



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Effective March 2018



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Summerlea C P School Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

1. Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from three years of age to the end of the Reception year. The majority of children join Summerlea School at the beginning of the school year in which they are five, therefore at Summerlea, the EYFS refers to the first year at school when children are in the Reception Class.

Our curriculum enables the child to learn and develop skills, attitudes and understanding in these seven areas of learning:

The prime areas:

- **Personal, Emotional and Social Development (PSED)**
- **Communication and Language (CL)**
- **Physical development (PD)**

The prime areas are important because they lay the foundations for children's success in all other areas of learning.

The specific areas:

- **Mathematics**
- **Literacy**
- **Understanding the World (UTW)**
- **Expressive Art and Design (EAD)**

The specific areas provide the range of experiences and opportunities for children to broaden their knowledge and skills.

Throughout the EYFS we plan activities to give children learning experiences and opportunities to work towards the Early Learning Goals and prepare them for the National Curriculum. Teaching and learning will take place within the classroom and outside areas. Within these areas children will participate in a variety of activities, both with an adult and independently.

2. Learning and development

At Summerlea, our classrooms and outdoor environment are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. The seven areas of learning are clearly defined both inside and outside so that children are able to access learning opportunities independently. These are as follows:



- **Communication and language development** involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.
- **Physical development** involves providing opportunities for children to be active and interactive; and to develop their motor skills as well as co-ordination, control, and movement. Children also learn to be independent with dressing and toileting.
- **Personal, social and emotional development** involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others in order to form positive relationships. They develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings.
- **Literacy development** involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write simple sentences.
- **Mathematics** involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition, subtraction, halving and doubling problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.
- **Understanding the world** involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.
- **Expressive arts and design** involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

There are also three ‘characteristics of effective learning’ which support the development of the unique child in **how** they learn, focussing on the process rather than the outcome.

- **Playing and Exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’;
- **Active Learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements;
- **Creating and Thinking Critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

All of the areas of learning are delivered through a well-planned, play based approach, with a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. We plan for individual needs and interests and are continually adapting and changing our provision to suit the children.

We follow a half termly topic based approach with an overarching ‘big question’ that drives our curriculum. The big question is then split into ‘mini-big questions’ to follow the ever changing interests of the child, following their questions and interests.



At Summerlea we plan activities to equip children with the skills required to meet the Early Learning Goals by the end of Reception. The Early Learning Goals set out the expectations of what most children should achieve by the end of the Reception Year.

The main aims of the EYFS curriculum at Summerlea are based on the following EYFS principles:

- 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**;
- 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.** The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision including children with special needs and disabilities

3. Links with other policies

Reference is made to the following policies whilst planning and operating in the EYFS, therefore it is felt that a separate policy or statement is not required:

- Behaviour
- Anti-bullying
- eSafety
- Equal Opportunities
- Special Educational Needs (SEND)
- Child Protection
- Health and Safety

4. Teaching and Learning

We recognise that all children develop at different rates and in different ways. We believe that the following features are examples of good practice in our school:

- The strong partnership between teachers and parents;
- Knowing each child as an individual in order to plan for their needs;
- The range of multi-sensory approaches used in order to provide first-hand purposeful learning experiences;
- The carefully planned, ever changing curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals;



- The enhanced provision adapted daily for children to build on and extend their interests and skills;
- 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 nurturing and caring approach adopted by every member of staff in Early Years ensuring children feel safe and secure whilst at school.

5. The Learning Environment

Our ultimate aim is to create a safe and stimulating learning environment which will encourage children to explore, investigate and learn through first-hand experiences. Our continuous provision is designed to offer engaging, inspiring and challenging learning opportunities where children are able to access equipment and resources with a high level of independence. At Summerlea School, the children have access to a well-resourced, large, outdoor classroom. This allows the children opportunities to explore, use their senses and be physically active. During child initiated activity time the children also have free flow access to all of the learning areas and can choose where they would like to learn, this includes every classroom and outside area which is available to use at all times. We are continually adapting and evaluating our Early Years provision and make changes where necessary in order to meet the needs of the children. We adapt our enhanced provision regularly in order to excite and enthuse the children. This is often linked to an interest expressed by them.

6. Assessment

At Summerlea School we use '2 simple 2 build a profile' which allows all of the Early Years staff members to take photographs and make observations of the children when they are involved in quality learning opportunities. Each new learning experience captured then links to an area of the curriculum and allows us to show progress throughout the year.

Each child has a 'Learning Journal' and all observations are gathered here along with examples of work and parental contributions. We also collect additional pieces of work in an additional folder to celebrate productivity. We encourage parents and carers to regularly drop in and look at their child's learning journal and celebrate their child's progress and achievements.

7. Organisation

Early Years is split into two or three classes (depending on the number of children within a cohort), usually with 30 children in each class. There is a full-time EYFS Teaching Assistant assigned to each class and Individual Needs Assistants may also support children with additional or special educational needs. The school day begins at 8.20am, when the doors open and the register is taken at 8.30am. The school day finishes at 3pm. All of the Early Years children are dropped off and collected by their parents or carers in the Early Years outdoor area. The structure of our day varies considerably depending on the time of year as we gradually begin to add more structure to the day as we approach the summer term in order to aid transition to Year 1.



8. Play in the Foundation Stage

We know that play is the fundamental way in which young children learn. Children develop skills across all the Prime and Specific areas of learning through play. At Summerlea School all of our staff members are skilled in interacting and playing with the children.

We support and facilitate play by:

- Ensuring our learning environment is safe and secure;
- Setting up activities for inside play before the children arrive;
- Providing a range of equipment, resources and activities on a daily basis adapting provision according to the needs and interests of the children;
- Encouraging children to request additional or alternative equipment as they choose and being independent in sourcing that equipment;
- Making outdoor play available every day and providing suitable clothing and footwear for rainy days;
- Interacting and communicating with children through their play engaging and extended their games;
- Observing play carefully only intervening in certain situations either to enhance or develop play;

9. Inclusion

In our school we believe that all of our children are special. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of the range of life experiences the children have when planning for their learning. In the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage. Some children progress beyond this point and others are still working towards meeting their Early Learning Goals. We achieve this by planning to meet the individual needs of every child in the cohort.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence
- planning activities that take account of gender differences and children's individual needs (including Gifted and Talented and children who have additional or Special Educational Needs)
- 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 all children
- monitoring children’s progress regularly and taking action to provide support as necessary
- involving external support agencies as necessary.

10. Recording, Reporting and Assessment

Baseline Assessment:

On entry to Reception we carry out baseline assessments for each child. As a school, we have chosen an observational method of carrying out the assessments (Early Excellence) which is considered to be best practice in Early Years across the Local Authority. The baseline assessment produces a holistic view of the child and allows us to predict future outcomes for each child.

Observational Assessments:

Ongoing formative assessment is at the heart of the EYFS. At Summerlea we carry out regular observational assessments in a variety of ways such as 2Simple iPad observations, paper based observations as well as scribing in speech bubbles to capture pupil voice. With every observation we ensure we:

- Observe children – observing children within play, both during self-initiated and adult initiated activities. This often involves the teachers and teaching assistants intervening at an appropriate time and level during the child’s play.
- Assess children – assessing the children against the relevant strands of the EYFS framework that they have achieved as well as noting which characteristic of effective learning they have been exhibiting.
- Identify next steps – identifying the next step for that child in order to progress further.

Assessments are tracked electronically using a programme called ‘School Pupil Tracker’ which allows practitioners to identify areas for development and to ensure every child is making progress.

Annual Reports:

Parents receive an end of year written report that offers comments on their child’s progress in each area of learning as well as making reference to the characteristics of effective learning. It highlights the child’s strengths and development needs and gives details of the child’s general progress.



11. Parents, pre-schools and transition

We know that all parents have an important role to play in the education of their child. We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate in their child's education and care in numerous ways.

Transitions:

Transitions are carefully planned for and time given to ensure continuity of learning. During any transition period, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child and other settings, including nurseries and pre-schools. We undertake home-visits for all children and also invite pre-school settings to visit us. Sometimes, we also make visits to pre-school settings if a child has additional or special education needs so that we can meet the children in a familiar environment. We also send home an 'All about me' booklet to gather vital information about each child prior to them starting school.

To support parents and their children during the transition from pre-school to school and to ensure the partnership between school and home is strong we provide the following:

- A welcome meeting for new parents in order to meet the Senior Leadership Team, Foundation Stage staff and the Inclusion Team
- A stay and play session for the children to visit the Early Years environment on an informal basis with parents prior to the summer holidays
- Home visits during the late summer and early autumn term
- Postcards home during the summer holidays to welcome the children joining our school in September
- A transition afternoon or morning as an opportunity for children to spend time with their teacher and class friends before starting school
- Regular opportunities for parents to 'drop in' to speak to their child's class teacher, look at learning journals and the learning environment
- Parent consultation evenings in the first term
- Having flexible admission arrangements that enable children and parents to become secure, and by allowing time to discuss each child's circumstances
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents such as a 'six week in' support session for parents in the first half of the autumn term.

There is regular communication with home through the child's reading diary and communication board displayed outside of the early years classrooms. We also invite parents to attend special school assemblies and 'drop in' sessions where they have an opportunity to look at their child's work.



12. Admission

The decision on how places are allocated at Summerlea School lies with the Local Authority. Priorities are given to applications as follows:

- Children with a statement of special educational needs or Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).
- Looked after children (children in public care) and children who were previously looked after who leave care under a special guardianship or residence order. Evidence must be provided.
- Children who need a place at the school on exceptional and compelling social, psychological or medical grounds. Evidence must be provided.
- Children who live in the catchment area with brothers or sisters already at Summerlea.
- Other children who live in the catchment area.
- Children who live outside the catchment area with brothers or sisters already at Summerlea.
- Children who live outside the catchment area.

All children have the option to begin school full time from September; however some children may require a longer transition period in order to meet their needs both emotionally and developmentally. Parents and/or carers have the option to request that their child attends school part-time until compulsory school age which is 5 years old.

This policy will be reviewed annually and any suggested amendments will be made and presented to the Governors.

This policy was approved by the governing body of Summerlea Community Primary School

on:13th March 2018.....

Signature of Chair of Governors:.....

Signature of Headteacher:*Helen Morris*.....



Policy Review Form

Please complete this section when reviewing and updating this document.

Author	Name Hayley Rhoades	Date March 2017
Reviews	Name Hayley Rhoades	Review Period: Annually March 2018
Information Source	Name	Date
Change Control	Sections Amended	Author & Date
	3. Links with other policies – Behaviour and Anti-bullying added	March 2018
	5. The Learning Environment – ‘During child initiated...use at all times.’ Sentence added.	March 2018
	7. Organisation – ‘The school day begins at 8.20am, when the doors open and the register is taken at 8.30am. The school day finishes at 3pm.’ Sentences added.	March 2018
	10. Baseline Assessment – ‘As a school, we have chosen...across the Local Authority.’ Sentence added.	March 2018
	11. Transitions – ‘Postcards home during the summer holidays to welcome the children joining our school in September.’ Sentence added.	March 2018