



Stoke Park Nursery and Primary School

EYFS Policy

This is an SPPS Statutory Policy – Approval may be delegated by the Governing Body.

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The Early Years Foundation Stage at Stoke Park Nursery and Primary School

Rationale and definitions

The EYFS sets the standards that all early years' providers must meet to ensure that children age 0-5 have the best opportunities to learn and develop well.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based on four themes:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development which is broken down into 7 key areas.

At Stoke Park Nursery and Primary School, we seek not only to meet but to exceed the required standard. Our aim is to nurture children during their time in Early Years, laying a foundation for their success, by being healthy, safe and having the knowledge and skills they need as they progress through school and beyond. To do this we seek to:

- *Inspire each child to learn the skills, knowledge and understanding they need to have highly successful, fulfilled childhoods and future adult lives*
- *Help them to become children who build trusting friendships, are strong in spirit, show resilience, make wise personal choices and have strength of character*
- *Provide the opportunity to be part of a thriving community that enriches childhood, celebrates success and encourages them to believe in their own potential*

This policy sets out how at Stoke Park Nursery and Primary School, we evaluate three constituent parts to ensure the quality of education in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The **curriculum framework** - sets out intent

The **delivery and teaching** of the curriculum -how the curriculum framework is implemented.

The **impact of the taught curriculum** - how the combined effect of the planned curriculum and teaching impacts on pupil outcomes.

1. Curriculum Intent:

Young children learn through Curiosity and Play

At Stoke Park Nursery and Primary school we embrace this idea and believe there are no limits to what our children can achieve when they can build upon a strong foundation of inspired teaching and a strong home-school partnership.

Our highly skilled practitioners recognise the many different ways adults can help young children learn; including:

- the use of quality interactions
- observing and noticing children's interests
- responding in a variety of ways

Our intent is that whilst following the guidance of the EYFS Framework we will provide a wide range of both discretely planned adult led and child-initiated activities and opportunities for learning through play. We aim to nurture *knowledge, creativity, kindness, wisdom, critical thinking, empathy* and many more of the skills and values that allow young children to develop and flourish as learners. We also believe that through this approach, children can discover their own unique talents and develop them to a high standard.

To achieve a good level of development, aspects of knowledge such as Phonics and Number need to be automated and fluent to support and enable later learning.

Our teachers use their professional expert knowledge, through discrete, responsive and enrichment planning, to teach the children both disciplinary and substantive knowledge.

Our intent is to provide frequent opportunities for children to re-visit key areas through adult led activities and play. We do this through quality teaching and delivery of the EYFS curriculum, embedding the Characteristics of Effective Learning and providing a learning environment where our children have the very best learning experiences, opportunities and interactions.

We are determined to enable our children to achieve their very best outcomes and our teachers use their expert knowledge of the children to assess what each unique child knows, to monitor and make judgements on their progress, and use this information to plan next steps, taking into account the child's individual interests and disposition to learning.

At Stoke Park Nursery and Primary School, we are committed to enabling all children to have the very best start to their educational journey so that they can discover, learn, strive to succeed and be proud of what they have achieved.

2. Teaching and curriculum delivery:

Through the enhanced provision plan and responsive planning, all staff can effectively respond to children's interests and provide a good balance of continuous provision and adult-planned activities. This enables children to choose from a range of activities which provide challenge and the opportunity to practise and embed play, skills and knowledge throughout the different areas of learning. Teaching connects new knowledge to existing knowledge across sequences of learning and within lessons, through communicating and modelling (particularly language), showing,

explaining, demonstrating, exploring ideas, encouraging, questioning, recalling, and providing a narrative for what the children are doing, facilitating and setting new challenges.

The areas of the curriculum that are taught discretely are *Phonics, Literacy, Numeracy and P.E (in Reception)*. Other aspects of the curriculum such as Knowledge and Understanding of the World and PSED may at times be taught discretely. Attention given to the equipment and resources provided within the learning environment allows children to access continuous provision with outdoor free-flow between Nursery and Reception, which benefits both cohorts of children and develops school readiness well. We believe this supports a culture of high expectations for children and families from a very early age.

Sensory and schema play is supported throughout the learning environment, both inside and outside, for example, using sand, water and sensory resources. Challenges are added to aid development of hand-eye coordination and fine motor skills, such as the 'funky finger challenge'. Our outside provision also includes space for large loose parts play, which supports problem solving as well as developing balance strength and co-ordination. Using responsive planning and the enhanced provision plan staff augment the provision daily with resources that meet the children's interests, enabling them to explore and learn in greater depth through following their natural curiosity.

Emotional Well-being and Belonging

The children's well-being and sense of belonging is supported by having a variety of work and photos displayed, including their own 'work' and mark-making efforts, as well as 'finished' work. We provide a 'Soft Start' at the beginning of the year, which is a key tool in supporting children and families to settle and feel secure. During this time, parents and carers are welcomed into the classroom from 8.30am with children to choose from a range of planned activities or free-play. The soft start is instrumental in building good relationships and is also a chance for teachers and staff to model reading to children, positive learning interactions and activities for home. The positive and welcoming atmosphere promotes enthusiasm and fosters conversations for learning. The soft-start approach is rooted in evidence and research that shows that it is the adult interaction and the to-and-fro of conversation that builds language skills (Skolnick Weiseberg et al 2013, Yogman et al 2018).

Feedback Cycle

Oral feedback is given to the children on how to persevere, build resilience and improve. Opportunities are continuously given for pupils to reflect and act on that advice. This on-going process of observation, quality interaction and assessment acts as a significant driver for the EYFS curriculum implementation. This cycle allows staff to carefully monitor progress, plan next steps, whilst taking account

of interests and the Characteristics of Effective Learning.

The sequencing of the delivery of teaching, specific teaching strategies and assessment promote the long term memorisation and fluent use of key knowledge, concepts and skills (set out in the EYFS framework). There is a clear structure and routine that establishes clear expectations for both learning and behaviour.

Integrated long, medium and short term planning

In both year groups we integrate long term planning, which ensures continuity and progression throughout Nursery and Reception. Medium term planning (half termly) helps us link the essential skills to be developed to specific planned activities and identifies assessment opportunities, which in turn supports the individual child to move forward in their learning. Short term (weekly) planning includes specific plans for the coverage of daily Literacy, Mathematics and phonic whole class teaching sessions, where learning objectives are shared verbally with the children. Adult led focus activities are also planned to develop and move children forward in all areas of their learning, again small targets are verbally shared to support progression in each child's individual learning experience. Free-flow activities are planned on a daily basis with the whole team to include opportunities for extension, child requested activities and further planned adult led activities.

EYFS Areas of Learning and Development

The Early Years Foundation Stage provides a structure of learning opportunities through which we develop the different aspects of early education. These areas cover the basic skills necessary for Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum.

We believe our creative and theme based curriculum helps children meet learning opportunities within a happy, secure and interesting environment through practical activity, enquiry and purposeful play, with consolidation through practice, talk and reflection.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

Underpinning the whole framework is the recognition of the importance of reflective practitioners, the values they hold and place upon the characteristics of effective learning – *how* children learn. As stated within the statutory EYFS (DfE, 2017:10)-

1.9. In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice.

Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning 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.*

These characteristics of effective learning compliment the prime areas (Personal,

emotional and social development; Communication and Language and Physical development) which are recognised as universal in early childhood, as well as the four interconnecting specific areas. (Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design.)

Prime Areas:

We believe that the prime areas of learning are the foundation for all future learning and we therefore place an emphasis on ensuring that all children feel happy, secure and settled into the school environment. During the first term, we begin the child's first experience of Nursery or Reception by focusing the theme around them and their families, enabling them to engage in a subject they know the most about. We want all children to become confident, active and independent learners, enabling them to enter Key Stage One with the skills that they need to continue their journey of learning.

Personal and Social and Emotional Development

This area of learning provides opportunities for children to develop positive attitudes about themselves and those around them. We want children to become valued members of the class and shape their identity through an increasing awareness of their own needs and the needs of others, and develop their ability to self-regulate. This area of learning helps children to develop positive dispositions to learning, to be cooperative and communicative. It helps to develop and show an understanding of what is right and wrong and develop an understanding that there are always consequences to a particular behaviour, whether rewards or sanctions. It supports the development of social skills by providing opportunities that enable children to learn how to socially respond and work with one another. This area of learning also supports a developing awareness of how their bodies work and what they need to be healthy and safe, (including knowing when they are hungry, cold, hot or thirsty, etc.) and how they are able to best meet these needs.

Physical Development

This area of learning offers opportunities for children to develop and practise the control they have over their own bodies. It allows for them to further develop the confidence and skill in large gross motor movements such as running, jumping, climbing, swinging, hanging etc. Developing and promoting their spatial awareness and coordination, whilst at the same time encouraging the fine motor skills that they will need to develop holistically. Encouraging the finer movements which involve the ability to control the use of one-handed tools and equipment e.g. digging tools, paint brushes, mark-making and writing tools. This area of learning is also vital in supporting a developing understanding of how their bodies work and what they need to be healthy and safe, (including knowing when they are hungry, cold, hot or thirsty, etc) and how they are able to best meet these needs.

Communication and Language

This area of learning provides opportunities for children to develop new vocabulary and the skills needed to talk confidently in a wide range of situations. It helps them respond to their peers and adults in an environment where speaking and listening are highly valued skills. It allows them to communicate and respond in a variety of contexts and places value on expressing their own thoughts and ideas, taking into account the thoughts and ideas of others. It also gives opportunities for all children to explore, enjoy, learn about and use words and text in a broad range of contexts, including through stories, role play and drama.

Specific Areas

There are four specific areas of learning which supplement the prime areas and allow children to become confident active learners when the prime areas of learning have been supported and applied. Through these areas, we believe children can further develop their knowledge of the world around them and develop an understanding of all future learning that awaits them. Here children will continue to become effective learners and develop the dispositions to learning through being curious, resourceful, persistent and courageous. These areas of learning are the basis for main whole class teaching sessions, as well as the independent and adult led learning opportunities available, with the prime areas at the forefront of all teaching and learning.

Literacy

This area of learning supports the development of linking sounds to letters and understanding that from this we can read and write. Children will begin to recognise print in their environment and start to understand that this is one way of communicating. It is vital that children understand that print carries meaning and that they are able to engage with this essential element of communication and the high importance it holds. We actively promote the importance of reading and writing through stories, songs, poems and mark making in a variety of different contexts and for different purposes using a wide range of media. In all classes there is a book corner and areas that promote mark making and writing. We teach phonics on a daily basis and Reception use the Unlocking Letters and Sounds program which can be explained in depth on the school website.

Mathematics

This area of learning provides opportunities for children to develop their understanding of number, measurement, pattern, shape and space by providing a broad range of contexts in which they can explore, enjoy, learn, practise and talk about numbers and shapes. It encourages children to understand and respond to the symbols that represent numbers and what this means in real contexts. It supports children in understanding the important role shapes and numbers play in our everyday lives and how they develop our own understanding, helping us to solve problems. Reception maths is taught using Number Sense and White Rose programs. Please find out more on the Mathematics section of our website.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

This area of learning provides opportunities for children to solve problems, question, make decisions, experiment, predict, and plan in a variety of contexts and to explore and find out about their environment. It helps to develop their senses and understanding of their physical world. This is further supported by visiting our forest school area, caring for any class pets or animals that we may have such as caterpillars or chicks and having the everyday experiences of the outdoor environment. By engaging with the world around us children learn more about people and communities and the world in which they live. Children will also explore the impact of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on their everyday lives.

Creative Development

This area of learning offers opportunities for children to explore and share their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of art, design and technology, music, movement, dance, imaginative and role-play activities. They are presented with the opportunities to experiment with different media, resources and a range of activities which will inspire and stimulate their creativity and motivation to move their learning forward.

Impact of the curriculum:

At Stoke Park Nursery and Primary School we do our best to ensure children make the best possible progress during their time with us, no matter what their starting point. We work with all our feeder nurseries as well as our own Nursery to identify the children's developing knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes to learning, using the development areas as well as their unique interests and strengths. Once the children enter Reception we use this prior knowledge to continue to identify and track the children's progress through the Foundation Stage. We work closely with Key Stage 1 to continue the children's development through both the Early Years and National Curriculum. We aim to make the transition from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 as smooth as possible, by sharing information gathered within Reception and continuing the learning for the children as individuals.

Parental Involvement and Community links:

In the Early Years phase at Stoke Park Nursery and Primary School, we value our parents and carers as co-educators of the children and respect the learning both inside and outside of the school environment. We aim to foster these parental links in a variety of ways by operating an open door policy in Early Years and a 'soft start' each morning where parents and carers are welcomed into the classroom to partake in activities with their children. As such parents have the daily opportunity to discuss any questions they may have with the class teachers and the Early Years staff. We also use Tapestry as an online Learning Journal to share WOW moments, weekly News and actively encourage parents/carers to be involved with this. We also encourage parents and carers to become involved in their child's education through

holding special events and sending regular story books home for the parents to share with their children.

Equal Opportunities, Inclusion and Special Education Needs:

We believe that all children have the right to a full and inclusive education and aim to deliver a curriculum that is accessible to all children irrespective of their ethnic, race and cultural heritage. (See Equal Opportunities and Inclusion policies)

We aim to provide a challenging curriculum that enhances the learning of children with special educational needs and enriches the learning of all children. (see SEND policy)

Admissions:

Please see our Nursery and School Admissions policies