

Silver Tree Primary School and Nursery



Early Years Policy

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Chair of Governor's signature	
Head Teacher's signature	

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Statement of intent

At Silver Tree Primary School and Nursery, we greatly value the importance of the early years foundation stage (EYFS) in providing a secure foundation for future learning and development.

This policy has been developed in conjunction with the relevant DfE guidance and legislation to ensure that each child has a happy and positive start to their school life, in which they can build a foundation for a love of learning.

“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 planning 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.

At Silver Tree Primary and Nursery School, we believe that Early Years practitioners should provide a broad and balanced curriculum which caters for the intellectual, emotional, spiritual, physical, moral, social and cultural development of young children.

- We believe that young children learn most effectively through play and interaction with adults.
- We believe all children should be given a wide range of opportunities.
- We believe that all children should be challenged to their full potential.
- We believe that exploring in early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives.
- We will show children the world beyond Ushaw Moor.
- We will help children to become better learners.

This policy refers to children between 3 and 4 years of age who are being educated in the nursery setting and children aged 4 and 5 years of age who are being educated in the reception year, including those children with Special Educational Needs.

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.
- A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- To ensure children have the space to move around time to practise and try new things out, and have their successes celebrated and rewarded.
- Each child receives a happy, enriched and positive start to their school life, within a safe and secure environment.
- Encourage children to develop their independence and collaborative skills with a nurturing and supportive atmosphere.
- Support children to build positive relationships through the development of social skills such as collaboration, turn taking and sharing.
- To make good use of the classroom, both inside and outside so that children have the opportunity to learn inside and outside.

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the new [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) that applies from September 2021](#).

3. Structure of the EYFS

The classroom is organised in such a way that children can explore and learn in a safe environment. There are two classrooms, which are joined by an internal door.

There are two separate spaces for carpet time and whole class teaching where Nursery and Reception children access their own space. However, during independent learning and exploration time, the doors are open and the children can access all learning spaces.

Children have access to a large enclosed outdoor play area, and daily outdoor activities are planned, unless circumstances, such as the weather, would make outdoor activity inappropriate and unsafe.

There are three toilets available to the EYFS, and there is a cupboard containing a supply of towels and spare clothes in the Reception Classroom.

4. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2021.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 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 are:

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

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

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

Characteristics of effective learning

The EYFS also includes 'Characteristics of effective learning' which help practitioners identify a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them. The three characteristics 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
- **creating and thinking critically** – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

4.1 Planning

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staff working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and 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, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

Staff attend a weekly provision meeting where discussions take place around children's interests, assessment, next steps for children as well as any early intervention needed.

During the planning meeting, continuous provision for the following week is discussed and planned around the current topic, for all areas of the provision.

In Reception class, more formal Phonics and Maths teaching takes place. Alongside this, activities and experiences are planned for all seven areas of learning, through a mixture of child initiated and adult initiated activities. Towards the summer term, challenges are given to the children and there is more emphasis to work independently, in order for them to be prepared for Year 1.

There are set routines that are followed each day. A daily, visual timetable is presented each morning with a particular focus on Maths, Phonics, stories and topic work. These times provide the children the opportunity to develop their team work skills, turn taking and concentration. Whole class story time is an important part of the day, with a book a week being focused on. Children are exposed to a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts to provide them with opportunities to hear and use new vocabulary. Our indoor and outdoor area contains many books, that are accessible to the children as and when.

4.2 Teaching

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

4.3 Play

Learning through play underpins our approach to teaching and learning in the EYFS. We understand that children learn best through first hand activities in which they are engaged and absorbed and working with a clear purpose.

Continuous provision begins in Nursery where the classroom and out door area is set up with different learning areas. Each learning area has a wide variety of resources, which children can access independently through the day.

The Reception classroom and outdoor area are also set up with areas of learning, offering continuous provision to build upon and widen experiences and learning from Nursery.

Enhancements are added when appropriate to ensure the children's interests are the topics are being covered.

Adults within the setting take an active role in the child-initiated play through observing, modelling, scaffolding and extending rich vocabulary. In Reception in particular, there is a mix of child and adult initiated activities covering a broad range of skills and objectives. We believe that being outside is of equal importance, and outdoor play is accessible throughout the day.

5. Health and safety

- A first-aid box is located in the Reception and Nursery classroom.
- Only medicine prescribed to a child by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist will be administered.
- The school's **Administering Medication Policy** outlines the procedures for administering medicines.
- The EYFS lead will report any accident or injury involving a child to their parents on the day it occurs, and any first-aid treatment administered to a child will be reported to their parents.
- Accidents and injuries will be recorded in an accident book, located in the Nursery classroom.
- The headteacher will report any serious accident, illness, injury, or death of a child whilst in the school's care to Ofsted as soon as is reasonably practicable, but within 14 days of the incident occurring. Local child protection agencies will also be notified.
- The school has a Fire Evacuation Plan in place.

6. Assessment

At Silver Tree Primary School and Nursery, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the 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 take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

When a child is **in Nursery**, 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 'progress check' highlights the areas in which a child is progressing well and the areas in which additional support is needed.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

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
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child.

The profile 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.

7.1 Working with parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. The progress check and EYFS profile 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 who helps 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.

7. 2 Home Learning

Home learning activities are posted on Class Dojo on a Friday. These are activities that the child can choose and work with their parent/carer. We ask for photos to be uploaded to the child's profile and this will be discussed the following week.

Activities are based on the current topic within the Reception class.

Reading books are also sent home weekly, more guidance around reading in EYFS can be found inside your child's reading record.

8. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by talking to your child and sharing, fun interactive activities. We cover:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth

We follow [statutory guidance](#) for safety around supervised tooth brushing.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

9. Staffing

The school adopts the following staffing ratios:

- For children aged three and over: - Where a staff member with qualified teacher status (QTS), early years professional status, or another suitable level 6 qualification is working directly with the children, there is one member of staff for every 13 children, and at least one other member of staff holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification.
- Where a member of staff does not hold QTS, early years professional status, or another suitable level 6 qualification, there is one member of staff for every eight children. At least one staff member holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification, and at least half of all other staff hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification.
- Only under exceptional circumstances, and where the quality of care and safety of children is maintained, will changes be made to the ratios.
- Parents will be informed about staffing arrangements, and, when relevant and practical, will be involved in staffing arrangement decisions.

10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by Helen Ray- Early Years Leader, every 2 years or earlier if necessary.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.