



*'ALIS VOLAT PROPRIIS'*

**SEATON HOUSE SCHOOL**

**EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE**  
**POLICY**

Date Reviewed: September 2020

Next Review Date: Autumn 2021 (to make changes in response to the updated EYFS)

Reviewed by: Head of Early Years

## **The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS):**

*“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to their full potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.”*  
Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2012).

### **Rationale:**

In all EYFS classes (Reception and Nursery), children are cared for and provided with a stimulating and challenging environment to give them the best possible foundation for their future learning by nurturing enthusiasm, creativity and developing enquiring minds. In partnership with parents, carers and external agencies, we enable the children to begin the process of becoming active learners for life.

### **Our vision:**

Our vision is to inspire the children to become independent, resilient, lifelong learners. We will provide a stimulating and supportive environment which builds on the children’s interests and existing knowledge and skills and enables them to flourish. We will value and support each individual child and develop their confidence, independence and love of learning. We will work closely with parents to share information and support the learning and development of each child.

We also recognise the importance of developing good personal, social and emotional skills and positive behaviour. Therefore, we have a set of golden rules which are used across the Early Years. Our golden rules are as follows:

- Do be kind and helpful
- Do listen to others
- Do look after our toys
- Do be polite

In Reception we extend these to include all of the school rules.

### **Our aims for the children are:**

- **Kindness**

We encourage the children to help each other. Staff will support the children to develop the skills needed to resolve conflicts independently. We promote positive attitudes towards themselves and others and ensure that every child feels valued.

- **Co-operation**

We encourage the children to work together and support each other.

- **Confidence and self motivation**

We will support children in becoming competent and confident learners during and beyond the foundation stage.

- **Success**

We will provide a safe and stimulating learning environment in which creativity and expression are valued. We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum for every child. We will build on what children already know and can do and enable them to succeed, develop and gain confidence.

- **Independence and resilience**

We will support and encourage independence, self-motivation and resilience. We will encourage a can do attitude and a love of learning.

\*Adaptations to the learning environment will be made in line with the school COVID risk assessment.

## **Introduction:**

The EYFS applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception Year. In our school, children enter Nursery at any time after the age of approximately 2½. They move into Reception in the academic year in which they turn 5 years old. The children in Nursery may attend sessionally at first with the expectation that they will be attending for some full days by the term prior to commencing Reception.

The EYFS is based on the four principles a unique child, positive relationships, enabling environments and learning and development.

## **A Unique Child:**

At Seaton House School we recognise that every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others, praise and encouragement, celebration/ sharing circle times, reward stickers, star of the day, as well as our class reward system to encourage and develop children's attitudes to learning.

### **a. Inclusion:**

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children at Seaton House are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

We believe that all our children matter. 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.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Observations of individuals, which are used to inform provision and planning;
- Using information provided by parents prior to starting to set up activities that their child will enjoy when they start;
- The entry summary identifies any areas to monitor or develop;
- 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;
- 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;
- Support groups;
- Early identification of children needing additional support;
- Monitoring and tracking children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary;
- Meetings with parents to discuss any concerns and to monitor progress.

It is important to us that all children in the EYFS are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries and rules and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

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We aim to protect the physical and psychological well being of all children. (See our Safeguarding Policy)

## **b. Welfare**

“Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.”

At Seaton House, we comply with the welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage and place the highest importance on the girls’ and boys’ welfare in all that we do. As a school we:

- Promote the welfare of children;
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill;
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children’s stage of development and individual needs;
- Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so;
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose;
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs;
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

## **Positive Relationships:**

At Seaton House we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

### **a. Parents as Partners**

We recognise that parents are children’s first educators and we value the contribution that parents make.

We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school;
- The children have the opportunity to spend time prior to starting at our school with their new teacher and explore the classroom during our settling in sessions;
- Over the summer term the children in Reception have the opportunity to spend time in their Form One classroom and meet the staff who will be working with them;
- Spend time with their class teacher during our whole school ‘Move up morning’ which is held in the Summer Term;
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child’s progress and allowing free access to their children’s ‘Learning Journeys;’
- Encouraging parents to talk to their child’s teachers about any concerns they may have informally on a day-day basis and at parent consultation meetings;
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between children and parents; For example, fund raising days, themed activity days, concerts including Harvest Assembly, nativity, coffee mornings and POSH events to which all family members are invited;
- Encouraging parents to contribute to the learning journeys through, ‘all about me’, next steps and observation sheets;
- Providing the parents with their child’s next steps;
- There are three meetings per year (Autumn, Spring and Summer term) at which time the class teacher and parent discuss the child’s progress and development and next steps in learning;
- Workshops for parents relating to early maths work and phase one phonics;

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- Home school booklets for communication purposes;
- Parent questionnaires and follow up;
- Providing weekly newsletters, try at home activities;
- Opportunities for the parents and their child to use the Nursery library and maths games library.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At our school in the Nursery a 'Key Person' system is used. In our Reception class the class teacher is the named 'Key Person' to all children within her class, however, the teaching assistant does play a major role in contributing to the development of all the children.

### **Enabling Environments:**

At Seaton House we recognise that children learn and develop well in enabling environments in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between the parents and carers and our staff. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

#### **a. Observation, Assessment and Planning**

The Planning within the EYFS follows a "topic" or "theme". These "themes" are planned each half term following a meeting to review the children's progress and interests. These plans are adapted each week to reflect the interests and needs of the children in the class. The plans are used and implemented by the class teacher and teaching assistants who have a very good understanding of the children in the class. Evaluations help to inform further planning and developments to the provision. Planning in the EYFS aims to be flexible in order to meet the needs and interests of all the children in the EYFS and take account of the unforeseen learning opportunities and experiences that occur. Activities and experiences are planned to be stimulating and hands on. There are opportunities for the children to actively learn new skills and reinforce these through a range of provision.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observations, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. These observations are recorded in children's individual profiles, daily planning, activity plans, assessment sheets and individual learning journeys. The learning journeys also contain information provided by parents, other settings, ECAT forms and attainment on entry assessments. Further more formal assessments in RWinc, Writing and Mathematics take place in Reception; these are used for individual target setting. Learning journeys are reviewed half termly and next steps are identified, which inform future planning. This also enables us to monitor and track progress.

#### **b. The Learning Environment \***

The EYFS learning environment is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active or undertake quiet activities. The environment is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently; if they are unable to do this they are able to request certain equipment. In Nursery, free flow access occurs for approximately half the session. Indoor and outdoor provision is catered for and this has a positive effect on the children's learning and development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children the opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all the areas of learning. In addition, we make use of the local environment.

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## **Learning and Development:**

At Seaton House we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We teach the children by ensuring challenging, playful opportunities across the prime and specific areas of learning and development. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. We recognise the different ways that children learn and the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning - playing and exploring, active learning and creating and thinking. These are reflected in our planning and practice.

## **Teaching and Learning Style**

Teaching and learning styles are effective in ensuring productive teaching and learning within our school.

Features that relate to the EYFS are:

- the partnership between staff and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that staff have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;
- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals (and in some cases beyond) throughout EYFS;
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- the ratio of pupils to staff enable the adults to interact and follow the child's interests;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents.

## **Playing and Exploring**

Through play our children investigate, 'have a go' and explore, which help them make sense of the world. They practice and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

### **a. Active Learning**

Children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy achieving. Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children at Seaton House are encouraged to develop their independence and take responsibility for their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfactions as they take ownership of their learning.

### **b. Creativity and Critical Thinking**

Children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things. Children are given opportunities to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the setting to extend their learning.

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### **c. Areas of Learning**

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning. The three areas particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning are called the prime areas and these are:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

The other four areas are called the specific areas and these are:

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

All of these areas are equally important and inter related. However, the Nursery staff focus strongly on the prime areas, which are the basis for successful learning in the other four specific areas. Throughout Nursery we build on the prime areas, alongside developing the specific areas. In Reception there is a more equal focus on all the areas of learning.

All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities, this balance is determined by the age and year group of the children. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS. Whole school initiatives are also included in certain areas e.g. In Literacy, The Read Write Inc. Phonetic scheme is taught from Nursery through to Year 3.

The fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs are implicitly embedded in the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum

### **Monitoring and Review**

It is the responsibility of the Early Years staff to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Head Teacher, SLT and subject Co-ordinators will carry out the monitoring/moderation of the EYFS through observation and discussion as a part of the whole school monitoring schedule and in line with performance management targets specific to the teachers. All staff will have annual appraisals in line with school policy. Early Years staff have termly staff meetings and opportunities to share information and ideas from training.

**Sarah McGreevy** (Deputy Head and Head of Early Years) September 2020

### **REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

**Ruth Darvill**  
Headteacher

**Sarah McGreevy**  
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