



Sutton Road Primary and Nursery School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

March 2026

Within the Collaboration, we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the school, irrespective of race, gender, disability, faith or religion or socio-economic background. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life.


Frequency of Review: Yearly

Reviewed and approved by: The Combined Committee of the Governing Body

Date: Spring 2026

Date of Next Review: Spring 2027

Reviewer: Kate Coleman (Early Years Leader)

Signed:  (Chair of Governing Body)

Date: 20.05.2026

Introduction

This policy outlines the provision Sutton Road Primary School and Nursery offers to all its pupils aged three to five years. Children within this age range are taught in The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). This policy is based on the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework 2024.

Our aims

Everyone is treated equally in our school; encouraged and respected. We believe that all children should be able to achieve their full potential academically, socially, and emotionally. We are committed to our school being a safe and inclusive place where learning is nurtured and encouraged in a happy, caring, and fun environment. We all work for our school to be a happy place where good behaviour is expected, and all children enjoy their educational journey. At Sutton Road Primary School we believe in nothing but the best!

We aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to his/her full potential. Each child is valued as an individual and learning and teaching is based on the understanding that children develop at different rates.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. The EYFS is based upon key principles of the Characteristics of Effective Learning, further explained in detail later in this document.

Effective Early Years Education

Effective Early Years education requires both a relevant curriculum and practitioners who understand and can implement the curriculum requirements effectively.

Within our collaboration we believe that children develop rapidly during the early years – physically, intellectually, emotionally, and socially. Therefore, practitioners ensure that all children feel included, secure, and valued with their individual needs being met. Early years' experience and learning builds on what the children already know, are interested in and can do. No child is ever disadvantaged, and individual needs are always included in planning and provision. Parents and practitioners work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect and parents are welcomed into the setting on a regular basis to share information and celebrate the children's achievements.

Play and Exploration

“Play is essential for children’s development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others.” (Department for Education, 2021).

To be effective, the Early Years Curriculum is carefully structured; recognising different starting points; relevant to levels of need. Opportunities are created for children to engage in activities planned by adults which are teacher led as well as those that are planned or initiated for themselves in child-initiated activities in order to progress and develop. Practitioners provide quality interactions and observations, to identify levels of achievement, interest and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning and next steps.

Well planned, purposeful activities and appropriate interventions by staff ensure children within the setting are engaged in the learning process. A mixture of real objects, pictorial and photographs are used to accelerate children’s understanding with all learning styles are catered for. To ensure children have rich and stimulating experiences, the learning environment is well planned and well organised and is reviewed regularly to suit the children’s interests and ever-changing needs and development. Enhanced provision challenges are placed within the environment presented to the

children as 'Rainbow Challenges' to support and challenge children's "play" during child-initiated time and to ensure a depth and purpose to their activities.

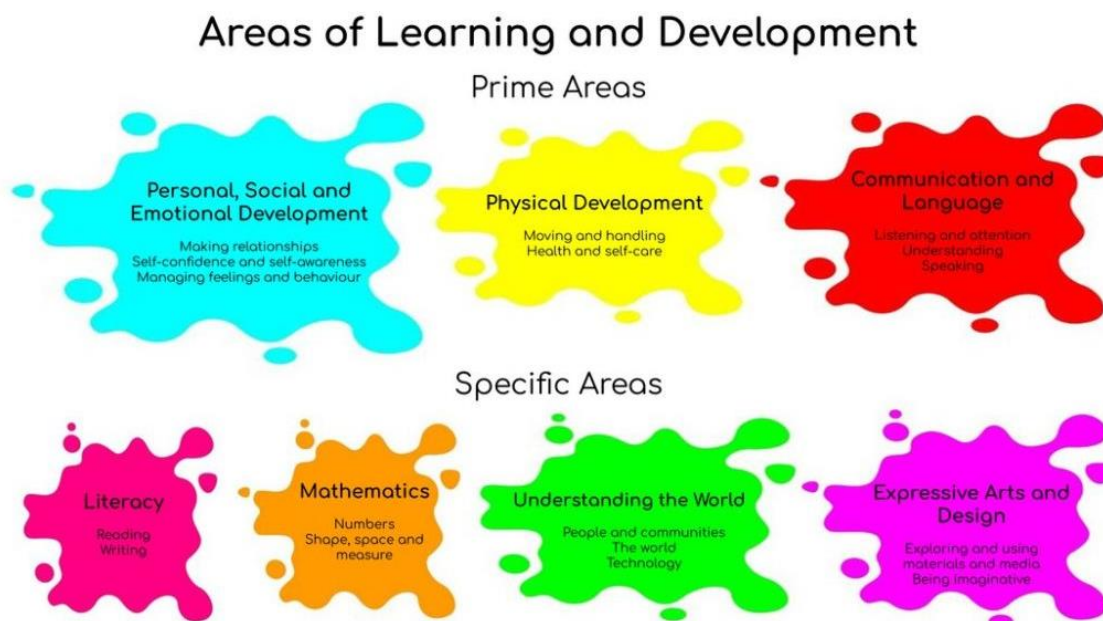
"Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals, and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play and learning that is guided by adults." (Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework, 2023)

At Sutton Road Primary & Nursery School we strongly believe that effective learning and development for young children requires high quality care and education by a committed and caring staff.

The Seven Areas of Learning

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2025 EYFS statutory framework. The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected.

The **3 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 are strengthened and applied through **4 specific areas**.



Characteristics of Effective Learning

We uphold the view that learning is underpinned by the characteristics of effective learning. In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice.

The 3 characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:



All of these areas interlink throughout the curriculum and adults make the most of opportunities to interact with children to develop their playing, thinking and learning. Adults also recognise that there are times when they need to take a step back to enable children to think critically and solve a problem by trial and error or perseverance.

It is our aim that children leave the EYFS with:

- a positive 'can do' attitude to learning
- a willingness to take risks and make mistakes
- high levels of engagement in a task where they can practise and build up concepts, ideas and skills
- perseverance
- a love of learning
- ideas of their own, that they can plan and follow through
- an ability to express fears to relieve anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations

Planning

The half-termly planning for our curriculum vehicle combines the seven areas of learning with skills and experiences essential for the development of the holistic child. Opportunities to recap past learning as well as new experiences enable flexibility for individualised provision and the nurturing of children's development to work towards a final outcome. The use of visitors, trips and other enrichment adds an additional layer to the learning of the children across the collaboration, supporting links to real life experiences such as occupations, the local area and 'awe and wonder' around them.

Detailed weekly plans are created to support the teaching of Phonics, English and Maths, using schemes to create a systematic and thorough coverage of these subjects.

Children in F1 (Nursery) are taught Monster Phonics, Pre-phase 2 phonics, covering all 7 aspects over 3 terms. Children in F2 follow the Monster Phonics scheme which focuses on grapheme recognition, blending and segmenting skills and introduce High Frequency Words which together allows children to read and write sentences by the end of the Foundation stage.

Long Term planning ensures a broad and balanced approach to the EYFS curriculum, along with ensuring the foundations are laid for the next step into Key Stage 1. Overviews of Vehicle, Maths and phonics are used to ensure coverage and a consistent progressive approach across the collaboration.

Teaching and Learning

Effective teaching and learning is supported through:

- the partnership between staff and parents that helps our children to feel secure at school, and to develop a sense of wellbeing and achievement.
- the knowledge staff have of how children develop and learn, and how this must be reflected in their teaching provision.

- the range of approaches provided to give first-hand experiences, clear explanations, make appropriate interventions, and extend and develop the children's play through talk or other means of communication.
- a carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage.
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their own interests, and develop their intellectual, physical, social, and emotional abilities.
- encouraging children to communicate and talk about their learning, the development of children's independence and self-management.
- the support for learning provided, with appropriate and accessible space, facilities, and equipment, both indoors and outdoors.
- the identification, through observations, of children's progress and future learning needs, which are regularly shared with parents, through daily conversations, written reports, and parents' meetings.

Assessment and Record keeping

Ongoing assessment is an integral part of learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also use information shared by parents about any experiences the children might have outside of school.

When a child is aged **between 3 and 4**, staff review their progress and provide parents and/or carers with a written summary of the child's development in the 3 prime areas. This highlights the areas in which a child is progressing well and the areas in which additional support might be needed.

In addition to this, the children also have their own online learning journey (Evidence Me), which captures learning opportunities. This enables staff to assess and plan for the next steps for individual children. But also provides the parents with a well-rounded, holistic picture of their child's development.

Within the first six weeks of a child starting Reception, practitioners are required to complete the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) in line with the expectations set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The RBA is a short, practical assessment carried out on a one-to-one basis with each child and is designed to provide a starting point measure of attainment when children begin school. The assessment focuses on early literacy, communication, language and mathematics, and is conducted in a supportive and age-appropriate manner to ensure children feel comfortable and confident. The information gathered is used nationally to measure progress across primary education, rather than to label or track individual children's performance within the setting.

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 (expected)
- Not yet reaching expected levels (emerging)

Development is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters guidance) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

The Role of the adult

At appropriate opportunities the adults will:

- Question, respond to questions and engage the child in extended conversations that support sustained shared thinking

- Extend vocabulary, knowledge and skills
- Encourage independence
- Add resources that stimulate, motivate and engage the learner
- Demonstrate, model and work alongside the children
- Help children to see links in their learning
- Support and encourage the children
- Encourage children to be problem solvers, problem setters and investigators
- Re-direct the play if necessary
- Help children to learn how to negotiate and resolve conflict
- Promote children's well-being
- Observe and assess learning
- Record judgments and plan for next steps in learning
- Provide feedback to child/other adult/parents
- Ensure the environment is safe and secure and that the Welfare Requirements are in place

Celebrating and rewarding.

Across the collaboration we use Dojo to reward good behaviour and achievement in school. Alongside this half termly Golden Letters home, attendance trips and End of Year Graduation ceremony.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within our school. All children within the collaboration are treated fairly and all children and their families are valued and celebrated within our school. 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.

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 and styles.
- 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.

Special Educational Needs

Through ongoing observation and both informal and formal assessments, practitioners carefully monitor each child's progress and development. This enables us to identify any emerging Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) at the earliest possible stage. Where concerns arise, we discuss them promptly and sensitively with parents or carers and work collaboratively to agree next steps. Our Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) is involved to ensure appropriate support is planned and implemented. Where necessary, and with parental consent, we may seek additional advice and guidance from external professionals such as the Speech and Language Therapy Service or other relevant agencies. Our approach is rooted in early identification, partnership with families, and ensuring that every child receives the support they need to achieve their full potential.

Relationships with Parents/Carers and the Wider Community

We recognise that strong partnerships with families are central to children's learning and emotional wellbeing. From the outset, we build positive relationships through introductory meetings and transition sessions, including stay-and-play opportunities, which help children and parents feel secure and confident about starting school. We maintain regular communication through shared reading books, home-school diaries, weekly Facebook updates and termly newsletters, ensuring families are informed about learning and how they can support this at home. Parent workshops provide practical guidance on areas such as early reading, phonics and emotional regulation, while parent consultation meetings offer valuable opportunities to discuss progress, wellbeing and next steps. By working closely with families, we create consistency between home and school, supporting children's learning, confidence and emotional regulation.

Building strong connections with the wider community is an important part of our EYFS practice. We work in partnership with a range of services and professionals to ensure that every child receives the appropriate support to meet their individual needs, sharing information responsibly and in line with safeguarding and data protection requirements. Our links with local organisations and community groups help to enrich the curriculum and broaden children's experiences. For example, we plan visits within the local area and welcome visitors into our setting to share their roles and experiences. These meaningful connections help children develop an understanding of the world around them and foster a sense of belonging within their community.

Transition

In collaboration with local pre-schools we aim to ensure that we have detailed information about children prior to them starting school. We invite the children to join us for transition sessions in the summer term and these include sessions for just parents, followed by 2 further sessions whereby the parents and children are invited to stay and play within the nursery and reception classrooms.

As the children prepare to enter KS1, the Year 1 teachers work with the F2 teachers to discuss the end of year data in order to understand the children's starting points and ensure a smooth transition into Year 1. These discussions help the Year 1 teacher to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children. The children will also spend time with their new teacher in the Year 1 classroom.

Safety

We believe children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure. A child's safety and welfare are paramount to us. We create a safe, secure and welcoming environment where children can enjoy learning and grow in confidence. We provide a curriculum that teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. We have stringent policies in place to safeguard children and daily procedures are in place to encourage children to operate in safe ways and to keep them safe. We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious food, following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident.

Equal Opportunities

In our EYFS, we are fully committed to promoting equality of opportunity and ensuring that every child is valued, respected and supported to achieve their best. We recognise that children enter our setting with a wide range of backgrounds, experiences and starting points, and we take these into careful consideration when planning meaningful and inclusive learning opportunities. Our provision is designed to be accessible to all children, including those with additional needs, so that every child can participate fully and confidently in all areas of learning. We celebrate and respect the diversity of our children, families and the wider community, fostering an environment where differences are acknowledged, understood and positively embraced.

Safeguarding

The school is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children. We take our child protection responsibilities very seriously and follow safeguarding procedures at all times. Any concerns regarding a child's safety or wellbeing will be acted upon promptly and shared with the appropriate safeguarding agencies in line with statutory guidance. The safety and wellbeing of every child is our highest priority. Our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is available for parents to view on the school website.

Role of Parents/Carers

The Foundation Stage team strongly believe that developing an effective working partnership with parents/carers has a positive impact on children's development and learning.

We value parents/carers by:

- showing respect and understanding for the role of parents/carers as children's first educators.
- encouraging parents/carers to share observations of their child's development and any concerns they may have and to provide support for them in partnership where appropriate. Eg wow stars, conversations, photographs, cheeky challenges, reading challenges
- providing a welcoming environment by being approachable and friendly.
- establishing an atmosphere of trust and confidence.
- inviting parents/carers to regular meetings to share information about their children and about our school.
- sharing information about their child's progress, development and the curriculum through regular meetings, reports and newsletters/leaflets home
- providing opportunities for parents/carers to attend social events with children e.g. Easter egg hunts, Mother's Day afternoon tea etc
- inviting parents/carers into the classroom to share expertise/interests.
- Encouraging parents to be involved in their child's learning through creative homework, weekend books etc
- encouraging home school links through support with the home school reading programme.
- inviting them to assemblies and other whole school events
- inviting them to become involved in the P.T.A / FSR which supports the school in fund raising and organises social events for adults and children.
- being available at the beginning and end of the day to talk to parents/carers on an informal basis. If further time is needed to discuss particular issues appointments are usually arranged for meeting at another time that is mutually convenient to allow more privacy.