

# Smallthorne Primary School



## Early Years Policy

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## Introduction

The Early Years is a time when children develop quickly and learn the foundation skills for their future education.

At Smallthorne Primary School our Early Years covers the two first years at school. Children can join Nursery in the September after their third birthday and join Reception in the September after their fourth birthday.

## Aims and Objectives

Our school and Early Years team aim to ensure the children in our care are safe, happy and learning.

We aim to:

- take advantage of every possible opportunity to learn through play and exciting activities which scaffold children's learning.
- ensure children enjoy school and therefore have a positive attitude to learning.
- provide a caring and safe environment where children feel happy and looked after.
- provide continuity of care and learning through each stage of the Early Years.
- promote and encourage self confidence and independence
- promote good communication and language skills
- develop children's social skills.

## Teaching & Learning

- Our curriculum is planned using *the EYFS 2012 statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage* which sets out the learning and development requirements from birth to five years; and '**Development Matters**' DfE non-statutory guidance material.

The curriculum is centred on three **prime** areas of learning:

- 1, Communication and Language
- 2, Personal, Social and Emotional development
- 3, Physical Development

We also support children in four **specific** areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

- 1, Literacy
- 2, Mathematics
- 3, Understanding the World
- 4, Expressive Arts and Design

We endeavour to provide experiences which develop more than one area of learning at a time.

- our planning also reflects the different ways children learn and the EYFS's characteristics of effective learning which 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.

- A long term plan for the Early Years has been developed to ensure coverage and progression. The long term plan outlines for each half term a topic, role-play area, parental link and possible educational visits.
- Topic Medium term plans are created each half term outlining learning opportunities and objectives for learning specific for the needs of the children in the class at that time.
- Weekly and daily short term plans are differentiated to cater for the needs of children's different age and stage of development (both classes use the same format.)
- We plan a challenging and enjoyable curriculum for all children including those with Special educational needs, disabilities and English as an additional language.
- Learning opportunities are planned to include purposeful play, child initiated learning and adult lead activities. Adults act as teacher, guide and intervener to develop and extend learning.
- Both Early Years classrooms are divided into clearly defined areas of learning.
- Each classroom has a theme which creates a bright a simulating environment to learn in.
- Both classrooms also have an 'outside classroom'; an area immediately outside the classroom which has a canopy and a large open area. The outdoor classroom acts as an extension of the classroom: learning activities take place here as they would inside. Early Years children also spend a good proportion of their time outside taking part in teaching and learning activities.

### **Assessment and Record Keeping**

Assessment plays a vital role in the planning; enabling us to provide all children with the support and challenge they need to move their learning forward.

- Children's learning is assessed during whole class teaching times, during guided activities and through observation of child initiated learning.
- Assessments are recorded in a variety of ways through tick-lists, annotated photographs, long observation forms and the 'Learning Book' APP. Parents constitute assessments through the learning book. These records are kept in each child's special book along with their profile booklet and online on the 'Learning Book'.
- Every term children's progress is marked on their Foundation Stage profile. Our Profile is a document listing all the objectives for children in aged bands 22-36 months, 30-50 months, 40-60 months and Early learning goals from the 'Development Matter' document.
- At the end of each half term children are given a score of **emerging, expected or exceeding** within the age band that best fits their ability(not the band of their actual age.)
- At the end of the Nursery year parents receive a written report describing their child's achievements and giving them a score of **emerging, expected or exceeding** within the age band that best their development stage.
- At the end of the Reception year parents receive a written report describing their child's achievements and a short commentary on their child's skills and abilities in relation to the three characteristics of an effective learner. Parents also receive their child's scores stating whether they are **emerging, expected or exceeding** in relation to the Early Learning Goals. These scores are reported to the Local Authority.

## **Parents/Carers**

Parents and carers are the first and most important educators of their children. We believe that for your child to gain the most from their Early Years, parents / carers and school must work together.

- Parents are encouraged to contribute information towards their child's assessment profile. We encourage parents to contribute online towards their child's 'Learning Book' and have a continual dialogue with staff.
- Every half term parents are invited to take part in workshops with their child to enable them to see what happens at school as well as receive ideas of how to support their child at home.
- Parents' evenings take place during the school year. Children's work and Foundation stage profiles are available to view and to celebrate success.
- We have an open door policy; parents are encouraged to talk to any of our team if they have any questions or concerns. Staff who welcome children in the morning always have a clipboard at hand to ensure any messages from parents are shared with relevant staff.

## **Safeguarding and Welfare**

- All of our Early Years Practitioners have received training in safeguarding.
- Each class has a 'Confidential file' where we keep confidential information parents tell us about their child and any concerns we have about children; in order to ensure this information is passed on as the children move through the school. This file is kept in a secure cupboard in the classroom in accordance with the Data Protection Act (DPA) 1998 and where relevant the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

The Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) gives parents and carers the right to access information about their child that a provider holds. However, the DPA also sets out specific exemptions under which certain personal information may, under specific circumstances, be withheld from release. For example, a relevant professional will need to give careful consideration as to whether the disclosure of certain information about a child could cause harm.

- Any concerns for safety and welfare of children in the Early Years are reported to the schools child protection officer Mr Crook or Ms Cartwright-Davies immediately and recorded in the class confidential file.
- The EYFS 2012 statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage states that in Nursery classes the adult to child ratio should be 1:13. Our Nursery class has a 1:10 ratio having three highly qualified practitioners and thirty children.
- Each Foundation Stage class has a qualified teacher (as defined by Section 122 of the Education Act 2002 and the Education (School Teachers' Qualifications) (England) Regulations 2003) and highly qualified and experienced Foundation Stage Practitioners.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception have a Key worker, parents are informed about who their children's key worker is. Children have special times during the day to talk to their special adult such as story, singing time and talk time. Key workers are alert to changes in the child's behaviour and wellbeing.
- From time to time volunteers, students and older children on work experience work in the Early Years classrooms, they are never left alone with the children and are not included in the staff ratios.

- **Photographic images**-parents are asked to give written consent for pictures of their child to be used on our web site at the beginning of Nursery and again when they start Reception. On this permission form parents sign that when they take pictures at concerts and events they will not put them on social media. We take photographic images of children during learning activities using the secure 'LEARNING BOOK' tablets. These images are used for displays in school, for our web site, in children's special books, as evidence towards children's profile and also saved on school computer system as evidence for OFSTED.
- **Medications** - both prescription and non-prescription medicines are only administered to a child where written permission for that particular medicine has been obtained from the child's parent and/or carer by completing a medicine form. Medicines are kept in medical boxes located in the Nursery kitchen. Inhalers are kept in medical boxes in each room and taken with the class when we go out for PE or on educational visits. We keep a written record each time a medicine is administered to a child. Parents are called before a medicine is given if the medicine is a long term medication (medicine forms are completed at the start of the school year.) Medicine forms are completed on the first day if the medicine is for a short period such as antibiotics. Children who require antibiotics should not come to school until they have been taking their antibiotics for 24hours.
- **Accident and injury**-first aid boxes/ bags appropriate for use on children are kept in the Early Years cloakroom. Each class has an accident book where they record accidents and action taken, parents are informed at \*home time on the same day and sign the accident book. *\*In the case of head bumps or anything beyond a minor injury a member of the management team will see the injury and parents will be informed immediately by telephone.*
- **Collection**-If a child is not collected by 3.10pm the adults on the child's contact form will be called. Children not collected by 3.20pm will be taken to the after school club run by Headstart Nursery on school premises- parents may incur a charge by Headstart Nursery.
- **Complaints**- If parents of an Early Years child wish to make a complaint they should speak to their child's teacher or the Early Years Leader (Miss A. Peake) or if the complaint is not dealt with to the parents satisfaction the Head Teacher (Mr C. Crook)

### **Induction**

We endeavour to make children and their parents/ guardians feel happy and confident about attending Smallthorne Early Years.

### Pre-school to Nursery

- Parents are invited to visit our school before applying for a place.
- Once a place has been allocated, parents are invited to a meeting at school. During this meeting parents will find out more about what happens in Nursery, meet the Practitioners and look around the facilities.
- Parents receive a prospectus which includes information about school, EY, uniforms etc.
- Children receive a Nursery rhyme pack to use at home and a letter from their new teacher (which includes photographs of the classroom and the practitioners.
- Nursery staff endeavour to visit children at Home and at their local pre-schools.

- Children and parents/ guardians are invited to visit Smallthorne one afternoon per week for three weeks. Children and parents play in the Nursery and take part in singing sessions. This helps both parents and children to get to know the environment and staff. (During the visits photographs of children with their parents are taken to be displayed in the classroom.)
- Children are given a picture of the symbol that represents their Key Group (apples, bananas or strawberries). This enables children to have a sense of belonging as soon as they start school.
- When children start Nursery in September they attend for either a morning or afternoon session for the first two weeks.
- After the initial two weeks of short sessions children attend Nursery for a morning session and stay for their lunch.
- Following the first few induction weeks parents and staff discuss whether the children are ready to stay for full days. We encourage this to happen as soon as possible.
- If a child leaves Smallthorne Primary school we pass on any information including Foundation Stage Profiles to the new settings and make contact with new teachers.

#### Nursery to Reception

- Parents apply for a Reception place during the Autumn term before the year their child will start Reception.
- Once a place has been allocated parents are invited to a meeting to meet the Reception staff and find out about what happens in Reception.
- Children (and their parents if the child has not attended out nursery) are invited to spend two afternoon per week for three weeks in the Reception class. Children are able to explore the learning environment, get to know the staff and take part in some Reception activities.
- Children join our Reception class full time from September unless agreed by parents and staff.

Written by Amanda Peake Early Years Leader

Reviewed by: A. Peake August 2016

Agreed by:

Governor:

Head teacher: