Often these children will have been identified as requiring additional support or are part of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) process.

From Reception Class to Key Stage 1

During the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile includes on-going observation, all relevant records held by the setting, discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer believes can offer a useful contribution.

Each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals. The profile indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are exceeding expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels

('emerging'). Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This informs the dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of those working in Nursery and Reception to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Headteacher and EYFS co-ordinator will carry out monitoring on EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule. This policy will be reviewed in January 2018 or as necessary.

Signed: *J. Jones*

Date: January 2016

Review Date: January 2018