

Swale Academies Trust
Early Years Foundation Stage
(EYFS) Policy



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1. Policy Overview

Our school

At Langney Primary Academy we believe in providing EYFS provision of the very highest quality in our nursery Bright Sparks and across our reception classes as we strive to be a centre of excellence for early years. We work collaboratively as an EYFS 'key stage' and as an Early Years Foundation Stage Village. This is an amended academy trust policy, however throughout the policy we have also incorporated aspects that make our EYFS special and distinctive within our community of schools.

Context

This Policy has been prepared in accordance with the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (effective from September 2014) (statutory Framework) and applies to all primary schools in the trust. This policy should be read together with the statutory framework.

The Academy's policies and procedures in relation to the Early Years Foundation stage (EYFS) are also reflected elsewhere within the Academy's general policy framework, included (but not limited to) within the following policies:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Equality and Inclusion Policy
- Pupil Behaviour and Exclusions Policy (primary)

These policies can be found at <https://www.swaleacademiustrust.org.uk/>

2. Aim

The Trust understand the importance of a strong foundation as a basis for future learning. In all of our schools we aim to create a safe, stimulating and positive environment which will enable children to become happy, confident and independent learners.

As outlined in the Statutory Framework "***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 chance.***"

We adhere to the Statutory Framework and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings.

- 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 practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

3. Principles into Practice

As part of our practice we;

- Provide a stimulating, creative, play based curriculum which covers the seven areas of learning.
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support.
- We value our partnership with parents and work closely with them.
- Plan challenging, fun learning experiences, based on the individual child informed by observation and assessment.
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in both adult and child-initiated activities.
- We have a well-established and child-centred key person approach in our nursery Bright Sparks. The key person in our reception classes is likely to be the class teacher who is accountable for the progress of all children.
- We recognise the importance of a creative, stimulating and safe learning environment, indoors and outdoors. We have an active and highly successful Learning at the Beach programme in the EYFS.

4. The Learning and Development Requirements

The EYFS learning and development requirements comprise:

- The seven areas of learning and development and the educational programmes (described below)
- The early learning goals, which summarise the knowledge, skills and understanding that all young children should have gained by the end of the Reception year; and
- The assessment requirements (when and how practitioners must assess children's achievements, and when and how they should discuss children's progress with parents and/or carers).

Our curriculum is led by children's needs and interests across the 7 areas of learning to enable the children to achieve and exceed the early learning goals.

Underpinning our curriculum are the Characteristics of Learning, which are;

- Playing and Exploring - Engagement
- Active Learning - Motivation
- Creating and thinking critically

All the seven areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

Our curriculum is based on the prime areas;

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, social and Emotional Development

These areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

Children are also supported through the four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The Specific areas are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive Arts and Design

Children would experience each area of learning and development through planned purposeful play. Children learn by leading their own play by taking part in play which is guided by adults. We recognise the importance for our children of enrichment activities, visits and visitors to provide first hand experiences.

Our practitioners must respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their developments through warm positive interactions.

Children have whole group and small group activities with a clear focus which will cover phonics and aspects of Literacy and Mathematics.

5. Observation and Assessment

Observation and Assessment of children's development and learning, occurs on a daily basis and informs our planning. We use the Early Excellence Assessment tracker to record children's achievements from birth to the end of reception and online learning journeys. Parents are invited to contribute to the online learning journeys and are invited to parents evening twice a year. In addition, parents are invited in to share their children's folder with them each term. These special folders include significant learning for each child, often with pictures and paintings that children and adults have chosen together to include. We often do this as part of a Fabulous Finish (parent sharing event).

We collaborate with parents and Health Visitors to complete the 27 Month progress Review in the nursery. Within the final term at nursery and in reception we provide the parents with a written report based on the child's development against each of the areas of learning and the characteristics of learning. For reception children we record children's progress towards the Early Learning Goals. Parents are given the opportunities to discuss these with the teacher in preparation for year 1.

Baseline assessments will take place during Term 1. This information will be used to inform planning and for EYFS leads to compare outcomes across the schools. Moderation of assessments will take place on a regular basis across all primary schools in the Trust.

6. Safeguarding and Welfare

We ensure that requirements for Safeguarding and Welfare, as set out in the statutory framework, are fully met.

Schools safeguarding policies set out procedures for child protection, suitable people, levels of qualification and training, arrangements for supervision, requirements for paediatric first aid and staff child ratios.

Each school has a designated safeguarding lead.

Children's health is promoted well and procedures are in place for responding to children who are ill or infectious. All Trust schools and settings have policies in place for administering medicines. Allergies are recorded and all staff are made aware.

Food and drink and healthy balanced and nutritious and fresh drinking water is available and accessible at all times. We record and act on information from parents and carers about individual children's dietary needs.

First aid box is accessible at all times. Paediatric first aid certificates will be prominently displayed in the school or setting.

Behaviour will be managed in line with the schools behaviour policy. In Nursery settings a named practitioner will be responsible for behaviour management.

Safety and suitability of premises, environment and equipment

Each school has clear procedures for assessing risks to children's safety and these risks are reviewed regularly. Risk assessments of the outdoor learning area should be carried out on a daily basis. Risk assessments should identify aspects of the environment that need to be checked on a regular basis, when and by whom and how the risk will be removed or minimised.

Outings

Schools will obtain written parental permission for children to take part in outings and risk assessments will be in place.

All schools have a complaints procedure which apply to EYFS.

7. Risk Assessments

Each school will have comprehensive health and safety risk assessments that inform their procedures and the EYFS lead is the person identified to be in charge of the implementation. Staff at every level will be involved in reviewing these as they are the ones with firsthand knowledge as to whether the control measures are effective and can give an informed view to help update procedures accordingly.

Day to day checks are carried out of the areas children use to ensure they are safe. Everybody is involved in these and can therefore take responsibility for their, and others safety.

EYFS leaders carry out risk assessments for certain activities when needed, the care of animals if there are pets, use of the outside area, visits from people outside of school who might bring equipment with them as well as any off site trips.

Whatever the reason for the risk assessment, the process remains the same:

- ✓ **Identification of risk or hazard** - where is it and what is it?
- ✓ **Decide who is at risk and how** - for example childcare staff, children, parents, cooks, cleaners.
- ✓ **Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions** - can you get rid of the risk altogether, if not how can you control it?
- ✓ **Record your findings and implement them** - prioritise, make a plan of action if necessary.
- ✓ **Monitoring and review** - how do you know if what has been decided is working, or is thorough enough? If it is not working, it will need to be amended, or maybe there is a better solution.

8. Parents as partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most important educators. We create and maintain positive partnerships with parents and carers throughout the phase and beyond.

Staff are available on a daily basis to speak with parents and children's online learning journeys are shared with parents throughout the year, as are their paper folders of significant learning. We also provide regular parent engagement events including workshops, along with opportunities to volunteer where appropriate.

9. Transitions

Transitions

We acknowledge that our youngest children will experience a range of transitions, sometimes across the same day in the nursery as we operate an extended day of wrap-around-care. Other significant transitions occur as children move from our 2 year old provision into our pre-school in the nursery, as children move into our reception classes and as children move from reception into Year 1. We do everything we possibly can to make these as smooth and seamless as possible so as to build on the experiences that come before.

We recognise the importance of smooth transitions within EYFS and beyond. All schools in the Trust will have a programme of home visits and settling in sessions where children have the opportunity to meet practitioners, teachers, teaching assistants and other children. In addition, at Langney we stagger children's start into school in September, with our Summer born children starting first, then our Spring and Autumn born children.

In the final term of EYFS the year 1 teachers will meet the children and staff to discuss each child's development against the Early Learning Goals. The discussion helps the Year 1 teachers to plan an effective, responsible and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children.

Effective transition from EYFS to year 1 is planned for through suitable timetabling, free flow opportunities, the use of an outside area, planning around the children's interests and continuing to assess children against the ELG's if they did not achieve GLD at the end of their time in EYFS.

10. EYFS Leadership and Management

All schools will have an identified EYFS lead.

The lead is responsible for:

- Monitoring the quality of teaching and learning to ensure consistency of provision and quality of interactions between adults and children.
- Induction and support for new members of staff including NQTs.
- Monitoring the quality of indoor and outdoor provision
- Deployment of additional adults
- Leading planning meetings
- Ensuring the accuracy of assessment information
- Individual teachers should be responsible for uploading their own data to the Early Excellence Assessment Tracker but the lead is responsible for analysing the information, reviewing the progress of different groups of children and identifying gaps.

- Regular team meetings to evaluate rates of progress and identify children on track to meet and exceed end of year expectations.
- Meetings for EYFS leads are held every term and occasionally all reception teachers will be invited.
- EYFS leads are responsible for promoting the safety of children at all times including ensuring risk assessments are in place as appropriate.