

# Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



## STOVER SCHOOL

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**Last reviewed on:** 9<sup>th</sup> March, 2019

**Next review due :** 9<sup>th</sup> March, 2020

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\*For all other information refer to our Early Years Foundation Stage Handbook.

## 1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life.
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
- Close partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers.
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

## Key Requirements

“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.” Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, DfE 2017.

Four guiding principles shape the practice within our Foundation Stage provision. These are:

- every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships
- children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers
- children develop and learn in different ways (see “the characteristics of effective teaching and learning”) and at different rates.

## 2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [2017 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#). This document also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association. This framework is mandatory for all early years providers in England (from 3 April 2017) maintained schools; non-maintained schools; independent schools; all providers on the Early Years Register; and all providers registered with an early year’s childminder agency.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to all children from 0 years of age to the end of the Reception year. Expiry or review date: this statutory framework remains in force until further notice.

## 3. Structure of the Early Years Foundation Stage within Stover School

In our school, children can join our Foundation unit within our Nursery from three years of age. Most children then start in our Reception Class at the beginning of the school year in which they turn five. (Compulsory schooling begins at the start of the term after a child’s fifth birthday). Key Stage 1 begins at the beginning of Year 1. 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. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all early years' providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

The EYFS seeks to provide:

- quality and consistency in all early years settings, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- a secure foundation through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each individual child and are assessed and reviewed regularly
- partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers • equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported

The EYFS specifies requirements for learning and development and for safeguarding children and promoting their welfare.

The learning and development requirements cover:

- the areas of learning and development which must shape activities and experiences (educational programmes) for children in all early years settings
- the early learning goals that providers must help children work towards (the knowledge, skills and understanding children should have at the end of the academic year in which they turn five)
- assessment arrangements for measuring progress (and requirements for reporting to parents and/or carers)

The safeguarding and welfare requirements cover the steps that providers must take to keep children safe and promote their welfare.

The Early Learning Goals set out what is expected of most children by the end of the EYFS. The early years education that we offer is based on the following principles: It builds on what the children know and can do; It ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged; It offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors.

Our Nursery is open for 34 weeks a year and operates between the hours of 8.30am – 4pm. Children are able to join the nursery once they have turned three years of age. We also offer an EYFS breakfast club for both Reception Class and Nursery children from 8 am which is bookable in advance.

Parents of 3 and 4 year olds can use the government's 15 hours entitlement across the week, the term following their child's 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday and can 'top up' their time in nursery by paying for additional hours.

## 4. Curriculum

At Stover School we recognise that every child is unique. We understand that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. We want our children to be independent and self-motivated learners, encouraging the children to adapt their work, think critically and take risks with their learning.

The foundation stage classes follow the curriculum as outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) document, which is available at: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework). This document defines what we teach and details the specifics of our school. The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, three areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

### The Prime Areas of Learning and Development

1. **Personal, Social and Emotional Development** - This area focuses on making relationships, self-confidence and self-awareness, and managing feelings and behaviour. This is critical for very young children in all aspects of their lives and gives them the best opportunity for success in all other areas of learning.
2. **Communication and Language** - This area encourages developing competence in listening and attention, and in understanding and speaking.
3. **Physical Development** - This area focuses on the child's developing physical control, moving and handling, and health and self-care.

### The Specific Areas of Learning and Development

- 4 **Literacy** - This focuses on reading and writing. Children are taught Early Reading (phonics) throughout the EYFS.

**Mathematics: Numbers** - This area focuses on learning through practical activities and on using numbers and understanding shape, space and measure.

- 5 **Understanding of the World** - This area focuses on children's developing knowledge and understanding of their own environment, through learning about people and communities, the world and technology. It forms the foundation for later work in Science, Design and Technology, History, RE, Geography and ICT.
- 6 **Expressive Arts and Design** - This area focuses on the development of the child's imagination and her/his ability to communicate and express ideas and feeling in creative ways. It incorporates exploring and using media and materials. Creativity is fundamental to successful learning.

### Characteristics of Effective Learning

Through regular observations, we will discover children's interests and assess what children know. Also, fundamental to our practice is to assess how children learn and it is our duty to report to parents their children's individual dispositions and attitudes to learning.

## **5. Planning**

In planning and guiding children's activities, our practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice.

Each child has an assigned key person. Parents and/or carers are informed of the name of the key person, and explain their role, when a child starts attending our Nursery. The key person helps to ensure that every child's learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs. The key person seeks to engage and support parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. We also offer families the opportunity to engage with more specialist support if appropriate.

Through planning, teachers ensure that there is a balance of adult led and child initiated activities across the day.

During child-initiated activities, the adults' role is to show an interest in the children's ideas, build conversation, facilitate and share ideas and model different skills. Such interaction with the children is essential as this helps to build the children's understanding and therefore guides new learning. Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, practitioners working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the three prime areas.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate. In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1.

## **6. Teaching**

At specific times in the day, the children will take part in an activity that is teacher led. In Nursery and Reception these sessions include: listening and circle time sessions, rhyme time sessions daily reading lessons, daily writing lessons, math's/counting experiences, as well as teaching new skills to support children's learning within the classroom environment. All taught sessions are carefully planned and tailored for each class using previous assessments of the children's knowledge, skills and ability. Planning is changed and tailored regularly and, in response to the result of taught sessions, ensuring all teaching and learning is relevant and challenging for each child.

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Practitioners respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are: Meeting expected levels of development. Exceeding expected levels. Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers. The level of progress children should be expected to have attained by the end of the EYFS is defined by the early learning goals.

## **7. Learning through Play**

Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. It is our belief that children learn best from activities and experiences that they have initiated. We carefully plan the environment both inside and out and provide opportunities to reflect upon interests which will inspire them further. We also make sure that children have the opportunity to extend and practise the skills they have learned through direct teaching. Through play children explore and develop learning experiences, helping them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand 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. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations. Giving children the opportunity to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, allows them to discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. With adult support this process enhances children's ability to think critically and ask questions. Adults can support them in making connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning. The children can also choose whether to work inside or outside during their independent learning time and exploratory play.

## **8. Assessment, Recording and Reporting of Progress**

Assessment plays an important part in helping our parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support. Ongoing assessment (also known as formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process. It involves staff observing 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, staff respond to their own day-to-day observations about children's progress and observations that parents and carers share with them.

Parents and/or carers are kept up-to-date with their child's progress and development. Staff address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents and/or carers, and any relevant professionals. In our school assessment takes a variety of forms in order to gain an understanding of each child's level of understanding. These can be through observations, photographic evidence, examples of work and parental conversations. Assessment occurs throughout any taught session as well as during free flow times when children are embedding and extending any previous learning. These assessments will then be used to inform and shape any future learning.

Observations are taken using Tapestry which allows staff to take photos and make notes while observing what the children are doing or saying. From such observations, we can ascertain what the next steps are for the children. We are then able to share these experiences with the children's parents. On entry to the foundation stage a baseline assessment is carried out for each child and at the end of each half term reading assessments are collated to track how well the children are progressing. The reading assessments then allow the children to be grouped according to their ability. In Reception Class they are also assessed each term in Literacy and maths so that next steps can be taught and pupils can access more challenging work when required. Parent consultations are held across the EYFS in the Autumn and Spring terms to provide information about children's progress, to discuss the children's learning journey from Tapestry and to talk about children's strengths, achievements, interests and next steps. These form part of the monitoring of pupil progress as the children progress through school. On-going teacher assessments are undertaken in line with the Foundation Stage Framework and The Foundation Stage Profile. By the end of reception, parents are made aware of whether their child is 'emerging, at expected level or exceeding' the Foundation Stage Curriculum Goals, following moderation with Devon LEA.

## **9. Special Educational Needs and Inclusion**

At Stover School we value the diversity of all children at our school. We believe that all our children matter and take every opportunity to develop parent partnerships, giving every child the opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning. Assessments and teacher observations are used to identify children who may have specific needs within the first half term following admission. Results of assessments are used to ensure that a differentiated curriculum is offered to such children to meet their needs. The role of SENCO is shared between Sharron Humphries (EYFS SENCO) and Mrs Fallshaw our (Preparatory School SENCO). At the end of Reception Class the teacher liaises with the Year 1 teacher and Mrs Fallshaw our Preparatory School SENCO to ensure the child's individual needs continue to be met. For more information, we have a Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Policy, which is available on the school's website.

## **10. Working with parents**

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers. Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development through regular meetings. Parents are encouraged to talk to teachers should any concerns arise. The Early Years Foundation Stage Framework, Tapestry, Transition Reports and the EYFS Profile all help to support and inform both parents and staff of a child's individual progress and needs. This helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities. Each child is assigned a key person to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

## **11. Safeguarding and welfare procedures**

Children learn best when they are happy, safe and feel secure. We aim to ensure that all children feel happy, safe and secure through the continuous development of positive relationships between children and staff as well as relationships with their peers. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Guidance. Our school has rigorous Safeguarding and welfare policy and procedures that are used to identify anyone at risk or harm of radicalization that sets out clear procedures for reporting any concerns. Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy. Our designated safeguarding leads are Helen Notman (Lead), Matthew Appleby (Deputy) and Sharron Humphries (EYFS).

**12. Documentation** - As a registered provider, we must hold the following documentation: name, home address and telephone number of the provider and any other person living or employed on the premises. (See schools ISAMS server online password protected in line with GDPR).

## **13. Staff Ratios EYFS**

Staff: child ratios –Staffing arrangements meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety. We ensure that children are adequately supervised and decide how to deploy staff to ensure children's needs are met. Children must usually be within sight and hearing of staff and always within sight or hearing. Only those aged 17 or over may be included in ratios (and staff under 17 should be supervised at all times).

Students on long term placements and volunteers (aged 17 or over) and staff working as apprentices in early education (aged 16 or over) may be included in the ratios if the provider is satisfied that they are competent and responsible.

The ratio and qualification requirements below apply to the total number of staff available to work directly with children. Exceptionally, and where the quality of care and safety and security of children is maintained, changes to the ratios may be made (EYFS DFE, 2017).

Within our Reception Class- for children aged three and over as a registered early years provision where a person with Qualified Teacher Status, Early Years Professional Status, Early Years Teacher Status or another suitable level 6 qualification is working directly with the children:

- **there must be at least one member of staff for every 13 children**
- **at least one other member of staff must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification.**

**We also have a full-time Specialist Early Years Teaching assistant within our Reception Class who holds an NNEB (relevant Level 3 qualification).**

Within our Nursery - for children aged three and over at any time in our registered early years provision when a person with Qualified Teacher Status, Early Years Professional Status, Early Years Teacher Status or another suitable level 6 qualification is not working directly with the children:

- **there must be at least one member of staff for every eight children**
- **at least one member of staff must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification**
- **at least half of all other staff must hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification.**

EYFS Framework (DFE, 2017).

The Specified Work Regulations 2012 allow a non-teacher to carry out the work of the teacher ("specified work") where the non-teacher is assisting or supporting the work of the teacher, is subject to the teacher's direction and supervision as arranged with the head teacher, and the head teacher is satisfied that that person has the skills, expertise and experience required to carry out the specified work.

#### **14. Food and drink**

Where children are provided with meals, snacks and drinks, they are healthy, balanced and nutritious. Before a child is admitted to our school, we obtain information about any special dietary requirements, preferences and food allergies that the child has, and any special health requirements. Fresh drinking water is available and accessible at all times. We record and act on information from parents and carers about a child's dietary needs and share with other staff who will be responsible for their care.

#### **15. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed and approved by Matt Appleby (Head Teacher) and Claire Harrison (Foundation Stage Lead) on an annual basis. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.



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

This checklist lists the policies and procedures that we must have according the EYFS statutory framework.

\*For more information please also refer to our Early Years Foundation Stage Handbook.

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy
First Aid Administering medicines policy	At least one person who has a current Pediatric First Aid (PFA) certificate must be on the premises and available at all times when children are present, and must accompany children on outings. The certificate must be for a full course consistent with the criteria set out in EYFS Statutory Framework (DFE, 2017).  See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See health and safety policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy
Managing behavior	See Behaviour Policy

