



Stretton Sugwas Academy

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Reviewed: Spring 2019

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Aim

At Stretton Sugwas Academy we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children in the early years foundation stage, thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning. We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent. We value the individual child and work alongside parents and others to meet their needs and help every child to reach their full potential.

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child’s experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.”

- “Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage” Department for Children, Schools and Families 2017

We adhere to the Statutory Framework of the EYFS and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings.

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships with other adults and children
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates

Principles into practice

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven areas of learning, using play as the vehicle for learning
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support
- Work in partnership with parents and within the wider context
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-initiated and child-initiated, supported by the adult
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and out

Foundation Stage Curriculum

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children’s needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve and exceed the early learning goals.

All the seven areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning. These three areas of learning are the **prime** areas:

Communication and Language

Physical Development

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Children are also supported through the four **specific** areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The **specific** areas are:

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the World

Expressive Arts and Design

Our day in the Foundation Stage

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which children explore, think creatively and are active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development. Although in the Reception class we have 1 formal physical development lesson a week we have daily physical activity and aim for children to be active for at least 3 hours daily. In our New-Bees Pre-School physical development is also seen as highly important and we encourage children to develop both gross and fine motor skills, alongside self care skills.

As a team, we write long term and medium term plans using the EYFS based on a series of topics each of which offers **experiences** in all seven areas. The mid term plans are made up of topic webs which are sent to the headmaster and EYFS Manager and are also sent home for parents to see. This allows them to have an understanding of some of the experiences their children are having in school and for them to link their home experiences into our topic at school. These plans then inform our short-term weekly planning, alongside our observations, which remains flexible for unplanned circumstances or children's responses. Children have whole group and small group times which increase as they progress through the EYFS with times for a daily phonics session in the Reception class using 'Letters and Sounds', we begin the phase 1 aspects of 'Letters and Sounds' in the preschool and will progress to phase 2 if we feel the children are ready. In the Reception class we also ensure we are teaching aspects of Mathematics and Literacy, including shared reading and writing. Again a love of books and stories is promoted in the pre-school and the children are constantly surrounded by Mathematical opportunities through play and opportunities to mark make. In the Reception class children work in ability groups for a focused phonics, Maths and Literacy activity each day. In the afternoon children are more likely to be spending time on child initiated activities where there is a chance for practitioners to observe their interests and further develop their learning.

Transition

We have a settling in policy which allows a smooth transition when children start preschool, if parents feel they need to they may stay for the first half hour with their child. If they are still facing difficulties on the second session we will encourage them to leave the child for half an hour before returning. We are always happy for parents to contact us if they have any concerns regarding their child.

We believe the transition into primary school is something that must be handled sensitively. It is extremely important to use this time to give children a positive attitude towards school, enabling them to make an easier start to school in September. We have four afternoons during June and July where the children come to school, this allows them to become familiar with the classroom and the staff. It also allows the staff to begin to get to know the children,

their capabilities and interests. The class teacher also undertakes nursery visits during the summer term. This is a valuable opportunity to speak to the staff who have been working with the children so far, gaining more information about the child. We have strong links between the Reception class and preschool with activities being shared throughout the year, for example, dough disco sessions and performances. The interaction between the two settings increases in the Summer term to prepare the children for the transition to school. The EYFS Manager also spends an afternoon a week in the preschool so has a solid knowledge of the children before they come into the Reception classroom. When children start school during the first two weeks the children are offered a staggered entry to school, doing a mixture of morning, afternoon and full day sessions. During this time staff undertake detailed observations allowing us to have a secure baseline assessment of each child, baseline assessments are completed during a child's first 6 weeks in school and this is the same for the preschool. From the baseline observations we are able to plan future activities which will be beneficial and at the correct level.

Home School Links

At Stretton Sugwas Early Years Foundation Stage we recognize that the child's first educators are their parents/carers. We keep parents regularly informed with what is happening in school and preschool and encourage an open door policy, allowing parents to make an appointment or talk to the teacher about any issues they may have. We also encourage parents to come in and hear the children read, further developing the relationship between school and parents. Parents are regularly emailed their child's learning journey and are encouraged to add their own observations from home. We also encourage the parents to share the learning journey with their children over the Christmas and Easter holidays with a questionnaire for Parents to review the learning journey with their child. We also use Twitter to keep parents informed of what we have been doing in our settings and ways they can support at home @strettonsugwas and @strettoneyfs.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

Children with special educational needs will be supported as appropriate to enable them to access the curriculum fully. This includes children that are more able and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities. Pupil Passports identify targets in specific areas of learning for those children with additional learning needs with the school's SEN Policy. The school's SEN Co-ordinator is responsible for providing additional information and advice to staff and parents and for arranging external intervention and support as necessary. In line with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy, we will provide all children, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability with equal access to all aspects of school life to ensure that every child is valued as an individual. All staff are role models and are aware of the influence they have in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical attitudes.

Toileting

We expect children to be toilet trained by the time they reach school. Our preschool is very happy to support parents with toilet training, however, it is vital that this process is fully committed to at home. A child does not have to legally be in school till they are 5, therefore we do require children to be fully toilet trained (unless they have a SEN or medical need)

before we can accept them into school. This is due to not having the facilities or staffing levels that they would have in a Nursery.