



## SEATON ACADEMY

### EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE CURRICULUM POLICY

#### Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the academic year in which a child has their fifth birthday. This policy is based on the requirements set out in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) made statutory from September '21. Children's learning is largely play-based using high quality, age appropriate resources. Children are supported to join in both child-initiated and adult led activities both indoors and outdoors. Our practice is largely informed by the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework and the educational programmes, we also look at the new Development Matters Framework which is adapted to meet the needs of each individual child.

#### Structure of EYFS

In the Nursery at Seaton Academy we take children from age 3. The Nursery class sessions are 9.00am - 12.00pm daily. We also have the "Shining Stars" Wrap Around Care facility where Nursery children can have a school meal and stay at school for the afternoon. Eligible parents are able to access their funded entitlement hours and we also offer this as a paid for option.

Our Reception classes offer full time school hours 08:50hrs-3:15pm.

#### Curriculum

At Seaton Academy we follow the statutory requirements as outlined in "The EYFS Statutory Framework September 2021. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum that covers the educational programmes as well as other knowledge and skills that will support and help the child develop as a whole child. Development Matters, Educational Programmes and our half termly topics guide our long term planning and assessment. Activities are also based around the children's current needs and interests to ensure all areas of the EYFS curriculum are embraced. We identify the key skills, knowledge and intended learning outcomes for all children. Weekly planning focuses on day-to-day organisation of activities. We understand that young children's learning is not necessarily sequential and that they may need time to consolidate, repeat and extend their learning in their own way.

The EYFS framework is devised into 7 areas of learning and development, 3 Prime Areas and 4 Specific areas; we understand that the Prime areas are crucial and must be prioritised and developed. In recognising and supporting children to develop in these areas we will also develop their readiness to learn across the Specific Areas.

<b>PRIME AREAS OF LEARNING</b>
Communication and Language
Personal, Social and Emotional Development
Physical Development
<b>SPECIFIC AREAS OF LEARNING</b>
Literacy
Mathematics
Understanding the World
Expressive Arts and Design

The Educational Programmes for each Area of Learning are:

### Communication and language (CL)

The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, storytelling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

### Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)

Children's personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Strong, warm and supportive relationships with adults enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. Children should be supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary. Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently. Through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceably. These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.

### Physical Development (PD)

Physical activity is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives. Gross and fine motor experiences develop incrementally throughout early childhood, starting with sensory explorations and the development of a child's strength, co-ordination and positional awareness through tummy time, crawling and play movement with both objects and adults. By creating games and providing opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors, adults can support children to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional wellbeing. Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination which is later linked to early literacy. Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practise of using small tools, with feedback and support from adults, allow children to develop proficiency, control and confidence.

### Literacy (L)

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and nonfiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems

and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).

### Mathematics (M)

Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. Children should be able to count confidently, develop a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers. By providing frequent and varied opportunities to build and apply this understanding - such as using manipulatives, including small pebbles and ten frames for organising counting - children will develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary from which mastery of mathematics is built. In addition, it is important that the curriculum includes rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures. It is important that children develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, 'have a go', talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.

### Understanding the World (UW)

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them – from visiting parks, libraries and museums to meeting important members of society, such as police officers, nurses and firefighters. In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains. Enriching and widening children's vocabulary will support later reading comprehension.

### Expressive Arts and Design (EAD)

The development of children's artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. The quality and variety of what children see, hear and participate in is crucial for developing their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate through the arts. The frequency, repetition and depth of their experiences are fundamental to their progress in interpreting and appreciating what they hear, respond to and observe.

### Learning in the EYFS

- We plan activities and experiences that enable children to develop and learn effectively across all areas of learning as well as offering opportunities to develop their cultural capital. In order to do this with our youngest children we focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.
- We also take into account the needs, interests and stage of development for all children, we use this to help plan a challenging and enjoyable experience.

- Where children may have a special educational need or disability we consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies where appropriate.
- We encourage cross-curricular links to ensure a seamless transition into Key Stage One by building on previous experiences and planning those for the future.

In the EYFS children are learning when they: -

- Collaborate and learn from one another through shared experiences
- Are supported to set their own challenges in their physical environment and in their learning
- Access resources independently
- Use their senses to explore and investigate
- Develop persistence and positive attitudes to learning as detailed in the Characteristics of Effective Learning (listed below )

### **Characteristics of Effective Learning**

In planning and guiding what children learn, the adults will reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and adjust their practice appropriately. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- **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 activities are carefully planned by staff to ensure that each child can be a resilient, capable and confident learner. Through the development of positive relationships and happy, warm, secure learning environments each child will be able to learn and develop both as an individual, unique child and as part of our larger school family group. Themes are planned to ensure progression and start with what the children already know as the foundations on which future learning can be built. It is also important to be flexible and include children's interests as learning opportunities. In the moment planning also occurs which gives children excellent learning opportunities based on what is happening around them.

### **The Importance of Play and Play Based Learning in the EYFS**

We highly value play and the learning it brings in itself. Anyone who has observed play for any length of time will recognise that, for young children, play is an essential tool for learning. Each area of learning is implemented through planned purposeful play, and through a mix of adult led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to children's individual needs and interests responding and guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. As the children become developmentally ready the balance shifts towards more adult led activities to help prepare the children for more formal learning and their next stage of education. Through play children explore and develop

learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules thereby developing emotional resilience and self-regulation. Children have the opportunity to think creatively and problem solve alongside others. They express fears or relive anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations as well as re-enact positive experiences building self-awareness and self-esteem.

### **Observations and Assessment in the EYFS**

Observation is the practice of looking at and listening to children to find out how they are developing, what they like doing and what they are learning through their play and the experiences on offer. Observations of children are vital because each child has a unique set of abilities and talents, observations, in different situations, capture these first hand. The starting point is always with the child. Observing what children choose to do, what their interests are and who and what resources they enjoy playing with, provides adults with reliable information about children as individuals. They provide opportunities to gauge children's strengths and needs to facilitate more accurately planned next steps in their learning. Observations take place regularly as part of daily routines. They give a starting point for a holistic approach that will ensure that the child is always central to what is planned.

Assessment in the EYFS consists of two main types:

- Ongoing assessment which is what adults do on a daily basis to make decisions about what the child has learned, or can do already, so as to help the child move on in their learning – this is called 'formative' assessment because it informs the next steps that are planned with the child and the parent.
- 'summative' assessment which 'sums up' all the different information from on-going assessments that have been made about the child. This information is added to a record of children's achievement. At Seaton Academy we use FFT to record and track the levels children have attained in each of the Areas of Learning throughout the academic year in both Nursery and Reception.

In Reception all children undertake statutory Baseline Assessments' in the first 6 weeks of the Autumn Term and at the end of the Reception Year staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Children are assessed against the 17 early learning goals (ELGs) indicating whether they are meeting expected levels of development or not yet meeting expected levels of development.

We have regular parents' meetings to ensure parents/carers are informed of their child's progress and next steps in learning. In addition to formal meetings we have an "open Door" policy and strive to develop strong working relationships between home and school. Parents receive interim reports and an end of year report that reports on each child's progress in each area of learning and their Characteristics of Effective Learning.