



Early Years Foundation Stage

Date: August 2020
Review: August-2021

THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

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At Sarum Hall School we value the important role that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. The EYFS is seen as preparation for life and learning and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

“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 provides the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up”
(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, Department for Education 2017)

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year, aged 5 years, and has four overarching principles: Every child is a unique child, children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships, children develop well in enabling environments and children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

1. A Unique Child

At Sarum Hall School, we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. They are able to grow in their sense of self, their unique potential and their understanding of their own strengths. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates, developing the ability to appreciate and respond to a variety of aesthetic experiences in respect of their own culture and that of others. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, the sharing of cultural celebrations with families, the exploration of diversity through play, assemblies and rewards to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning. Girls develop an understanding of the difference between right and wrong, concern for others and begin to reflect on the consequences of their actions. Children learn, and are encouraged, to work as a community for the common good and can feel a sense of belonging and an increasing willingness to participate. We promote British values and children in the EYFS are involved in democratic processes within the school. They also learn about important people within the school and wider community.

We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best and do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning. In planning and guiding children's activities we reflect on the different ways that children learn. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are playing and exploring (engagement), active learning (motivation) and creating and thinking critically.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of children with a range of different abilities, of those with different social and cultural backgrounds, different ethnic groups, those with special education needs and those who have English as an additional language.

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.

1.1. Inclusion

At Sarum Hall School we value and acknowledge children's individuality and ensure that we provide for the individual needs of all children, promoting and valuing diversity and differences. We believe it is important that children learn to feel good about themselves and value and respect others. In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of all pupils, 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.

Identification of Children with Disabilities/Additional Needs and Support

The Early Years have access to the Head of Learning Support, Ms Deborah Blackburn, who promotes, co-ordinates and monitors equality of opportunity for children and families accessing the setting and helps to provide provision for children with disabilities/additional needs, supporting EAL pupils and identifying pupils who may be Gifted and Talented.

All staff are responsible for identifying children's needs and supporting their learning. Any concerns will be discussed with the Head of Learning Support in consultation with the parent/carers.

All members of staff will also be expected to assist the Head of Learning Support in caring for children with disabilities/additional needs. The child's Key person and Form Teacher, is responsible for maintaining detailed and accurate observations, record keeping and assessments of a child's progress in all areas of learning and development. It is also their responsibility to identify any areas of additional needs and inform the Head of Learning Support.

Children with special educational needs will be given support as appropriate to enable them to access the curriculum. This includes children that are more able, and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities. Individual Education Plans identify targets in specific areas of learning for those children who require additional support, in line with the school's Special Educational Needs Policy. Teachers discuss these targets with the child and her parents/carers. The Head of Learning Support is responsible for providing additional information and advice to practitioners and parents, and for arranging external intervention and support where it is necessary.

1.2. Equal Opportunities

We provide all pupils, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, belief, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, or ability, equal access to all aspects of school life and work to ensure that every child is valued fully as an individual. Practitioners, as role models, are aware of the influence of adults in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical ideas.

1.3. Behavioural expectations

It is important that all children in the school are 'safe'. We provide a framework of behavioural expectations to educate children about boundaries and rules. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill and encourage them to participate in the writing of class rules. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

1.4. Safeguarding and Welfare

"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."

(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, Department for Education 2017)

At Sarum Hall School we follow the welfare requirements and the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage:

- to promote the welfare of children.
- to promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- to manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.

- to ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- to ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
- to ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- to maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

The nature of early child care means that there will likely be times when staff are required to supervise and support the changing of children's clothes, underclothes and the use of toilets. Guidelines are set out in the school's policy for [intimate care](#):

Where physical intervention needs to be taken for the purposes of averting immediate danger or personal injury to any person or to manage children's behaviour, records will be kept and shared with parents/carers on the day the incident has occurred (*Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, Department for Education 2017*).

2. Positive Relationships

At Sarum Hall School, we recognise that children learn to be independent through secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

2.1. Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents/carers are children's first and most lasting educators and we value the contribution they make. When parents/carers and practitioners work together in early years settings, the results have a positive impact on the child's development. A successful partnership needs to embrace the sharing of information, knowledge and expertise.

This is promoted by:

- Children and parents/carers have the opportunity to spend time with the EYFS staff before starting school during an induction session.
- Parents/carers receive a guide for their daughter's new class during the summer, and in September are invited to an informal meeting with the class teacher for further discussion and 'question and answer' session. At this juncture, the curriculum is explained and parents are encouraged to understand the value of supporting their child's learning at home.
- We offer a staggered start to school life for Nursery girls with them coming into school in smaller groups for shorter days initially, before beginning full days in school with the whole class.
- EYFS operates an 'open door' policy so that parents/carers can come and discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner, offering opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our EYFS classes. Please note that during the Covid-19 pandemic, parents are not able to come into school but the EYFS teachers are visible at collection each day to help answer any queries.
- EYFS class teachers offer email communications with parents/carers.

- EYFS classrooms have parents' notice boards where letters and reminders are displayed.
- Parents/carers are able to make appointments for formal meetings at any time during the school year.
- Parents/carers are actively encouraged to share skills they might have with children in the classroom or come in and read a story to the class at the end of the day as part of our Mystery Reader sessions.
- Parents/carers receive two written reports each year explaining their child's attainment and targets for future learning.
- Parents/carers are invited to attend parent consultation evenings twice a year.
- Parents/carers and children are invited into school regularly for events such as open day, Dad's/Mum's mornings/afternoons, and sports days. These events are currently not possible due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Tapestry has been introduced to parents in Nursery 2020 to replace the physical profile books. This is in order to increase the visibility between school and home and to provide instant access to feedback and evidence in school, as well as the opportunity to contribute from home.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At Sarum Hall, each child is attached to a 'Key Person' who oversees their profile and will ensure each child settles. This key person changes on a termly basis so that all the staff in each class rotate around the children as different individuals bring different skills. Staff names and photos for each class are clearly displayed outside each classroom. The key worker each term is also responsible for observing, planning and recording opportunities for members of their groups to settle and grow. Parents should direct all enquiries regarding their child through the class teacher via email or telephone. The class teacher will liaise closely with other key workers in order to host parent consultation evenings and write termly reports.

The Headmistress has weekly meetings with the EYFS class teachers to discuss concerns about children's development and well-being, address issues and receive advice to improve their personal effectiveness. The meetings also look ahead to development opportunities and events throughout the calendar year.

3. Enabling Environments

Sarum Hall School EYFS aim to create an attractive, welcoming and stimulating learning environment which will encourage children to explore, investigate and learn. Children should feel secure, confident and happy here.

3.1. The Learning Environment

The EYFS classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, quiet and rest. The classroom is set up with resources covering all curriculum areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

Activities are planned for both the inside and outside; under supervision, children have the freedom to move between the indoor and outdoor classrooms during the day. The children have access to many different areas including role play, book corner, Literacy table, maths area, listening centre, computer, collage and junk area, play dough, sand, water, construction, small world and puzzles.

Children are encouraged to become independent learners and to take responsibility for initiating their own lines of enquiry and investigation.

3.2. Play

“Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Play is essential for children’s development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others.”

(Statutory Framework for the Early Year Foundation Stage, Department for Education, 2017)

At Sarum Hall School, we do not distinguish between work and play. We support children’s learning through planned play activities ‘Explorers Time’, and decide when child-initiated or adult-led play activities would provide the most effective learning opportunities. We believe that it is important for adults to support children’s learning through play. Through play, children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build ideas, learning behavioural expectations and the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

4. Learning and development

4.1. Teaching and Learning Style

EYFS practitioners understand child development and learning, and how this affects their teaching. They provide opportunities for first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk. Teachers carefully plan the curriculum to support children to work towards milestones throughout EYFS, they plan provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities. Children are encouraged to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management.

4.2. Areas of Learning

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in early years settings. Three are particularly crucial for igniting children’s curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These are prime areas –

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

The four remaining areas of learning are specific areas through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

These specific areas are –

- Literacy;
- Mathematics;
- Understanding the world; and
- Expressive arts and design.

All these areas are interconnected; they cannot be delivered in isolation as they are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. A broad and balanced curriculum ensures that we offer enrichment for all pupils which goes beyond specific subjects being learnt.

4.3. Planning

Planning within the EYFS follows the Schemes of Work, which are based around half termly themes. These plans are used by the EYFS teacher as a guide for weekly planning; however the teacher may alter and adapt these plans in response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children. This will be indicated on weekly planning.

Activities are planned in accordance with the Foundation Stage Curriculum. Copies are held by the Academic Director electronically.

When planning, teachers aim to address the needs of both the group and the individuals within it.

4.4. Assessment

At Sarum Hall School, we continuously undertake assessment for learning. We analyse and review what we know about each child's development and learning, and then make informed decisions about the child's progress. We use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs.

Each pupil is observed and assessed against the Early Learning Goals using Tapestry. Photos are taken and observations are written using an app on the iPad, including 'next steps' to inform future learning. Observations are managed on a secure online website and formatted to produce a document that is saved as a linked document within iSAMS. The website generates useful data to inform planning for future learning opportunities.

The EYFS Profile summarises all of the formative assessment undertaken and makes statements about the child's achievements. It summarises children's progress towards the early learning goals. It is completed by the end of each term. Teachers undertake in-house and local cluster group moderation with other Independent settings.

“Assessment should not entail prolonged breaks from interaction with children, nor should it require excessive paper work. Paperwork should be limited to that which is absolutely necessary to promote children's successful learning and development.”

(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, department for Education, 2017)

Moderation and discussion of children's progress also takes place during Early Years Foundation Stage meetings.

Parents have the right to access their child's profile and portfolio books at any time. Portfolios should be kept where both children and guardians may use them freely.

Nursery profiles are online using Tapestry and Reception profiles are in a hard copy in the classroom. From September 2021, all EYFS profiles will use Tapestry.

In the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile must be completed for each child. The profile provides parents/carers 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. At the end of June in the reception year children's profile scores are shared with parents, allowing for time for them to meet with the reception teacher to discuss results should they want to.

The Year 1 teacher must be 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 learning.

4.5. Staffing and Organisation

There is one Nursery and one Reception class at Sarum Hall School, with a maximum intake of 24 children in each class. We maintain an adult to pupil ratio of 1:8 within the Early Years; there is one teacher and two teaching and learning assistants in each class throughout the school day. Specialist teachers are used to teach Music and PE in Nursery, and in Reception there is also a specialist teacher for French.

The Reception and Nursery Classes are positioned next to each other with adjoining doors. Each classroom benefits from a conservatory area at the back through which the children are able to directly access the outdoor learning area and playground.

The classrooms are close to the toilets and are equipped with appropriately sized sanitary ware.

Teachers and assistants all attend training courses throughout the year, with providers such as the Institute of Education and Camden Local Education Authority. Early Years staff meet together once a week. These meetings are used to discuss next steps, to moderate assessment, to organise resources and to provide in-house training. All Teaching and Learning Assistants in the Early Years have Paediatric First Aid training.

4.6. Transitions

The Nursery, Reception and Year 1 teachers work closely together to make the transition through the EYFS to Key Stage 1 as smooth as possible.

Nursery and Reception staff organise their time so that children get to know all staff well. Nursery and Reception rooms are interjoined and children in the EYFS are able to move freely between to the two classrooms at designated times, except during the COvid-19 pandemic where bubbles are maintained to avoid cross-contamination of pupils in different year groups.

When children move into the reception class they are familiar with the room and staff and the transition is smoother.

During the Reception year children are prepared for the transition to Year 1 primarily through developing their independence in routines and learning. Children are encouraged to be independent when dressing and undressing and when organising their personal belongings. Reception practitioners plan for more structured activities to be gradually introduced throughout the school year, encouraging less dependence on adult support when completing tasks. Reception children should already be familiar with the Year 1 teacher and teaching and learning assistant as they support children at lunchtimes and playtimes, attend assemblies and other whole school activities. During the summer term, children visit their Year 1 classroom and teacher.

The Reception and Year 1 teachers meet to discuss EYFS profiles provided with information about each child's characteristics of learning, and individual needs. EYFS Profiles are passed on for the Year 1 teacher's use.

5. Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teachers and teaching assistants to follow the principles stated in this policy.

The Senior Leadership Team will carry out monitoring of the EYFS.

6. Supervision in the Early Years

In accordance with the revised Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2017, staff supervision is a requirement for providers under Section 3 – The Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements Clauses 3.19 and 3.20 as follows:

3.19 Providers must put appropriate arrangements in place for the supervision of staff who have contact with children and families. Effective supervision provides support, coaching and training for the practitioner and promotes the interests of children. Supervision should foster a culture of mutual support, teamwork and continuous improvement which encourages the confidential discussion of sensitive issues.

3.20 Supervision should provide opportunities for staff to:

- *discuss any issues – particularly concerning children's development or well-being;*
- *identify solutions to address issues as they arise; and*
- *receive coaching to improve their personal effectiveness.*

A weekly Early Years team meeting provides the opportunity for staff to raise and discuss any concerns about the progress, behaviour or well fare of any pupils. This is also the opportunity for staff to raise any other school or work related issues. Solutions will be discussed, implemented and reviewed. The Early Years team meet regularly to discuss their key children's learning and development in more detail and these supervision meetings are part of the ongoing supervision and monitoring process.

At Sarum Hall School the supervision meetings will:

- Provide support to members of staff.
- Give opportunity for practitioners to discuss concerns/sensitive issues.
- Identify strengths and areas for development.
- Identify coaching and mentoring needs.
- Highlight training needs.

The supervision meetings allow the Senior Leadership Team to have an opportunity to:

- Support staff members with their development needs.
- Provide mentoring and coaching options.
- Share successes.
- Identify any children who need support.
- Discuss any safeguarding concerns.
- Support staff members with their own self-reflection.
- Ensure issues/problems are solved.
- Build trusting relationships that provide a culture of information sharing.

The Senior Leadership Team will share opportunities for CPD with the Early Years team to encourage and motivate staff in finding suitable training courses. It is recommended staff attend one course every term and are then expected to feed back to the rest of their team on their learning and experiences.

Staff also have an annual appraisal with the Headmistress to evaluate workloads, performance and training undertaken. Personal targets are set for the forthcoming academic year. Staff members may seek support from the Senior Leadership Team at any time. The Health and Wellbeing Coordinator is also available for one to one support if required. If necessary a meeting will be held to organise appropriate support and coaching, relating to any aspect of work. A written record of the meeting will be kept.

Linked guidance, policies and procedures:

[Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSIE\) statutory guidance](#)

[Working together to safeguard children.pdf](#)

Relevant school policies:

Keeping Children Safe in Education, Child protection Policy and Code of Conduct.

Criminal Law

The Department for Education (DfE)

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI)

School Policies

Sarum Hall Mission Statement