



EYFS Teaching and Learning Policy

Our EYFS Vision... 'Building brighter futures...'

At Simpson's Lane Academy we want to raise all our pupils to be individuals that are equipped to thrive in the world in which we live. Our curriculum centres around 5 priorities that we believe our children need. We passionately believe in educating our children so that they have the foundations in place to enable their future learning. Our curriculum supports our pupils to become confident, aspirational and have the knowledge and skills to become proficient in all areas of the Early Years curriculum. Our children are the focus of our curriculum; they drive learning and take ownership of their own exciting learning experiences. We strive to encourage the children to believe that they can make the world a better place.

Our five priorities are.

- Fundamental skills
- Responsible citizens
- Sustainability
- Community and involvement
- Enterprise, expectations, and aspirations

Our Academy strives to create a safe, secure and happy Early Years environment and atmosphere where learning is fun. Where children, parents and staff work and learn together to develop the maximum potential of all.

Aims and Objectives

The aim of this policy is to support a rich, interesting and stimulating learning and teaching environment, an environment that allows children to fully develop their skills and abilities.

- Foster a harmonious atmosphere which supports and promotes self-esteem.
- Build confident communicators.
- Support children's development in all areas of the EYFS.
- Support every child as an individual.
- Help every child to grow up feeling confident about their own identity, in a spirit of friendship, understanding fairness and the rights of others, valuing diversity, and ready to be a British citizen.

Teaching and Learning

Teaching at Simpsons Lane Academy includes a good balance of adult led and child-initiated learning. Teaching may be whole class, face-to-face with a child or small group of children during the session. Practitioners skilfully plan the learning environment to support children in making progress through child-initiated play. Sometimes these two approaches over-lap, for example when a child or small group initiate play which is then supported and extended by the practitioner. When practitioners teach children:

- They make opportunities for the child to contribute and to make choices in their learning.
- They scaffold the child's development, to support increasing independence and control.
- They ask questions to check or develop children's understanding.
- They work collaboratively to solve problems and find answers.
- They provide formative feedback to help children to consolidate their learning and extend their exploration and thinking further.

Launch pad and oracy play an important role in supporting children that are not seen to be 'on track' with their learning. Both resources help to support children's learning and are used effectively to close the gaps and ensure accelerated progress is made.

We follow a book led curriculum which has been designed to promote a lifelong love of books and the importance of reading. Books have been selected for F1 and F2 from the National top 30 reads and have been carefully selected to be delivered throughout the academic year to show progression. Key books selected link to a long term yearly plan and have been chosen to support key themes and interests and form the basis for an exciting and engaging curriculum.

We are also dedicated to the teaching of high-quality phonics with a systematic approach which flows through the curriculum. We believe that phonics is essential in developing children to become successful readers and spellers and to preparing them for life beyond the early years. The scheme we follow is Essential Letters and Sounds.

Our long term plan of key themes outlines a progressive pattern of learning for all key areas of the curriculum. It informs our assessment and enables us to assure that our children are progressing at the desirable rate. It also ensures that key experiences we feel our children need form the basis of our teaching and provide them with a curriculum that suits their specific needs. The plan enables our children to be year1 ready, providing a framework for our children to settle quickly following a smooth transition process.

The Importance of the Environment

Environment activities and experiences are arranged to promote independence. Opportunity is given by adults to play co-operatively, alone, or time is given for children to stand and observe. There must be time and space allowed to develop play both inside and outside, safely and securely.

The environment is aesthetically appealing with lots of examples of children's current work included in child centred displays. It is print rich and ensures children are exposed to the written word from an early age. Books play a central role and are related to not only the themes we are following but also the phonics that are being taught. Our aim is to ensure that children are immersed in text of many different forms.

Displays are limited to identified notice boards to reduce visual clutter. Displays include examples of children's speech where possible and appropriate and give children opportunities to talk about, review and think about their previous experiences and learning (metacognition). This is clear to see through our 'learning journey' display where we display the learning that has taken place on a weekly basis and is led by the children. Clear guidelines and boundaries promote positive behaviour.



Challenging social situations are seen as opportunities for growth and development, explaining and working with children to help them feel strong and safe, and to learn how to manage difficult issues and conflicts in appropriate ways. Jigsaw and PSED sessions are incorporated into regular circle times

In a natural environment, where children, are given time to thoroughly explore their thoughts, feelings and relationships, they develop understanding of the world and the environment through the use of emotions, imagination and senses. Phonics is a theme that flows through the environment and exposes children to the learning of sounds in a variety of ways. The environment ensures that children are able to revisit learning that has already taken place and consolidate it through different learning styles. Our communication friendly spaces are developed to encourage high quality interaction and language development. Staff engagement focuses on developing the needs of each individual child and ensures that leaning is progressive.

Assessment

We begin our assessment processes through getting to know each child, using close observation in structured and incidental ways. Purposeful observations and significant wow moments are recorded and shared with parents through our online platform 'seesaw'. These assessments indicate the child's level of development. Recorded assessments/observations lead to action for the child, identifying next steps of development. This is a process of formative assessment. Children are involved in this process through their daily discussions, guided groups and teaching sessions. They can reflect on their learning and voice their opinions. Tracking assessment systems such as the EYFS RAG and phonics tracker allow us to identify children at risk of making poor progress – always remembering that in the early years, progress can be uneven. Practitioners identify the 20% of children in their class at risk of making poor progress and they specifically focus planning to meet their needs. Staff also identify the more able children (assessed as being ahead of the expected levels of development in EYFS Development Matters) to ensure that we plan rich and stimulating experiences to extend their learning. Progress data is entered into our RAG on entry and at every 4 weeks. We moderate our assessments through internal processes, and through moderation cluster meetings with other schools in the Trust.

Special Educational Needs

Staff will always appropriately modify learning and teaching for children with SEN and/or disabilities. We value each child as a unique individual and are familiar with and meet all the requirements of relevant equal opportunities legislation regarding race, gender, and disability. We work closely and in partnership with parents and any other involved agencies to meet the needs of our children through provision that is inclusive to all. Children with identified Special Educational needs and /or disabilities at Early Years Action + will have an Individual Education Plan (IEP), developed with the support of parents and any involved agencies. Much of the IEP will be included on the Provision Map, which enables us to engage with a range of children's needs through regular, planned provision which is additional to the core curriculum. Children at the Early Years Action stage will benefit from additional levels of differentiation and in class support. The SENCO monitors the progress of all children with SEN to ensure that they are benefitting from an appropriate curriculum which enables them to feel safe and secure, and to learn effectively. Where children with SEN are making poor progress, further assessment is undertaken, or support sought.

Parental Partnership

We recognise that parents/carers are the child's first and most enduring educators. When parents/carers and practitioners work together in the early years settings, the results have a positive impact on the child's development. A successful partnership needs to be a two-way flow of information, knowledge, and expertise. We aim to develop this by:

- Outlining the Foundation Stage curriculum to parents/carers during parents evenings and 'play and stays', to enable them to understand the value of supporting their child's learning at home.
- Encouraging parents/carers to complete all aspects of the starter packs.
- Operating an 'open door' policy, whereby parents/carers can come and discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner.
- Sharing children's progress through
- Encouraging parents/carers to share their child's 'wow' moments.
- Encouraging parents/carers to listen to their child read each night, to make use of the word books and to comment on reading progress in a 'read and response' booklet.
- Discussing individual targets with parents/carers at Parents' evenings (informed by the EYFS overviews)
- Providing an annual written report to parents/carers in July summarising the child's progress against the early learning goals and the EYFS assessment overviews.
- Holding child/parent 'play and stay' sessions to enable parents/carers to play alongside their child in the Foundation Stage environment.
- EYFS newsletter information.
- Parent/Carer questionnaires.