



# EYFS Policy 2025-26

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## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy (Reception Year)

*"Every child deserves the best possible start in life. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure and happy childhood is important in its own right, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. When parents choose to use early years services they want to know the provision will keep their children safe and help them to thrive. The Early Years Foundation Stage is the framework that provides that assurance."*

### **Aims:**

We believe that the Early Years are critical in children's development and that the EYFS builds a firm basis for future learning, development and independence. We aim to:

- Provide a happy, secure, well-ordered and stimulating environment, where children can develop as independent individuals through interaction with sensitive adults and other children.
- To offer a broad and balanced curriculum which extends previous learning and covers the seven areas of learning as set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework (2024).
- To ensure that children develop positive attitudes to learning, self-motivation, curiosity, confidence and responsibility.
- To provide children with firsthand learning experiences rooted in purposeful play in which they can become actively engaged, expressing thoughts, ideas and feelings.
- To develop the cultural capital of our pupils through the taught curriculum, extra-curricular activities, engagement with our local community and cultural experiences.
- To develop the whole child socially, spiritually, emotionally, physically, intellectually and aesthetically.
- To develop and maintain partnership with parents and others including other professionals who are involved with the development of the child.

### **Safeguarding:**

At Seaford College, safeguarding is a fundamental priority across all phases of education, including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's overarching Safeguarding Policy, which outlines the procedures and responsibilities for ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all pupils. In EYFS, safeguarding practices are tailored to meet the developmental needs of younger children, with particular attention to early identification of concerns, secure environments, and staff training. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSLs maintain oversight of EYFS safeguarding, ensuring alignment with statutory guidance and the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) framework.

### **Admission arrangements and introduction:**

Prospective parents and children are able to make informal visits to the Reception Class. This allows them to become familiar with the school and to meet staff.

Children are admitted to the Reception Class in the September following their fourth birthday. The children will attend full time from the beginning of the Autumn term.

Children due to join the Reception Class are able to spend one or two mornings/ afternoons in the class after the half term break of the summer term. This allows them to become familiar with the setting.

Meetings are held at the beginning of the autumn term for parents of Reception class children to discuss the organisation of the class, schemes used, reading record books, timetables. This is also an opportunity

for the parents to meet staff and discuss any matters of concern that they might have.

### **A Unique Child**

At Seaford College Prep we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others. We use praise and encouragement, celebration/sharing assemblies, and rewards to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

### **Inclusion**

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children at Seaford College Prep School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

In our school we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of all our children, irrespective of gender, race and ability. All children will have equal access to the Curriculum.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and which will develop their self-esteem and confidence.
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on individual learning needs.
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children in order for them to learn effectively.
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of every child is valued.
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping.
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

### **Principles for Teaching and Learning**

The following principles will underpin teaching and learning in the classroom:

- Teaching is based on a sound knowledge of the Areas of Learning and Development and the Early Learning Goals.
- Teachers and other practitioners will use a balance of approaches and groupings appropriate to what is being taught.
- There will be a balance of teacher directed and child chosen activities.
- Children are encouraged to contribute according to their own experiences and interest.
- Learning will be active, ensuring choice and independence.
- It is recognised that purposeful play is the natural way children learn.
- Learning will take place outdoors and indoors.
- Teachers recognise that all children are individuals and have a variety of needs.

The learning environment will be such that the children feel secure, confident and stimulated. It will be

safe and enable children to be independent.

### **Organisation of Teaching and Learning**

The Reception Class are at school full time. Formal teaching ends at 3.30pm for Reception pupils. Optional after school activity sessions are operated by members of school staff which extend the school day until 5.15pm.

Reception is located within Wilberforce. Sports facilities for the EYFS include the main school sports hall, swimming pool, astro pitch and sports field. EYFS have an outdoor area, with direct access from Pre-Prep. *The importance of an outdoor curriculum is recognised and planned for.*

The staff set high expectations for children's attainment and progress. Teaching will use a balance of approaches and groupings, appropriate to the age of the children and what is being taught. Sessions are organised so that there is a balance of teacher initiated and child-initiated activities. The children's own interests and experiences are valued, and their learning will take these into account. Teaching will include the wider curriculum which promotes the development of the whole child, and which includes the opportunity to explore the unexpected.

### **The Areas of Learning and Development**

There are seven areas of learning and development which shape educational programmes in the early years setting. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. The three prime areas of learning are crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

These three areas, the prime areas, are:

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social and emotional development.

There are four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

- literacy
- mathematics
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design

The EYFS planning includes the following:

- Communication and language development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.
- Physical development provides opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children are also helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.
- Personal, social and emotional development involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

- Literacy development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children are given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.
- Mathematics involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.
- Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment. These experiences also further develop our children's cultural capital.
- Expressive arts and design involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

### **Characteristics of Effective Learning (CoEL)**

CoEL advocate that in planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners will reflect on the different ways that children learn and then reflect these in their practice. A child's individual learning characteristic will determine the way they respond to both the teaching and learning taking place in the environment.

Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning identified by the EYFS 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.

The focus of the CoEL is on how children learn rather than what they learn i.e. process over outcome. Underpinning the CoEL is the understanding that during their earliest years, children form attitudes about learning that will last a lifetime. Children who receive the right sort of support and encouragement during these years will be creative, and adventurous learners throughout their lives. Children who do not receive this sort of support and interaction are likely to have a much different attitude about learning later on in life. It is important to remember that children are individuals who bring their own needs, talents and histories to the learning environment.

Planning takes the form of:

- Long term plans. These identify main topics to be covered throughout the year.
- Medium term plans. These link the Areas of Learning and Development and the Early Learning Goals to specific planned activities and will identify assessment opportunities.
- In the Reception Class literacy is planned using the Development Matters Framework and Mathematics is planned in accordance with White Rose Maths and the Development Matters

Framework. Song of Sounds Phonics programme is used to deliver targeted and high quality phonics tuition.

- Short term plans (weekly/daily). These include specific activity plans, clear differentiation for groups and individuals, and organisational management including the role of the adults.

#### **Assessment, Recording and Reporting to Parents:**

Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and staff to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support. On-going assessment (also known as formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process. EYFS staff observe children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations. In their interactions with children, EYFS staff respond to their own day-to-day observations about children's progress, as well as observations that parents and carers share.

- Records will be kept of each child's development and achievement in the form of observations, annotated examples of work, photographs, checklists and dated comments on an education platform.
- Assessment will be integrated into planning and the information gathered will be used to inform future planning.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile will be completed for each child during their Reception year.
- Full Reports are written at the end of the Autumn and Summer term and a Snapshot Report at the end of the Spring Term. Throughout the year, there are also opportunities for face to face meetings with parents. Parents will also receive a grade for their child's end of EYFS Profile.
- Parents may make an appointment to meet with staff at any other time.

#### **The Role of the Adult**

The Governor responsible for Reception EYFS is Jenny Hall and is responsible for:

- Agreeing the policy, monitoring and evaluating the impact of the policy.

The Assistant Head, Academic will be responsible for:

- The oversight of the EYFS policy, promoting the development of the policy and monitoring and evaluating. The Assistant Head, Academic will make sure the EYFS policy is being implemented in Reception.
- Ensuring the policy is implemented consistently and reviewed regularly in consultation with other staff.
- Monitoring and planning the curriculum
- Ensuring that the children's progress is recorded effectively and is passed on and understood by the staff in Key Stage 1.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Teacher will be responsible for:

- Implementing the policy through their planning, organisation and teaching.
- Keeping informed about current requirements.
- Liaising with other agencies.
- Developing experience through attendance at courses.
- Keeping other school teaching staff and governors informed about Early Years Foundation Stage developments.

- Provide support, advice and encouragement to colleagues.
- Ensuring that all resources are used effectively.
- Helping children to develop positive attitudes to learning.
- To develop and maintain positive relationships with parents and carers.

Teaching Assistants will be responsible for:

- Supporting the class teacher in implementing the policy.

### **Partnership with Parents and Carers**

#### **Positive Relationships**

At Seaford College Prep, we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent through secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with all our children and their families.

- The school recognises that parents/carers are the child's first educators and that an effective partnership between home and school is vital.
- The school will seek to involve parents/carers in the classroom. The school will encourage both regular and occasional involvement of parents/carers.
- The school will ensure that parents/carers receive regular information about what happens in school and in the classroom through newsletters, displays, notice boards, home/school books and regular face-to-face contact as well as through our online education platform.

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 Seaford College Prep School the EYFS Teacher acts as the 'Key Person' to children in Reception.

### **Children's Welfare**

- Parents must complete an emergency contact form for all pupils, which include relevant medical, personal and social information.
- The school's Health and Safety Policy will ensure the health and safety of pupils.
- The school has an Anti-Bullying and Behaviour Policy, which applies to the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Recordable accidents must be recorded on school accident forms and parents notified as soon as possible.
- The school will work closely with the DSL and Social Services in monitoring any pupils at risk.

### **Liaison**

- The Early Years Foundation Stage classes work closely with the Key Stage 1 and Lower Key Stage 3 classes, including assemblies, music and some playtimes.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage Teacher will seek out opportunities to develop further links with the local community.

### **Monitoring and Review**

It is the responsibility of the EYFS Coordinator/ Class Teacher to be responsible for the day to day monitoring of the principles stated in this policy. They will regularly review practice and evaluate outcomes to inform future action and development plans.

The Head of the Prep School and a named Governor are responsible for the EYFS. This governor will discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion.

The EYFS Teacher and the Assistant Head Academic will carry out monitoring of the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.