



Sedbergh Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Approved by: *Charlotte Robson-Peall*

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This policy was written and updated in collaboration with school staff. This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policy documents:

- Teaching and Learning Policy
- SEN (including most able) Policy
- Single Equalities Policy
- Handwriting Policy
- Marking and Feedback Policy
- Assessment Policy

If you require this document in another format; i.e. easy read, large text, audio, Braille or a community language, please contact the school office.

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This policy is a statement of the intent, implementation and impact for teaching the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum at Sedbergh Primary School.

Our Curriculum Intent:

‘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 together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.’ (EYFS Statutory Framework, 2021)

At Sedbergh Primary School, our dedicated Early Years Team believe it is crucially important that an early learning curriculum is responsive to the changing needs of children so that opportunities for growth and development are not missed. We designed our curriculum with the particular strengths and needs of the children of Sedbergh Primary in mind. For example, many children enter our Foundation Stage unit with speech and language difficulties: therefore, we ensure to model standard English as part of our daily routines and through play, as well as offering lots of speaking and listening activities and vocabulary development such as; Word Aware, a Poem a Day and Talk for Writing. Many children have not been exposed to a culturally diverse background so we include a wide range of inclusive and diverse texts to introduce children to different religious and cultural communities in this country. Learning in our Elder classes is varied. Most learning is play-based and takes place indoors and outside. However, there is a balance between adult-initiated experiences (guided learning) and child-initiated experiences. We offer lots of learning outdoors to build children’s confidence and physical strength and co-ordination, for example through Welly Wednesday. Our curriculum is led by quality texts and supported by high quality enhanced provision. We aim to develop independence and give children the opportunity to think and

discover for themselves, which is why our curriculum allows time for staff to work with children to access provision independently and develop a variety of skills through areas such as, self-service dough or paint. Adults take children's interests and strengths as a starting point, seeing each child as a competent learner. We aim to respond to the diverse learning needs of all children by recognising and being constantly aware of the needs of each individual child according to their ability and aptitude. We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. Therefore, we aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families. Parent involvement is also crucial therefore, we use the Class Dojo app as one way to communicate with parents. Learning should be fun and the Early Years team aims to ensure that the learning experience takes place in a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere, that is safe and homely, as well as being stimulating and encouraging.

Implementation:

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is based on four principles:

- A unique child
- Positive relationships
- Enabling environments
- Learning and developing

A Unique Child

At Sedbergh Primary School we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and independent. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates and with different learning styles. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration/ sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We welcome and encourage the diversity of individuals within school and do not discriminate against children because of differences and encourage children to see difference as a positive value. At Sedbergh Primary School, we believe that all children matter and are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school. Children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all provisions available. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and 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 boys and girls, 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.

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 based on children's learning needs;
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively

- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

Assessments take into account contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential special educational needs is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage and the schools SENDCo is called upon for further information and advice. Appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the school's Inclusion policy for SEN.

Welfare

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See Whole School Safeguarding Children Policy). "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."

At Sedbergh Primary School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2021. We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare and safeguarding of children.
- promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.

Positive Relationships

At Sedbergh Primary School, we recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make.

Parents as Partners

We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts Nursery and Reception in order to detail how we aim to work with their child; and we can talk to parents about their child before their child starts in our school;
- children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher together with their parents before starting nursery during an optional home visit and open mornings within school.
- the children's online learning journey (class dojo) which parents can have access to at all times from home or they can come into school and use our computers.
- parents adding photos and comments to their child's learning journey to share the experiences and learning that takes place at home.
- offering parents opportunities to talk about their child's progress. There is a formal meeting for parents twice a year at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private. Parents also receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year. Throughout the year they will also receive their child's next steps and possible ideas to support learning at home.
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns by providing a quiet and confidential area.
- support children through the transition from pre-school to Nursery and then to Reception with the children attending school through a staggered intake, if necessary. This is also to support staff and parents in getting to know each other as well as the children.
- support children through the transition from Reception to Year 1 with regular teacher meetings and a booklet for parents outlining the arrangements
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: stay and play sessions, assemblies, school visits, concerts, and fundraising events.
- providing parents an opportunity to celebrate their child's learning and talk to their child about what they want to do at school through termly reviews which will inform planning and provision;
- written contact through letters or dojo, as well as the acknowledgement that parents can ring school to contact their child's teacher.
- providing parents with half termly challenges to be completed at home, which are linked to the learning in school
- communication through reading diaries
- communication through bus books for children coming to school on the bus
- providing welcome booklets at the start of Nursery and Reception
- regular updates on learning and in-school activities through our School Facebook site or the App.

Teaching Staff

Mrs Jones and Mrs Thompson are the Reception class teachers; both working 0.6 hours a week. Mrs Tholen is the Nursery Class Teacher, for the Autumn Term 2023, before Miss Chapman returns from maternity leave. Mrs White is the EYFS Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) who works mostly with the nursery children and Miss Brewer is the EYFS Teaching Assistant, working mostly with the Reception children.

Enabling Environments

At Sedbergh Primary school we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an

indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned enhanced provision.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

The planning within the EYFS follows the achievements, interests and needs of the children, following careful observation of each child and discussions with the parents of the children. As a basis, we have a long term curriculum plan designed by the EYFS teachers; however, topics may vary or change depending on the interests of the children. Regular planning sessions with the children also take place. We make regular assessments of the children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs.

Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. These observations are recorded in the child's online Dojo portfolio or are kept in the child's assessment file. Adult led activities are assessed on a daily assessment sheet, as well as written feedback in Literacy or Maths books and verbal feedback being given. All children have next steps in their books or a class target displayed in the classroom.

On entry into Reception, a baseline assessment is carried out using the school's own assessment strategies. The assessment is mainly carried out through observations and mini assessment tasks designed by the teachers, and then input on to Scholar pack. The scholar pack tracking is completed at the start and end of the year. Throughout the year, we have designed our own tracking sheets. Nursery children's progress is also assessed using our own tracking sheets. Reception will also take part in the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA), which is a short assessment taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts Reception. The statutory guidance for the administration of the RBA is set out in the EYFS Statutory Framework (Annex B).

The Learning Environment

Both EYFS classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, but also areas of quiet and rest. At Sedbergh Primary School, we believe that play based learning is paramount and each room is set up in learning areas where children direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities provided by staff. Children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. Staff will enhance play and extend as needed to further develop children's learning.

During the summer term, reception children are also given rainbow challenges to extend their independent learning and areas in the room are differentiated to suit all abilities.

Learning and Development

At Sedbergh Primary school, we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand they are interconnected.

Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning and development of which three are "prime areas," and four "specific areas." The prime areas are

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

The specific areas are

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

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity.

“This framework does not prescribe a particular teaching approach. Play is essential for children’s development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. Practitioners need to decide what they want children in their setting to learn, and the most effective ways to teach it. Practitioners must stimulate children’s interests, responding to each child’s emerging needs and guiding their development through warm, positive interactions coupled with secure routines for play and learning. As children grow older and move into the reception year, there should be a greater focus on teaching the essential skills and knowledge in the specific areas of learning. This will help children to prepare for year 1.” (Statutory Framework for EYFS, 2021)

At Sedbergh Primary School, we support children in learning through the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning. These 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.
- (Taken from statutory framework for the EYFS 2021)

Evidence of these skills are displayed on our Characteristics of Effective Learning wall or are linked to daily observations and kept in the assessment file.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, we also look closely at the Leuven scales for involvement and well-being, and assess these before beginning any assessments, particularly baseline.

Religious Education is also taught in the reception class in accordance with Cumbria guidelines.

Teaching and Learning Styles

At Sedbergh Primary school we are dedicated to making the teaching we deliver as effective as possible. To achieve this we:

- set high expectations for attainment and progress.
- have good understanding of how children develop and learn.
- promote a positive partnership between teachers and parents so that children feel secure and develop a sense of wellbeing and achievement.
- make careful assessments and observations, including information provided by parents and other settings.
- identify children’s progress and next steps (which are shared with parents) and plan our provision and activities to meet children’s individual needs and interests.

- provide activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities.
- carefully plan a curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goal throughout the EYFS.
- provide appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment.
- use a range of approaches that provide first hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication.
- encourage children to communicate and talk about learning and to develop independence and self-management

Class Organisation

At Sedbergh Primary our Early Years Foundation Stage is made up of two classes; Nursery and Reception. We have 30 places available in each class. Currently, Nursery children join the Reception class on a Friday due to low nursery numbers. Children are admitted into the Nursery in the term after their 3rd birthday and children are admitted into Reception in the September after their 4th birthday. Both classrooms are situated at the back of the building.

Transition

From Pre-school/ Feeder settings/ Home

During the term prior to a child's entry into Nursery, the following procedures have been put into place to ensure successful transition.

- Parents are invited to a meeting in the summer term to ensure they know about school procedures and allocation of classes and can express any concerns they may have.
- During the term before the child is due to start, staff will visit Sedbergh Playgroup to introduce themselves to the children and get to know them in a familiar setting, if necessary.
- The children are invited to visit the Nursery class with Sedbergh playgroup (or parents) and will come in small groups over a few weeks during the term. Children joining from other settings will also be invited to visit the class. The number of visits will depend on the child's needs and how much information gathering is required in order to support the child's transition.
- Children requiring extra support will have additional visits regardless of their setting. Often these children will have been identified as requiring additional support or are part of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) process.

At the end of the summer term each child will be provided with an optional home visit to re-familiarise themselves with the adults and to give book folders etc. needed for Nursery. If necessary, children will be part of a staggered intake to allow children to become familiar with the class and routines of the day. It also allows teachers and TA to observe the children's abilities and interests.

From Nursery Class to Reception Class

Although the nursery and reception classes are taught separately for four days of the week, there are lots of times throughout the week where we come together for example, Welly Wednesday, phonics etc. The class teachers get to know all of the children over the Nursery year and the children mix with the Reception children daily in our outdoor area, as well as being involved with the same or similar activities. Therefore, a formal transition does not seem appropriate. However, parents are encouraged to attend our intake meeting in the summer term before their child enters Reception, to ensure they know about any new school procedures and be aware of any slight changes that may happen when their child moves into EYFS Policy

Reception. Also, any children that we feel may benefit from extra time in Reception or require additional support will be given the opportunity to spend extra time in the Reception classroom and getting to know the Reception staff.

From Reception Class to Key Stage 1

During the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, staff 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. The Profile includes on-going observation, all relevant records held by the setting, discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer believes can offer a useful contribution.

Each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals. The profile indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). Year 1 teachers are 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 effective learning. This informs the dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1.

Children are given the opportunity to work with the Year 1 teacher during the summer term both in their own classroom and in the Year 1 classroom. Parents will also be provided with a transition booklet that outlines exactly what will be happening in school to support the children with the transition in to Key Stage 1.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of those working in Nursery and Reception to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Headteacher and EYFS co-ordinator will carry out monitoring of the Early Years Foundation Stage Unit as part of the whole school monitoring schedule. This policy will be reviewed in June 2025 or as necessary.