



All Semley CE VA School policies apply to year R to 6 inclusively or Semley CE VA School Staff	
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Early Years Policy (Based on 2021 EYFS Framework)

Within Early Years at Semley CE VA Primary School we aim to;

- give each child a happy, positive and enjoyable start to their school life within a safe and nurturing environment
- establish solid foundations to encourage independence and foster a deep love of learning
- enable each child, through encouragement and high expectations, to develop socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually in order to thrive in a diverse, ever changing world
- offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited opportunity for development
- offer a broad and rich curriculum

The Curriculum

We follow the curriculum as outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) document. This framework defines what we teach and we use the Development Matters guidance to support our curriculum. The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are seen as important and interconnected.

Three of the areas are referred to as the Prime areas. These are particularly important for building a foundation during pre-school years for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving (Early Years Framework 2021)

The prime areas are;

Communication and language	Listening, Attention and Understanding Speaking
Personal, Social and Emotional Development	Self-regulation Managing Self Building Relationships
Physical Development	Fine Motor Gross Motor

The Prime areas are strengthened and applied during the reception year through the further four areas which are referred to as the Specific areas.

Literacy	Comprehension Word Reading, Writing
Mathematics	Numbers, Numerical patterns
Understanding the World	Past and present People, culture and communities
Expressive Arts and Design	Creating with materials Being imaginative and expressive

We enrich the Early Years framework with our curriculum to enhance the experience and opportunities available to the children. This includes special events and celebrations, memorable experiences and themes selected to drive the curriculum.

Our teaching of synthetic phonics is based on the Understanding Letters and Sounds Phonics scheme and our teaching of mathematics is guided by the NCETM Scheme - Mastering Number.

Play

We aim to provide playful activities and experiences within our environment that engage, interest and inspire our children, whilst also preparing them for Year 1, through continuous provision in our Reception classroom and outdoor area. Children can access these learning areas independently throughout the day which provide them with stimulating, active play to encourage creative and critical thinking alongside other children, as well as on their own. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests, inspire those around them and consolidate their understanding and skills. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. Our adults take an active role in child-initiated play through observing, modelling and questioning whilst also developing the children's skills and language.

We understand that outdoor play is of equal importance as indoor play and that the outdoor classroom offers children 'bigger', 'louder' and 'messier' experiences. We therefore aim to offer free flow access to our outdoor learning areas throughout the school day.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The three Characteristics of Effective Learning are Playing and Exploring, Active Learning and Creating and Thinking Critically. Practitioners use them to help to identify a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them.

Teaching

We ensure there is a balance of child- initiated learning through continuous provision, and adult led activities, across the school day. Our Reception class has a teacher and a teaching assistant every day. The adults respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction and modelling, questioning and demonstrating skills. There are set routines that we follow each day. There are designated times when the children come together to be taught and we focus on maths, literacy, phonics, stories and topic work. These times provide the opportunity for children to develop their ability to work as a group and with talk partners to listen, to take turns, to answer and concentrate.

Whole class reading and story time are important parts of the day. We want our children to develop of lifelong love of reading. Children are exposed to a wide range of both fiction and non-fiction texts to provide them with opportunities to hear and use new vocabulary. We promote a quality text each week with our 'Book of the week' through which we explore vocabulary and respond to the text through drama then children continue to explore that text through a story prop basket as part of continuous provision. We want our children to leave the EYFS knowing and enjoying traditional and modern stories. We make sure there is always time for a whole class story during the day, as well as opportunities to enjoy books within the continuous provision.

In Reception every child is provided with their own book bag and will receive a 'reading' book three times a week based on their phonetic knowledge. In school they will share this book with an adult on a one to one basis. They will also have the opportunity to select a book for enjoyment from our class library on a weekly basis.

Planning

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum provides the basis for planning for our Reception class. The planning objectives within the Foundation Stage are supported by the Development Matters Statements from the Early Years Foundation Stage document. Our planning is based upon themes with discrete lessons in phonics, literacy and maths.

Practitioners select themes according to children's interests, experiences and prior learning. Progress and curriculum coverage are monitored half-termly.

Assessment

Ongoing or formative assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Practitioners observe pupils to identify their level of achievement and interests. These observations are then used to inform future planning. Observations and assessments are recorded on children's online learning journeys which parents can access.

At the end of the EYFS (end of Reception), practitioners complete the EYFS profile (Statutory requirement) for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are;

- 'Expected' - meeting expected levels of development
- 'Emerging' - not yet reaching the expected levels of development

Children's development levels are assessed as the year progresses. If a child's progress in any of the prime areas gives cause for concern, practitioners will discuss this with the child's parents/carers and agree how to support the child.

Parent Partnership

We believe that education is a shared responsibility between school and home. We therefore work closely with parents/carers to ensure that they are involved in their child's education. A termly newsletter and topic map details what we are learning and how to support their child's learning at home.

We ensure that parents/ carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development, through online learning journeys, reading records, daily contact and parents' evenings and we provide opportunities for feedback throughout the school year.

We offer information evenings to provide parents with an insight into how we teach specific areas of the Early Years Curriculum e.g. phonics and detailing ways in which they can support their child's learning at home.

Safeguarding

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. We educate children on the importance of boundaries, rules and limits and we encourage them to become responsible for their own behaviour by supporting them to make the right choices. We teach the children how to recognise and manage risks in a supervised learning environment.