

Sutton-at-Hone Church of England (Voluntary Aided) Primary School



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



A Church of England Voluntary Aided School
Diocese of Rochester

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Head of School: Karen Trowel

Chair of Governors: Mark Shaw

Sutton-at-Hone C.E. Primary School Policy Document

Aims

Through our Early Years Education we aim to foster a happy, confident, enquiring and enthusiastic attitude in all of our children. They are encouraged to become self-motivated and independent learners. We aim to develop the 'whole' child in that their intellectual, physical, creative, social, moral and spiritual self is equally important in their learning. These are the '**characteristics of their learning**' and they will play a central role to our planning and assessment for these children.

Objectives

To provide a secure and safe environment in which the children feel valued and confident.

To provide a stimulating environment in which children can be appropriately challenged to take their learning forward.

To encourage learning through practical activity and play.

To promote the development of attitudes, skills, knowledge, understanding and concepts appropriate to the child's individual needs.

To develop in the children a sense of achievement through their learning about themselves, others and the world around them.

To provide opportunity for the children to consolidate and reflect upon their learning.

To provide an environment of equal opportunity for all learners.

To plan, provide and assess children's experiences and learning through the three '**prime**', and four '**specific**' curriculum areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum:

Prime Areas of Learning

Personal, Social and Emotional development

Communication and Language

Physical development

Specific Areas of Learning

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding of the world

Expressive Arts and Design

Specific Aims for Encouragement and Development within each curriculum area

Personal, Social and Emotional development

- Awareness of differing feelings and beliefs of themselves/others
- Time for reflection
- Independence and confidence in themselves
- Positive relationships with peers and adults
- Behaving in appropriate ways, learning right and wrong

Communication and Language

- The art of communication through speaking and listening
- Using a wide variety of communication styles (visual, auditory, kinesthetic, non-verbal)

Physical development

- An awareness of their own body and how to coordinate body parts
- Children's involvement in a variety of physical activities
- Fine and gross motor skills

Literacy

- The idea that print is used to convey meaning through the reading and sharing of books
- The children becoming writers themselves
- A phonics programme (Read/Write/Inc) offered for the children to acquire the skills needed to become readers and writers

Mathematics

- The use of appropriate language relating to mathematical concepts with understanding and competence
- The application of their learning to aid in problem solving

Understanding of the world

- Close observational skills. Ability to notice similarities/differences
- The ability to ask questions and suggest explanations
- Choice of appropriate materials and tools to solve problems
- The children's curiosity and interest in finding out about other people in different times and places and beliefs
- Identifying the uses of everyday technology and use information and communication technology to support their learning
- A growing awareness of the world outside their own experience

Expressive Arts and Design

- Response to, and expression through art, craft, dance, drama and music

School Approach

It is our aim at Sutton-at-Hone School to ensure that we use and build upon the known fundamental principles of good Early Years practice.

Fundamental principles of good Early Years practice

It is widely acknowledged that early childhood is vitally important and is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. Children develop at differing rates emotionally, intellectually, morally, physically, spiritually and socially. All these aspects of development are interwoven and of equal importance. Young children learn from everything that they do and try, and do not separate their learning into subjects. Children learn most effectively through a combination of instruction, and by being actively involved. They gain from asking, and by being asked, questions. Playing and talking are the main ways in which young children learn about themselves and the world around them. Children need time and space to produce work of quality and depth.

All children have abilities which should be identified. It is important to value what children can do rather than what they cannot, and this should indicate the starting point for their learning. The

relationships which children establish with adults and other children are of central importance in their development. Children who feel confident in themselves and their own abilities have a head start as they will be more inclined to take risks in directing their own learning. If they are encouraged to think for themselves they are more likely to act independently.

Children in Reception class at Sutton-at-Hone School

These children are at the Foundation Stage of their learning, and experiences and activities are based on the Early Learning Goals. These do not follow the National Curriculum (NC) but provide pre-NC skills, knowledge and understanding to provide a foundation for later achievement in the National Curriculum.

Class Management of Learning

Areas and activities are set up in the classroom for play and discovery learning as well as directed group activities and whole-class teaching. Therefore, children can learn to interact and respond in whole-class, small-group and individual situations.

The Classroom Environment

The indoor classroom offers activities in the following learning areas: book corner, writing area, listening area for stories and rhymes, role-play and imaginative area, early-science area, computer, mathematical area, construction area, musical area, small-world area, water and sand play, art and craft area. The outdoor space is a reflection of the indoor classroom, also offering activities for all curriculum areas, but with the addition of large-scale equipment such as bikes, and small and large play items for physical development, and more.

The activities in these areas are changed weekly to provide ongoing interest, stimulation and challenge to the children. Children's own interests are included into the areas as they arise.

During guided or directed teaching sessions children work in either mixed, or same, ability groups depending on the learning planned.

Teaching Strategies

Children learn in a variety of ways and are catered for as follows:

- Free choice and exploration of Early Years environment and learning areas
- Guided exploration and learning
- Teacher-directed learning

As children first enter their Reception Class the emphasis for their learning will be on a balance between the strategies. As the year progresses teaching will work towards focusing more on the latter strategies, to prepare the children for the National Curriculum in Year 1. These changes will be gradual, and of course will accommodate the specific needs of the children involved.

Learning process

The classroom areas, and the planned and unplanned activities provide a range of opportunities for the children to progress through the 'steps' to achieving the Early Learning Goals during their Reception year.

On Entry Assessment

During the children's first few weeks in school, the FS practitioners will assess the current learning stage, and development needs of each child, so as to be able to teach the children appropriately.

Ongoing assessment and observations

Since much of the young children's work and learning is through practical activity and play, observations are of key importance to assessment in the Early Year's classroom. Observations of children's responses and significant achievements are recorded during both child-initiated sessions and teacher-directed activities. Any parent's records of their child's learning at home are included in the ongoing assessment too.

Assessment to inform planning

Observation records from the previous week are browsed when planning so that children can work, and are challenged, at their own individual levels. When appropriate, language screening, and motor-skills screening, are used as indicators for any early interventions needed to aid the learning process for an individual child, or group of children.

Foundation Stage Profile and End of Year Report

Formal records are updated termly for each child in the seven Early Learning curriculum areas, as records of achievement for reporting. This information forms the basis of the Foundation Stage Profile for each child. Regular informal sharing of the children's Learning Journals with parents occurs throughout the year. A written report is sent home at the end of Reception year.

School partnership with parents and guardians

We keep good contact with parents and guardians through visits and meetings before and after the children start school. Weekly contact is also kept through the home-school contact books, and formal and informal parent interviews throughout the year.

Partnership with feeder playgroups

We have regular exchange visits to and from feeder playgroups so that new children, and teachers, can get to know each other before the children start school.

Equal opportunities and Special needs

Experiences should reflect our multicultural and mixed able society and provide equality of opportunity to enable all children to fulfil their potential. From teacher assessments early identification can be made of children needing additional support, or further challenge because of Special or Additional Needs.

Health and Safety

The children are taught how to handle classroom equipment and resources safely to ensure the well being of themselves and others around them. Furniture and equipment is placed sensibly, and appropriate supervision is provided to avoid danger. Adults supervise every room and outdoor space that the children play and work in.