



## **Simonside Primary School**

### **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

#### **Legislation**

This policy is based on requirements set out in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. September 2021.

#### **Introduction**

‘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 September 2021.

#### **At Simonside Primary School, our aim is to ensure that we:**

- Provide a safe, challenging, stimulating, caring and sharing environment which is sensitive to the needs of every child.
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will give children a wide range of knowledge and skills as well as enable them to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential. Thus we aim to set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond.
- Provide quality teaching and learning opportunities to enable every child to progress thus ensuring no child is left behind.
- Work in close partnership with parents and guardians to ensure every child is included and supported irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability.

#### **Principles**

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

**A unique child.** 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 as well as celebration and rewards to encourage and develop a positive attitude to learning.

**Positive relationships.** We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships and aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families.

**Enabling environments.** We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Through observations we assess the children's interests, stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging and achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning.

**Learning and development.** The Foundation Unit is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. Learning spaces within the classroom reflect each area of the early years curriculum.

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Simonside Primary School we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. However, we also believe that early childhood is valid in itself as part of life. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

The EYFS for children is from birth to five years of age. All children begin school with a wide variety of experiences and learning and it is the privilege of the adults working in the foundation stage to accept the task of building upon that prior learning experience. This is done through a holistic approach to learning ensuring that parents and guardians, support staff and the Foundation Stage team work effectively together to support the learning and development of the children in our care.

## **Structure of EYFS at Simonside**

### **Nursery**

All children are entitled to 15 hours of free childcare. At Simonside we provide spaces as follows.

Mon, Tues all day and Wednesday morning

OR

Wednesday afternoon, Thursday and Friday all day

Full time (5 full days per week 9am – 3pm) places are available for those families who are entitled to 30 hours. See [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) -30 hours free child care for eligibility.

Children can start in our Nursery in the term after they have turned 3 years of age.

### **Reception**

We offer full time Reception places between two classes. Children attend school from 8.50am until 3pm.

## **Curriculum**

### **Learning and Development**

Learning and development is categorised into **three prime** areas of learning:

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

Additionally there are four specific areas of learning:

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

Achievement of these prime and specific areas of learning is by:

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically

## **Teaching**

### **Planning and Differentiation**

In the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations matched to the needs and interests of our children. We provide carefully planned daily activities to meet the needs of all learners i.e. boys and girls, children with special educational needs, those that are more able, those that have any disabilities. When planning activities staff are also very aware of the differing social and cultural backgrounds and ethnic groups our children are from and constantly respond to the needs, interests and stage of development of each child in their care.

Staff plan carefully using specific texts as 'hooks' to inspire and drive learning each half term. We ensure that we make children's learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive. Effective learning builds on and extends what children know and can already do. All staff who work in the Foundation Stage are involved in this process and a range of differentiated tasks are planned accordingly.

### **Assessment**

Ongoing assessment is an integral part of the daily teaching process. Staff carefully observe the achievements, interests and learning styles of all children and use this knowledge to plan next steps in learning.

Half termly, staff in Nursery and Reception classes assess if each child's learning in the 7 areas mentioned above is 'on track' or 'not on track'. These assessments inform discussions with parents and in pupil progress meetings where additional support can be planned for those children who may need it.

The children's learning is recorded in their Literacy and Maths books (in Reception), in their learning journals (Nursery and Reception) and in our class floor books. At the end of the final term in Nursery and Reception we send a summary of progress home to parents in the form of a written report. These both offer brief comments on their child's progress in each area of learning. They highlight the child's strengths and development needs, and give details of the child's general progress.

For Reception children we report on their child's development against each of the Early Learning Goals. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals indicating whether they are meeting expected levels of development or are not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). These assessments are moderated internally within school and within our Trust of schools to ensure consistency of judgements. EYFS profile data is also shared with the local authority. Year 1 teachers use this information to make plans for the children moving up at the start of the year.

### **Learning through Play**

Through play our children explore and develop the learning experiences that help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up their ideas, learn how to control themselves, and begin to understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively both alongside other children and 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. At Simonside Primary School, children learn through planned play activities and staff will decide when child-initiated or adult-led play activities would provide the most effective learning opportunities.

### **Resources**

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning and reflects the individual's interests, passions and abilities. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer as well as more structured activities, as we believe that this encourages independent learning. We ensure that resources and spaces are safe to use and checked regularly.

### **Intimate Care**

"Intimate" care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out a procedure of an intimate nature that most children are able to carry out themselves. However, depending on a child's age and stage of development, they may need some support, for example dressing, wiping themselves after using the toilet and changing underwear following an accident. Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child. An intimate care log is kept within both Nursery and Reception areas.

## **Inclusion and Equal Opportunities**

In line with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy, we will provide all children, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability with equal access to all aspects of school life to ensure that every child is valued as an individual. All staff are role models and are aware of the influence they have in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical attitudes.

Children with special educational needs are supported as appropriate to enable them to access the curriculum fully. This includes children who are more able and those with specific learning needs. SEN 'My Support' plans identify specific targets and approaches that are needed to best support each individual child in their learning. The school's SEN Co-ordinator is responsible for providing additional information and advice to staff and parents and for arranging external intervention and support as necessary.

## **Working with parents**

We recognise that children learn and develop best when there is a strong partnership between home and school. Staff work hard to build supportive relationships with parents and carers. We do this through:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school;
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress through our genuine "open-door" policy;
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns;
- offering a range of activities, throughout the year, that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents;
- providing various activities that involve parents, through regular communication with home (including newsletters and homework books) and inviting parents to curriculum meetings which provide parents with information on what learning looks like in Maths and phonics for their child in the year group they are in.
- We also keep parents up to date on what the children are learning through weekly posts on our Class Dojo page;
- Next steps in learning shared with parents through termly parent consultations.
- Parents are invited to fill in a 'Parent/carers views' form each term where they have the opportunity to report the progress they can see their child making at home as well as share anything else that they feel is important for staff to know.

Staff in EYFS at Simonside are keen to form positive relationships with parents, offering support and advice, talking through concerns they have and referring them to our parent support advisor when needed.

## **Safeguarding and welfare**

Staff are invested in the safety and welfare of every child in our care and thoroughly adhere to our safeguarding policy and procedures. We are also committed to supporting parents with the health of their child by providing opportunities to speak to our PSA regarding diet, sleeping and toileting concerns. We also carefully plan opportunities to promote oral health.

## **Transition. Moving on.....**

At Simonside, we fully support our children in every move that they make through school. Staff in EYFS prepare children for moving from Nursery to Reception and from Reception to Year 1 by putting a number of measures and procedures in place thus allowing a smooth transition for all children.

During the summer term these procedures include:-

- Staff meet with the next teacher to share assessments made, progress, next steps in learning etc. Books, files, guided reading records are also passed up to the next teacher so they can see learning that has taken place / the work completed in the previous year group.
- Medical/dietary information is also shared as well as any particular family circumstances that staff need to be aware of.
- Staff hold 'Welcome' meetings for parents in the summer term so that vital information about start dates, routines, uniform and equipment children will need, can be shared. Parents are given a handbook which contains all of the relevant information they will need as well as a guide to the curriculum expectations for the year group their child will be entering. Parents have ample opportunity at these meetings to voice any questions or concerns they may have about their child moving classes.
- Planned visits are arranged for children to spend time in their new classes and get to know the staff and other children if they don't know them already.
- Where appropriate, teaching assistants will move to the new year group for the first few weeks in September to support any individual children who may struggle with the changes.

Policy reviewed September 2022  
EYFS Lead