



Sir John Lillie Primary School

Early Years Policy

RATIONALE

Sir John Lillie Primary School supports each child to begin and continue a structured, stimulating and challenging curriculum. We believe that children are able to plan, review and develop their own learning. As adults we facilitate this learning and enable them to articulate and extend their ideas.

PURPOSE

The aim of the Early Years Policy is to ensure that we provide a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment that provides the right foundation for good future progress through school and life. We believe that every child deserves the best possible start in life and we aim to ensure that every child can fulfil their potential through a challenging, creative and supportive curriculum and through early intervention and support where needed. We encourage each child to take the fullest advantage of a wide range of opportunities and experiences that are tailored to their individual needs and development.

(Also see our '**Settling in and Transition Policy**' which sets out how we support children to make the transition from home to school, from Nursery into Reception and from the Foundation Stage into Year 1.)

OUR AIMS:

- To promote the intellectual, physical, spiritual, moral, social, cultural and emotional development of each child within a welcoming and supportive environment.
- To ensure that each child has equal and adequate access to the broad and well-sequenced curriculum and that their progress is in line with their developing ability regardless of gender, ethnicity, social background or special needs.
- To plan engaging and challenging learning opportunities that take into account both the children's needs and interests and allow children to learn through active involvement and play
- To ensure a consistent yet flexible daily routine which provides for child and adult initiated activities, including opportunities for both indoor and outdoor learning
- To provide a stimulating and exciting learning environment which allows children to engage actively in their learning
- To ensure that the premises, equipment and resources are safe, secure and fit for purpose.
- To enable each child to make a successful transition to KS1 by ensuring that they have developed sufficient skills, aptitudes and understanding.
- To work in partnership with Parents/Carers.

THE CURRICULUM

At SJL we run an early year's unit where nursery and reception children share the continuous provision. Teaching of phonics, maths, PSED, PE, music and a morning carpet input are delivered separately. There are two curriculums that have been designed to teach in alternate years. Those are based on the *Development Matters* document, *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised*, *White Rose Maths*, *Kapow* and *Get Set for PE/Music* schemes of work. The long term plans are split into 6 half-terms with the specific learning outcomes for children to achieve by the end of each half term in 7 areas of learning. Those learning outcomes are progressive.

When planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners take into account the different ways that children learn and this informs future planning and activities. The 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.

This policy embodies the three **prime areas** and the four **specific areas** of learning, which form an essential component of all curricular planning and are constantly monitored for quality, relevance and effectiveness by the team of adults involved.

Each area of learning must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult led and child initiated activities. We understand that play is an essential part of children's development as they learn to explore, problem solve and interact with others.

Phonics:

We follow the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* scheme to teach systematic phonics sessions each day in nursery and reception.

Mathematics:

At SJL, we use *White Rose Maths* to plan purposeful learning opportunities to develop children's mathematical skills across the EYFS unit.

PE:

We use the *Get Set for PE* work of scheme to plan weekly PE lessons in nursery and reception.

PSED:

In reception, we use the *Kapow* scheme of work to plan purposeful PSED sessions.

Music:

In reception, we use the *Get Set for Music* scheme of work.

THE PRIME AREAS

The Prime areas provide the basis for successful learning and reflect the key skills, knowledge and understanding all children need in order to develop and learn effectively and become 'ready' for school. As children's confidence and abilities within these areas grow there is a shift towards a more equal focus and balance of all the areas of the curriculum.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- Show resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge
- Develop their sense of responsibility and membership of a community.
- Select and use activities and resources, with help when needed.
- Play with one or more other children, extending and elaborating play ideas.
- Find solutions to conflicts and rivalries.
- Remember rules without needing an adult to remind them
- Express their feelings and consider the feelings of others and moderate their own feelings emotionally and socially
- Build constructive and respectful relationships.
- Know and talk about the different factors that support their overall health and wellbeing
- Manage their own personal needs

Communication and Language

- Listen to, retell and act out familiar stories
- Understand a question or instruction that has two parts Understand 'why' questions
- Learn and use new vocabulary in different contexts
- Sing a large repertoire of songs. Know many rhymes, be able to talk about familiar books, and be able to tell a long story.
- Articulate their ideas and thoughts in well-formed sentences.
- Use talk to help work out problems and organise thinking and activities, and to explain how things work and why they might happen.
- Listen to and talk about selected non-fiction to develop a deep familiarity with new knowledge and vocabulary.
- Connect one idea or action to another using a range of connectives.

Physical Development

- Showing good control and co-ordination in large and small movement
- Use one-handed tools and equipment, for example, making snips in paper with scissors.
- Use a comfortable grip with good control when holding pens and pencils
- Develop the overall body strength, co-ordination, balance and agility needed to engage successfully with future physical education sessions and other physical disciplines including dance, gymnastics, sport and swimming
- Develop their small motor skills so that they can use a range of tools competently, safely and confidently. Suggested tools: pencils for drawing and writing, paintbrushes, scissors, knives, forks and spoons.
- Develop the foundations of a handwriting style which is fast, accurate and efficient
- Develop confidence, competence, precision and accuracy when engaging in activities that involve a ball

THE SPECIFIC AREAS

Literacy

- Engage in extended conversations about stories, learning new vocabulary
- Understand the five key concepts about print: print has meaning, print can have different purposes, we read English text from left to right and from top to bottom, the names of the different parts of a book, page sequencing
- Develop their phonological awareness, so that they can: spot and suggest rhymes, count or clap syllables in a word, recognise words with the same initial sound, such as money and mother
- Read simple phrases and sentences made up of words with known letter-sound correspondences and, where necessary, a few exception words.
- Re-read these books to build up their confidence in word reading, their fluency and their understanding and enjoyment.
- Form lower-case and capital letters correctly.
- Spell words by identifying the sounds and then writing the sound with letter/s
- Write short sentences with words with known sound-letter correspondences using a capital letter and full stop.
- Re-read what they have written to check that it makes sense

Mathematics

- Count objects, actions and sounds.
- Subitise.
- Link the number symbol (numeral) with its cardinal number value.
- Count beyond ten
- Compare numbers
- Understand the 'one more than/one less than' relationship between consecutive numbers
- Explore the composition of numbers to 10
- Automatically recall number bonds for numbers 0–5 and some to 10
- Compare length, weight and capacity
- Talk about and explore 2D and 3D shapes
- Continue, copy and create repeating patterns

Understanding the World

- Talk about the differences between materials and changes they notice. Continue developing positive attitudes about the differences between people
- Know that there are different countries in the world and talk about the differences they have experienced or seen in photos
- Recognise some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries.
- Talk about members of their immediate family and community, name and describe them
- Recognise that people have different beliefs and celebrate special times in different ways.
- Explore the natural world around them.
- Describe what they see, hear and feel whilst outside
- Understand the effect of changing seasons on the natural world around them.

Expressive Arts and Design

- Explore different materials freely, to develop their ideas about how to use them and what to make.
- Join different materials and explore different textures
- Listen attentively, move to and talk about music, expressing their feelings and responses.
- Watch and talk about dance and performance art, expressing their feelings and responses
- Sing in a group or on their own, increasingly matching the pitch and following the melody

PLANNING

Teachers create flexible weekly planning sheets. The planning identifies which areas of learning are being covered, the learning objective, possible key questions and vocabulary needed to support and extend the children's learning. The planning also shows the learning taking place at large group times, phonics activities and maths meetings.

Nursery and reception teachers work very closely to plan purposeful learning opportunities within the continuous provision. Activities are linked to the learning statements in the long term plan that have been derived from the 'Development Matters' document. Activities within the continuous provision have a clear learning intention that is the same for nursery and reception children. There is a clear adaptation of skills that children will need to use to meet the learning objective with an additional challenge for reception children. All of that is shared with children and practitioners via challenge cards displayed on tables, together with the focus vocabulary where applicable.

PLANNED OPPORTUNITIES

- Adults plan and initiate a focus activity indoors or outdoors each day. These activities are informed by previous assessments and are adapted in order to cater for individual needs and next steps. Focus activities enable the children to build on and extend previous experiences, learning and play.
- The adult in charge of the activity records children's skills, knowledge and understanding, either through written observations, class activity lists, photographs or videos
- As well as focus activities, children take part in phonics sessions each day to develop their knowledge and understanding of letters and sounds and to develop reading and writing skills.
- Short carpet times (large groups times) are also planned for the beginning and end of sessions where children have the opportunity to reflect on and evaluate their learning and to develop their listening and speaking skills, reading and writing skills and Maths skills (Maths Meetings).

CHILD INITIATED OPPORTUNITIES (CIL)

Each day children are provided with opportunities for child initiated play, where they are able to plan, develop and extend their own ideas, interests and challenges. Adults are designated to interact with the children to assist in enriching their play further. Observations will be made as necessary.

When planning, practitioners make ongoing judgments on the balance between child initiated and adult led activities but it is expected that as children develop the balance will gradually shift towards more adult-led activities and independent challenges to help children prepare for Year 1.

WIDER OPPORTUNITIES

- All children have access to outside area and both planned and CIL outside learning
- All children have access to healthy fruit/snack and drinking water throughout the day
- Children eat hot school meals and adults sit to have lunch with the Nursery children, providing opportunities to discuss healthy diet & practices
- Children are offered a wide range of experiences – including trips in the local area, visitors, cooking activities, music and singing sessions, PE lessons and EYFS assemblies

ASSESSMENT IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

We believe in assessment being useful, purposeful and formative. As a result, assessment and evaluations of learning and activities are used to inform future planning, to identify next steps and to set challenging learning objectives.

We believe in the quality of assessment over the quantity of assessment and our aim is for assessment to not interrupt or limit adult and child interactions and to not create excessive paperwork for practitioners.

We value contributions to assessment from Parents/Carers and believe that two-way sharing of information is essential in building a true and accurate picture of each child's learning and development. Parents/Carers can contribute to their child's assessment by making comments in their Reading Records, or at Parents Consultations and by talking to their child's teacher/keyworker.

Where is assessment recorded?

Each child has their own **online profile on Target Tracker**.

Target Tracker profiles are completed chronologically and include:

- Written observations
- Photographs
- Videos
- Examples of children's work

Reading Records – in Reception children are given a Reading Record and phonetically decodable books matched to the child's phonics level. They also get to take home a book they enjoy to share with their family. Parents/Carers are encouraged to write comments and share information about how their child is reading at home.

Writing Books – in reception, each child has a writing book where pieces of work produced during writing focus activities are recorded.

Reading Books – in Reception, each child has a reading book where each reading practice session is recorded.

When/how do we assess?

1. **Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA)** – statutory baseline assessment delivered with the first 6 weeks of a child starting a reception class
2. **Initial/baseline assessment** – internal assessment delivered by practitioners to have a better understanding of children's starting points.
3. **Ongoing assessment and tracking progress** – assessment carried out termly and entered onto the Target Tracker.
4. **Phonics and keyword assessment (Reception)** – carried out half termly using the 'Little Wandle' assessment grids to track the progress and promptly address any gaps in children's phonics knowledge.
5. **The EYFS Profile** – reception children assessed against the 17 Early Learning Goals in the summer term.

1. Baseline Assessment

- The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) - a statutory assessment from September 2021 is completed within the first 6 weeks of a child starting school
- Once a child is judged to be settled and confident in their new surroundings they are assessed against the seven areas of learning. This 'baseline' is based on observations/interactions, information from Parents & Carers and previous settings and from the children themselves. Judgements are entered on to Target Tracker.
- Baseline assessments are collated and evaluated to identify trends, to identify areas for development, to target specific individuals or groups and to inform future planning.
- For children on entry to Nursery it is expected for N1s to be working within the 'Pre 3' bracket and N2s are expected to be working within the 'Nursery' band. For children on entry to Reception it is expected for them to have achieved the significant majority of the 'Nursery' bracket and to have begun working within the 'Reception' bracket.
- Initial assessment and each child's next steps are shared with Parents/Carers during Parent Consultations in the first term.

2. Ongoing Assessment

Assessment notes can be recorded throughout the day by all adults during both focus activities and child-initiated activities on class lists or on children's online profiles.

Observations and evaluations of both adult and child led activities are used to inform subsequent planning and to set targets.

Recording & Tracking Progress

Each term:

- Key persons/teachers make a judgement of each child against the age bands as set out in the Early Years Outcomes document. For each of the 7 areas, a child is judged as beginning, working within or securing in the relevant age band. Judgements are internally moderated across partner teacher's/key persons to ensure accuracy and consistency of the assessment.
- Key persons/teachers take part in termly Pupil Progress Meetings with the Headteacher, the FS manager and inclusion manager. They review and discuss the progress of all children, identify any concerns and show how individual children are being supported.
- The above assessment is entered termly onto Target Tracker and progress reports created which highlight the progress each child is making and whether they are working below/at/above age related expectations.

(Beginning = child has achieved only a couple of the statements in the relevant age band Working Within = child has achieved 1/3-2/3 of the statements in the relevant age band Securing = child has achieved over 2/3 of the statements in the relevant age band)

For a child to have achieved beginning in a particular age band they should have also achieved the significant majority of the previous age band.

Each term:

The children's profiles are **highlighted and dated on Target Tracker each term** to enable practitioners to clearly see the progress that each child has made.

Reception – in addition to the above, **phonics and keyword assessments** are also carried out at the end of each half term.

Highlighting the Profiles/Early Years Outcomes document

Teachers are responsible for highlighting the child's Early Years Outcomes when targets have been achieved and it is their responsibility to ensure these are updated regularly. When a target has been met, teacher highlights the target using Target Tracker.

3. Target Setting

In Reception:

- Marking of work within topic books is shared with the children.
- As children in Reception become more confident with understanding their targets and next steps, children are supported to self-assess their work.

4. Summative Assessment

In the children's final term of Reception, observations and ongoing assessment are used to assess the child's attainment within each of the 17 Early Learning Goals. Children are assessed as to whether they are emerging or expected. This assessment is collated and submitted to the borough. The ELGs support teachers to make a holistic, best-fit judgement about a child's development, and their readiness for year 1. Internally, teachers will also identify children who are working beyond age related expectations and those judgements will be entered onto Target Tracker as Reception S+.

Reception teachers internally moderate judgements with Year 1 teachers.

Teachers share the final assessment with parents/carers and they are given a written report identifying how their child has demonstrated each of the three areas of the Characteristics of Effective Learning.

All assessment is shared with the children's next teacher. (See also our 'Transition' Policy).

The FS manager collates and evaluates summative assessment. This is shared with the rest of the team and is used to identify strengths and weaknesses and to inform the following year's action plan.