**Seaton Sluice First School**

**Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises of 1 Nursery class (morning session) and 1 Reception class.

Nursery Staff

Mrs Jackie Sawyers Nursery Teacher PT

Mrs Alison Warren Teaching Assistant

Reception Staff

Mrs Natalie Mays Reception Teacher

Mrs Emma Elliott Teaching Assistant

Mrs Pam Dale PPA cover (Reception)

Mrs Paula Calderwood

The EYFS staff are dedicated to providing excellent pastoral care and education to those children in our care. Children are taught within their own class groups in a variety of ways: in whole class groups, small groups, pairs and individually. To ensure continuity and progression across the two year groups the EYFS staff work together to plan age related activities and learning opportunities. The activities and experiences are planned around the needs and interests of each individual child. Children from both classes have opportunities to play together in the shared areas both indoors and outdoors.

Staff are fully qualified, have a wide range of experience and expertise in working with and educating children. The staff are committed to professional development and attend up to date training courses and have excellent knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and child development.

At times the EYFS will have visiting student teachers and student teaching assistants working in the setting alongside the staff. Other professionals may also work within the setting throughout the year. All parties will have an appropriate CRB certificate.

**Aims of the Foundation Stage**

* To provide a secure, safe, caring and stimulating environment that is child-friendly.
* To ensure that all children are happy and feel valued.
* To build on what children already know and what they can do and develop a positive attitude to learning through fun, exciting, stimulating and challenging experiences.
* To encourage independence and self-confidence.
* To value the role of parents and carers and to develop a working partnership between them and school in order to establish an accurate understanding of each child’s individual needs.
* To work within the guidelines of the ‘Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage’ and ‘Early Years Outcomes’ 2013’.

**Learning and Development**

At Seaton Sluice First School we want children to be engaged in the learning process and for their learning to be relevant and purposeful. We believe that play, both indoors and outdoors, is an ideal vehicle for young children’s learning. We believe play encourages children to explore, investigate and make sense of the world around them. Play allows children to be challenged in their thinking and enables them to practise and rehearse skills. Children are naturally curious and this motivates them to learn. We plan with the understanding that each child is unique and engages with people and the environment through: playing and exploring, active learning and creating and thinking critically. These characteristics of learning underpin all learning and development and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner.

**Curriculum**

Our curriculum is based on learning through planned, purposeful play, with a mixture of adult led, adult guided and child initiated activities both indoors and outdoors. Our curriculum covers the three prime areas and four specific areas of learning.

**Personal, social and emotional development** – We would like our children to develop a positive sense of themselves and others; form positive relationships and develop respect for others; develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviours for school; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

**Communication and language** – We would like our children to experience a rich language environment; to develop confidence and skills in expressing themselves and to speak and listen in a range of situations and for a range of purposes.

**Physical development** – We would like our children to be active and interactive, to develop their co-ordination, control, manipulation and movement enabling them to gain confidence and feel positive about being healthy and active. Also we aim to develop their understanding of health and self-care.

**Literacy** – We would like our children to become confident readers and writers. All children follow the Letters and Sounds program. Children in Nursery follow Phase 1 Letters and Sounds, whilst the children in Reception year follow the “Jolly Phonics” scheme and progress through Phase 2, 3 and 4 of Letters and Sounds. (Please see Phonics teaching policy.) Children have the opportunity to develop their writing skills in accordance with their age, ability and competence in a variety of ways through teacher led activities and independent use of mark making areas indoors and outdoors.

**Mathematics** – We will provide children with opportunities to develop confidence and competence in learning and using key skills. This includes counting, sorting, matching, seeking patterns, making connections, recognising relationships and working with numbers, shapes, space and measure.

**Understanding the world** – We would like our children to be able to make sense of their world and community by exploring, observing and finding out about people, places, technology and the environment.

**Expressive arts and design** – The children are encouraged to express their curiosity, thoughts and feelings through art, music, design technology, movement, role-play and dance. Children are encouraged to explore and use media and materials in an imaginative way.

**Outdoor Learning**

We have an outside learning space which children have access to each day. We have all weather clothing and footwear available so children are protected and there are no barriers to learning. The outside area is an extension of the classrooms and there are a variety of resources to facilitate learning. In this area EYFS staff provide planned activities for children as well as giving opportunities for independent learning.

**Planning**

Our planning reflects our belief that all areas of learning and development are connected and are equally important. The EYFS staff plan together to ensure continuity and progression across the Foundation Stage. All plans, short, medium and long term are flexible enough to adapt to changing circumstances and the children’s current interests.

**Long term planning**

This is a two yearly cycle of topics, cultural celebrations and well being weeks.

**Medium term planning**

The medium term planning gives details of work to be covered in each of the 7 curriculum areas over a half term period. The continuous provision plan ensures each area of learning in the classroom is well resourced and equipped for the children to learn, practise, transfer and develop their skills. It is flexible and can be added to throughout the half term.

**Short term planning**

Weekly plans show learning objectives, activities and observation and assessment opportunities. We plan a mixture of adult led and child initiated activities for the children to engage in. Planning also outlines the way in which the indoor and outdoor continuous provision is developed to enable children to learn, explore and develop independence through a rich and supportive environment.

**Assessment and Record Keeping**

Ongoing assessment is an essential aspect of the effective running of the EYFS. Regular planned and focused assessments are made of children’s learning and individual needs. Observations take place on a daily basis (both formally and informally). Staff also make spontaneous observations in order to capture significant moments of children’s learning. Observations are recorded in different formats e.g. narrative style, post-it notes, whole class grids and annotated photographs. Observations are evaluated, children’s learning priorities are identified and relevant learning opportunities are planned to support children to make the next steps and progress. Other methods of assessing children in the EYFS setting include engaging alongside children in their play, annotation of children’s written work, talking with children about their task or play and in Learning Journeys. Learning Journeys record children’s progress over the academic year in all areas of learning and development and can include samples of work, photographs and anecdotal observations. Parents are also encouraged to contribute to children’s Learning Journeys to ensure a full and rounded record of children’s interests, abilities and experiences.

Baseline assessment is carried out during the children’s first six weeks upon entering the Nursery using the age related statements in ‘Early Years Outcomes’.

In Reception the children are assessed using ‘Early Excellence’ in addition to ‘Early Years Outcomes’.

Individual tracker grids are updated regularly to show each child’s progress throughout the Foundation Stage.

During the final term of EYFS the children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals. (EYFS Profile)

**Parents/Carers and Partners**

We value the involvement of parents in school and recognise the importance of establishing positive relationships with them. Parental involvement with school begins even before children start Nursery or Reception with a home visit and an invitation to visit the school and meet their child’s teacher. Parent consultation meetings are held in the Autumn and Spring Terms at which parents are invited to discuss their child’s progress. A report is sent out at the end of the Summer Term and parents are invited into school to discuss this report if they wish. The setting has a friendly, open-door ethos and practitioners are available to talk to parents at the beginning and end of the day. Parents are always welcomed into school and encouraged to discuss any concerns they might have with the class teacher or the Head Teacher. Parents are kept informed of all happenings at school via designated parent’s information boards, regular newsletters and text messages. This enables parents to support their children’s learning at home, consolidating and building on what has been covered in school. Parents are also encouraged to fill in “proud letters” about positive behaviours, attitudes and experiences of their children at home. Parents are invited to various stay and play sessions, assemblies and functions throughout the year.

**Admissions and Induction**

Seaton Sluice First School provides part-time (15 hours) Early Years education for children in Nursery. This is for children who have turned three years old during the previous term. Children can spend up to 5 terms in Nursery. Before they start in the setting, all children are offered a home visit and a visit into the setting with their parents during the term prior to their start date. The purpose of these initial visits is for the children to meet their new practitioners and start to become familiar with the setting environment. ‘All About Me’ induction packs will also be given out to parents as another way to enhance practitioners’ knowledge and understanding of each individual child.

Seaton Sluice First School provides full-time Early Years education for children in the Reception Year. This is for children who enter school from September of the academic year in which they will turn five years old. In the Summer term prior to the child’s start date parents are invited into school to meet the setting practitioners. At this meeting information regarding the induction process and what goes on in the setting is shared. There is also time for informal chat and parents’ questions. School information packs will be distributed to parents at this meeting, detailing school routines and expectations. For the first 3 weeks in September children attend the setting part time (until 12.45pm) after this induction period children will attend the setting full-time, though parents can opt for their child to attend part time should they see fit. Every effort is made to make children feel safe, secure and happy. There is a relaxed and open ethos in the setting. Established routines, a calm atmosphere and encouraging talk are some of the strategies practitioners use to maintain children’s positive feelings about school.

*See Admissions Policy for more information.*

**Equal Opportunities**

All practitioners at Seaton Sluice First School have a responsibility to maintain positive attitudes to diversity and difference, ensuring that inclusive practice is delivered in the EYFS setting. All children, irrespective of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture or religion, and social circumstances, have the opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development within the EYFS at Seaton Sluice First School.

*See Equal Opportunities Policy for more information.*

Also see:

Teaching and Learning Policy

Assessment Policy

Phonics Teaching Policy

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Admissions Policy

Equality Policy

Behaviour policy

Complaints policy

Intimate care policy

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