




Southville Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Policy

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1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- All children have access to a broad and balanced curriculum that gives each individual the opportunity to acquire a range of knowledge and skills required to be successful at school and beyond as a lifelong learner.
- There is quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good or better progress, and no child gets left behind.
- There is a close partnership between practitioners, parents/ carers and other professionals that are involved in the team around the child.
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [2021 Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#).

3. Structure of the EYFS

The school has one Preschool class and three Reception classes.

The Preschool admits children on either a part-time or full-time basis and can attend the term after their third birthday. Full-time children attend from 9.00am to 3.00pm Monday to Friday. Part-time children can attend either Monday until Wednesday lunchtime or from Wednesday lunchtime until Friday. If there is space available, there is an option for parents/ carers to extend Wednesday by paying a top-up fee for the half-day not covered by the 15 hours universal funding. Please see our separate Preschool Admissions policy, available on our school website, for more information.

Each Reception class has a maximum of 30 children, with a total of 90 in the cohort. Each class has its own indoor classroom, and they share an outdoor learning environment. All children in the EYFS are assigned to a key person and the correct adult/child ratio is applied for each year group.

4. Curriculum

Our early years setting promotes the four overarching principles of 'the unique child', 'positive relationships', 'enabling environments' and 'learning and development' and adheres to the requirements as outlined in the 2021 Statutory Framework of the EYFS. This includes making a judgement at the end of the reception year against the Early Learning Goals to summarise and report the knowledge, skills and understanding that our youngest children have gained; to inform the year one teachers of the next steps in learning and promote a successful transition into key stage one.

All teaching staff, including the senior leaders, have an awareness of the content and appreciation of the importance of the EYFS curriculum and how it leads into teaching and learning in key stages one, two and beyond.

The framework lists 7 areas of learning and development, as written below, which are equally important and interconnected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

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

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

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

To complement the areas of development, our school promotes opportunities to develop learning behaviours known as the 'Characteristics of Effective Learning'.

These can be explored under the following headings:

- Playing and Exploring
- Active Learning
- Creating and Thinking Critically
- Emotional Well Being (added to Bristol Early Years Characteristics of Effective Learning)

We believe that when children know how to learn and demonstrate good learning behaviours there will be a positive impact on their long-term outcomes.

4.1 Planning

Our staff are passionate about early years education and plan engaging activities and experiences that encourage children to be curious and independent learners. Planning reflects the individual needs of all children and provides opportunities to consolidate existing learning and with opportunities for challenge. This allows children to explore concepts more deeply when appropriate. Planning is carefully crafted to consider all of our families/communities and to incorporate our school values to ensure there is a culturally and diverse curriculum and environment that enables every child to participate.

The opinions, experiences and voice of our children are central to our planning processes. We actively encourage all children to be co-constructors of their learning and fully support them when setting their own learning goals and following their own lines of enquiry. We plan opportunities to inspire children to demonstrate the characteristics of effective learning in a range of contexts and as they move towards key stage one, these experiences reflect the ongoing and changing needs of the children as part of a robust and nurturing transition.

4.2 Teaching

We are proud to offer our children an engaging curriculum and an indoor and outdoor environment where they are encouraged to take risks, challenge themselves, take ownership of their learning and not be afraid to make mistakes. Our curriculum is implemented through a range of experiences including through purposeful play and interactions with the whole class, small group or 1-1 supported by nurturing and highly skilled practitioners.

Our staff extend children's learning through planned adult-directed opportunities as well as spontaneously through effective questioning and interaction whilst observing during periods of child and adult initiated play. They are knowledgeable and have a good understanding of child development, knowing when it is appropriate to observe and when to step in to scaffold learning to help children to reach the next step. They reflect on the different ways in which children learn and modify the environment, the curriculum or the teaching delivery method where appropriate. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, they consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, as and when is necessary and in agreement with parents/ carers.

Our staff know the importance of the prime areas of learning and promote a language rich environment through our daily interactions with the children, building new vocabulary through discussion and planned topic related words, reading and sharing stories, immersing ourselves in fabulous storytelling, by going on an adventure in wonderful, shared role play and by having the most fantastic conversations with the children they teach. Staff know how important it is to apply these skills to the 'specific areas of learning' and all staff are trained to deliver the synthetic phonics programme to ensure excellence in early reading. As children grow older there is a greater focus on the teaching of the skills and knowledge in the specific areas of learning to help children prepare for the transition to year one.

There is a supervision programme in place to ensure that staff have regular opportunity to reflect on the work they undertake in the early years provision to ensure there is a continuous improvement cycle.

5. Assessment

We believe that assessment plays an important part in helping parents/ carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs and to plan activities and support. This falls into two categories: Summative and Formative Assessment.

5.1 Summative Assessment

In our setting we make summative assessments by using a tool called OPAL (Observation of Play and Learning). This tool is used across the EYFS and includes children in both our nursery and reception classes.

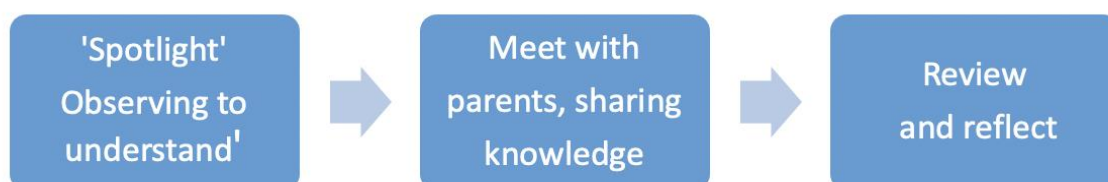
Summative assessment (a snapshot overview of a child's development at regular intervals) is important in our early years setting because it gives us a tool to tell each child's individual story and to reflect on what support they need from us. We assess children against developmental milestones to identify whether a child is at a typical stage of development or whether early intervention is appropriate. Our 'OPAL' assessment tool allows us to monitor children's development in five areas of learning which we call the GLD (Good Level of Development). These are:

- Communication and Language
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development
- Literacy
- Mathematics

We assess children against a starting point milestone and every six months from their birth date at an age-related milestone. By assessing children in this way, we are ensuring judgements are fair, relevant and accurate. We will meet with parents/ carers at each milestone and co-construct an assessment, using knowledge from the team working with the child in school, the child's opinion (child voice) and from the rich experiences that the parents/ carers bring from home. At the end of this meeting, we will inform parents/ carers if their child has met or not yet met the age related GLD milestones. If a judgement of 'met' in all areas has been reached, parents/ carers will be given some suggestions of how to help their child reach the next step in their learning.

If a judgement of 'not yet met' has been reached, the practitioner and parents/ carers will then decide together on how to make progress in this area and if any interventions might be appropriate from the school/home or in some cases a referral to an outside agency. They will also be given a summary of how to help their child reach the next step in their learning.

After each six-monthly assessment (also called spotlights) we will review the progress made in our intended actions for development to ensure that the child is still progressing or if the intended interventions have been successful. The cycle is shown in the diagram below.



If required, aside from in the area of Communication and Language, assessments will be made in a child's first language.

National Assessment Requirements

There are two national summative assessment points that help to inform parents/ carers about the choices they make when selecting a school for their child/children. These are both completed in the reception year and the school has a statutory obligation to complete these.

Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA)

The RBA will be completed within the first six weeks of the children starting school. It provides the starting point for a Reception to Year 6 progress measure which is used to externally evaluate school performance. It is a short interactive and practical assessment of a child's early literacy, communication, language and mathematics skills.

Early Learning Goals (ELG)

At the end of the reception year, the EYFS profile will be completed for each child. The profile, in the form of a school report, will provide parents/ carers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their attainment against expected levels and their readiness for year one. Practitioners will inform parents/ carers whether their children are meeting the expected levels of development, or if they are not yet reaching the expected levels of development. The EYFS profile data must be reported to local authorities upon request. Local authorities are under a duty to return this data to the relevant government department.

5.2 Formative Assessment

Formative assessment in our setting happens daily as part of our everyday practice and informs how to shape further teaching and learning experiences for our children. Staff observe the children interacting with the world around them and respond in the moment or over time by adapting teaching, resources, interactions or the environment. Staff spend time alongside the children being present and actively listening to what is unfolding, in order to be curious and questioning about what they are observing and open to possibilities. Staff support children to think about their meta-learning and encourage them to reflect and review and be part of the observation, assessment and planning process. Being 'in the moment' with the children is important to us and we think carefully about what evidence we need to capture to ensure this does not take us away from the children and their learning.

The formative assessment of a child can be taken from a range of sources, and it is the rich wealth of this information that leads to quality judgements and outcomes. This includes observations and anecdotal evidence from the child themselves, family members, all staff working with the children, a child's friends, outside agencies, visiting professionals, etc. Where a special educational need is suspected/identified, practitioners can reflect on their observations using Bristol's Differentiated Early Years Outcomes (DEYO) to support the next steps and target setting.

Regular, planned meetings are held to share observations and reflect on learning and possible lines of development as a staff team. This is essential to moderate decisions made to ensure that practice is always as effective as it can be, to learn from each other and to gain a different perspective or to deepen further existing knowledge about child

development, to inform CPD and to make consistent and reliable judgements about a child's learning.

6. Working with Parents and Carers

At Southville Primary, we believe our parents/ carers are able to provide invaluable insight about their child. We recognise that children have different experiences at home and may behave differently to how they do in school and therefore a holistic picture of a child's learning can only be developed through positively recognising parents/ carers as the primary educators. This begins when they first transition to one of our EYFS year groups, during which time all parents/ carers are given the opportunity to meet with a practitioner to discuss their child's strengths, likes, dislikes, additional needs, additional languages, socio-economic circumstances, protected characteristics and to raise concerns or ask questions. We will also discuss their aspirations for their child and invite them to share any other information. We strive to make parents/ carers feel that they are involved in the decision making for their child and that their opinions are acted upon in the setting. We ensure that all of our families feel welcome and provide support where needed to include writing letters in a home language, additional home visits, signposts to our family support worker or SENCO, liaising with the portage team or outside agencies, providing a translator, etc.

As well as regular meetings with practitioners (both formal and informal), families will have access to their child's online learning diary. This is a shared platform where both parents/ carers and practitioners can upload observations, as and when they would like, to inform the summative assessment milestones, to show progress, to celebrate strengths and interests, to build confidence or to show a wonderful and new perspective to a child's behaviour or personality.

We believe that working in partnership with parents/ carers is essential and we strive to build connections through inviting parents/ carers to share in their child's learning experience through 'stay and play' sessions, inviting parents/ carers in to help with class activities or on school trips and to invite parents/ carers in to share their expertise with the children. We run parent workshops/ meetings about specific areas of the curriculum and send out weekly information so parents/ carers can discuss what is coming up in advance with their child.

7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the governing board every 3 years.

Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

Statutory Policy or Procedure	Location
Safeguarding Policy.	See child Protection and Safeguarding Policy [School Website]
Procedure for responding to illness.	See Health and Safety Policy [School Website]
Administering medicines policy.	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy. [School Website]
Emergency evacuation procedure.	See Health and Safety Policy [School Website]
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors.	See child Protection and Safeguarding Policy [School Website]
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children.	See child Protection and Safeguarding Policy [School Website]
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints.	See Complaints Policy [School Website]