



**Sutton Bonington
Primary School**

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

**Approved: June 2024
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Next Review: Summer 2026**

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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

2. Legislation

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

3. Our vision for the EYFS

Our vision for the EYFS is in line with our school vision:

We are an inclusive school where every member of the community is valued and we all **BELONG** – children, parents, staff, governors, volunteers and friends

We are a successful school where we all **STRIVE** for excellence in all we do through a broad and ambitious curriculum

We are a supportive school where all children and adults **FLOURISH** due to strong relationships and opportunities to develop personally

In addition, our vision within the EYFS is to give every child the best start to their early education by providing a stimulating environment which promotes high quality play-based learning. We want our children to be inspired through an ambitious and well sequenced curriculum alongside a balance of child initiated and adult led experiences which will prepare our pupils with the knowledge, skills and language for future success and for the next stage of their education. We ensure that we develop all children's ability to self-regulate whilst working in partnership with our parents through strong and respectful relationships.

Our vision within the EYFS is based on the seven key features of effective practice as outlined in the 'DfE Development Matters non statutory curriculum guidance for the EYFS' – see appendix 1 for more information.

4. Structure of the EYFS

Here at Sutton Bonington Primary School, children usually join our Reception class in the Autumn term of the academic year that they will turn five. Children attend full-time and remain in the Reception class until they start in Year 1.

5. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework.

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

At Sutton Bonington Primary School our curriculum intent for Early Years is in line with that of our whole school and can be found on our website. This includes the Sutton Bonington values (kindness, resilience, honesty, curiosity, respect and pride).



6. Planning

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. They 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.

The planning within the EYFS is based on the Sutton Bonington EYFS curriculum which we have developed in line with the age related expectations statements from the Development Matters document and our curriculum for children in Year 1 (based on National Curriculum requirements). Topic planning takes place on a half-termly basis but planning is flexible and may be altered to take into account children's interests and needs. Adult focused activities are planned on a weekly basis. Children have the opportunity to work in each of the learning areas within the classroom and outdoors. Whole class, group and individual activities are used to develop skills in all areas of the curriculum, as appropriate. This fostering of the children's interests develops a high level of motivation for the children's learning.

7. 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.

Throughout the day, there are key times for discrete, adult led teaching e.g. phonics, maths, topic input and story. These sessions tend to last approximately 15-20 minutes with the session length increasing as the year progresses for sessions such as phonics.

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.

Our environment also very much serves as an additional teacher and we expect this to be of a very high standard.

8. Assessment

At Sutton Bonington Primary School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement and interests. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts reception, staff will undertake baseline assessments of children and will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) for all children. Assessments are then recorded termly.

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. It is also used to help measure the progress that children make, with an emphasis on how to increase progress where this is necessary to help a child meet the Early Learning Goals. 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 (when possible), to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

9. 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. We use the Tapestry app to share achievements between us and home.

Teachers and teaching assistants help to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet the needs of each child. They support parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. They also help families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

10. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

We promote children's welfare and good health in general, in the early years by providing opportunities to learn about:

- The importance of eating different food groups proportionately
- The importance of brushing your teeth
- The importance of drinking water and eating healthy snacks (fruit and vegetables)
- The importance of exercise and spending time outdoors
- Different ways to keep safe in the environment

In the EYFS environment, and across the whole of our school, mobile phones are not to be used in teaching areas. They are kept in the teacher's cupboard.

Where children are deemed too ill to be attending, we will contact parents to ask them to collect their child. We also support those with medical conditions or requiring medical support in line with our medicines policy.

Where we have concerns about the attendance of a child, we will always follow this up by making contact with parents or other contacts (we always hold at least two contacts per child) as necessary. Where we are unable to make contact with anyone, a home visit may be undertaken and if necessary, we would contact other safeguarding agencies for further advice. Where a parent fails to collect a child, we will attempt to make contact with all contacts provided (parents must provide at least 2) so that arrangements for collection can be made and that the welfare of the parent can be checked upon. Should the school fail to make contact with any listed contacts, safeguarding procedures will be followed which may include a referral to social care.

Visitors to our EYFS settings are accommodated in line with our visitors policy.

Emergency procedures are detailed in our health and safety policy and displayed around the EYFS environment. The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy, health and safety policy, first aid policy and behaviour policy.

11. Complaints

Complaints are dealt with in line with our whole school complaints policy and procedure.

12. Monitoring arrangements

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

Appendix 1 - Seven Key Features of Effective Practice

1. The best for every child:

- All children deserve to have an equal chance of success.
- High-quality early education is good for all children. It is especially important for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- When they start school, children from disadvantaged backgrounds are, on average, 4 months¹ behind their peers. We need to do more to narrow that gap.
- Children who have lived through difficult experiences can begin to grow stronger when they experience high quality early education and care.
- High-quality early education and care is inclusive. Children's special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are identified quickly. All children promptly receive any extra help they need, so they can progress well in their learning.

2. High-quality care:

- The child's experience must always be central to the thinking of every practitioner.
- Babies, toddlers and young children thrive when they are loved and well cared for.
- High-quality care is consistent. Every practitioner needs to enjoy spending time with young children.
- Effective practitioners are responsive to children and babies. They notice when a baby looks towards them and gurgles and respond with pleasure.
- Practitioners understand that toddlers are learning to be independent, so they will sometimes get frustrated.
- Practitioners know that starting school, and all the other transitions in the early years, are big steps for small children.

3. The curriculum - what we want children to learn:

- The curriculum is a top-level plan of everything the early years setting wants the children to learn.
- Planning to help every child to develop their language is vital.
- The curriculum needs to be ambitious. Careful sequencing will help children to build their learning over time.
- Young children's learning is often driven by their interests. Plans need to be flexible.
- Babies and young children do not develop in a fixed way. Their development is like a spider's web with many strands, not a straight line.
- Depth in early learning is much more important than covering lots of things in a superficial way.

4. Pedagogy - helping children to learn:

- Children are powerful learners. Every child can make progress in their learning, with the right help.
- Effective pedagogy is a mix of different approaches. Children learn through play, by adults modelling, by observing each other, and through guided learning and direct teaching.
- Practitioners carefully organise enabling environments for high-quality play. Sometimes, they make time and space available for children to invent their own play. Sometimes, they join in to sensitively support and extend children's learning.
- Children in the early years also learn through group work, when practitioners guide their learning.
- Older children need more of this guided learning.
- A well-planned learning environment, indoors and outside, is an important aspect of pedagogy.

5. Assessment - checking what children have learnt:

- Assessment is about noticing what children can do and what they know. It is not about lots of data and evidence.
- Effective assessment requires practitioners to understand child development. Practitioners also need to be clear about what they want children to know and be able to do.
- Accurate assessment can highlight whether a child has a special educational need and needs extra help.
- Before assessing children, it's a good idea to think about whether the assessments will be useful.
- Assessment should not take practitioners away from the children for long periods of time.

6. Self-regulation and executive function:

- Executive function includes the child's ability to:
 - hold information in mind
 - focus their attention
 - think flexibly
 - inhibit impulsive behaviour.
- These abilities contribute to the child's growing ability to self-regulate:
 - concentrate their thinking
 - plan what to do next
 - monitor what they are doing and adapt
 - regulate strong feelings
 - be patient for what they want
 - bounce back when things get difficult.
- Language development is central to self-regulation: children use language to guide their actions and plans. Pretend play gives many opportunities for children to focus their thinking, persist and plan ahead.

7. Partnership with parents

- It is important for parents and early years settings to have a strong and respectful partnership. This sets the scene for children to thrive in the early years.
- This includes listening regularly to parents and giving parents clear information about their children's progress.
- The help that parents give their children at home has a very significant impact on their learning.
- Some children get much less support for their learning at home than others. By knowing and understanding all the children and their families, settings can offer extra help to those who need it most.
- It is important to encourage all parents to chat, play and read with their children.