



**Southwold Primary
& Nursery School**

"Be all you can be and together we will shine"

Southwold Primary and Nursery School

Early Years Policy

Early Years Curriculum Intent

At Southwold Primary & Nursery School we are committed to meeting every child's individual needs. We ensure that the child's welfare is paramount and that they develop as young enthusiastic learners in a safe environment. We provide a range of opportunities for children to develop their skills and engage through hands on learning and play opportunities. We encourage children to participate in a variety of skills-based activities; some are focused and led by an adult and others are provided to give the child a chance to be active, independent learners. We believe this approach helps to build children's self-esteem and self-worth to increase independence and the ability to show initiative, be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

We strive to engage children in their learning through enabling our environments by making them creative and interesting through our learning landscape, which encourage the use of both indoor and outdoor space. We encourage a strong partnership between home and school.

Our ethos promotes children's all-round development and fosters positive attitudes towards learning. Inviting children to develop positive values, attitudes and relationships is supported throughout the school through our Values based approach.

Play and Active learning

At Southwold we believe play to be the means through which young children learn. It is through play that children can explore, question, develop and act out experiences, helping them make sense of the world. Play helps children build up ideas and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. Children investigate and solve problems through collaborative and individual play.

Learning opportunities are available in our Nursery and Reception classrooms both indoors and outdoors, where the three prime areas and four specific areas of learning are offered. Due to the range of adult led activities and child-initiated time we provide, we give plenty of time for play opportunities to arise. Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence, they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Planning

Our topic-based planning enables the children to explore the school's big questions from our curriculum overview. The weekly plans take on these themes and are also supported by the skills progression observations carried out of the children from the previous week. This enables children's interests, achievements, and next steps to be addressed and enhanced in the environment.



We teach carefully planned topics throughout the year to ensure every child is given a variety of different stimuli and skills. The topics covered are also supported by the child's interests; this helps to keep the children engaged and allows them to take ownership of their learning.

We offer the children a broad and balanced curriculum which follows The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. This enables the nursery and reception teachers to incorporate the seven areas of learning and development into a stimulating, creative, cross curricular approach, ensuring breadth.

The children are actively engaged in working towards the Early Learning Goals. The goals are made up of the Three Prime Areas and Four Specific Areas of learning:

Prime Areas:

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social and emotional development

Specific Areas

- literacy
- mathematics
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design

These areas are broken down into educational programmes which lead towards the Early Learning Goals. To achieve these goals, the children work through knowledge, skills and understanding which are appropriate to their developmental stage. Alongside this run the characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on one another. These areas are explored through a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities. The child-initiated opportunities are where we provide the chances for the children to be independent learners, we have often modelled or joined in the play before. The adult led activities are introducing and teaching new skills. This is where children will work with an adult, normally as part of a small group.

Activities and role play opportunities inside and outdoors provide a means through which children can independently practise, apply, develop the skills and ideas with the support of the adults in the setting.

At Southwold we recognise that phonics knowledge is key to reading and writing. We carry out discrete phonics sessions, linked to the Read Write Inc scheme. The children then apply their phonics skills each day in and around the environment. We practise speaking and listening throughout the day through Tales Toolkit and Wellcomm sessions, circle times and class discussions.

Assessment and observation



When children begin Nursery and Reception, the class teachers have transition meetings with the nursery staff and preschools. Along with this information and discussion, the teachers meet the children at their current setting and during play dates (if not already seen at the start of nursery) to gather information that goes towards their Baseline assessment. We use the STA Baseline assessment in addition to a Southwold baseline document. Each child's level of development is recorded against the skills. Throughout the year the nursery and reception team carry out observations of children and record their observations on Tapestry. This along with pieces of work and creations the children have produced contributes to the child's Learning Journey. We also encourage parents to upload learning and observations from home alongside their child's 'marvellous me' moments so we can share them in class and celebrate them.

Although adult led activities can offer insight into children's attainment by making sure the child can demonstrate their knowledge. It is mostly evidence through observing children through their child-initiated time and activities that are used as judgements for the EYFS profile.

The ongoing assessments of the children are collected and recorded into the children's Learning Journeys. They are then recorded onto our tracking system on Arbor three times a year. In the final term we write a report to parents. Along with a personal comment, this will state their progress against the Early Learning Goals and the child's Characteristics of Learning.

Moderation takes place within Southwold Primary School and across the WHF and schools within the local area.

The Learning Landscape

At Southwold we recognise the environment plays a vital role in supporting and extending the children's development. The nursery and reception classrooms which incorporate the indoor and outdoor areas are well organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active and others where they can have quiet time.

The environments are set up into learning zones where children can find and locate resources and equipment independently. Our learning landscape operate a free flow system whereby the children can choose which area of the landscape they would like to explore. This is around the adult led activities that take place throughout the day at various times.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and tolerate a no discrimination philosophy. All children are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or ability. All children and families are valued within our school. We recognise that all pupils bring different experiences, interests and strengths which influence the way they learn, and we encourage all children to succeed and do their best. We aim to give each child the opportunity to experience success in their learning and ensure equal opportunities will be extended to all pupils. We encourage children to make their own choices and in giving reasons for decisions and actions. We recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others, therefore we praise and encourage as well as celebrate achievements that are made in school and at home.



Special Educational Needs

Those children which are recognised as having Special Educational Needs or a Disability (SEND) will follow similar programmes of study as their peers. However, the work, if necessary, will be tailored to meet individual children's needs.

Safeguarding

Southwold Primary School takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of the children and young people in its care. "The welfare of the pupil/student is paramount." (Children Act 1989.) Our staff and Governors are committed to safeguarding the pupil/students at this school and contribute to multi-agency working to keep pupils and students safe.

Health and Safety

All safety measures are taken to ensure the safety of all children in the Early Years. Locks are installed on the gates and doors. We follow the TWHF 'Health and Safety' policy which all staff and students are familiar with, and we have designated people responsible for first aid in school. Within the Early Years, we have members of staff who are currently trained in Paediatric First Aid. Children are taught the safe and appropriate use of equipment and materials. Children are taught to be mindful when moving around the school and are aware of safety issues. Our health and safety policy is available on our school website. All medicines are kept in a locked cupboard at the school office or in locked cabinet in the classroom if required and approved by parents/carers before administration of any medicines. No hazardous substances are used within the setting.

Working in partnership with Parents/Carers

We recognise that parents/carers are children's first and enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We appreciate the role that parents have played and their future role in educating the children. We do this through:

- Talking to parents about their child before they start school and throughout their journey with us.
- Visiting all children in their familiar setting prior to starting school in Nursery or Reception. The children have the opportunity to come into school to spend time in the environment and get to know their teacher.
- Being invited to a transition morning or afternoon for a stay and play session in June/July before starting school.
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before they start school.
- Offering parents regular opportunities to discuss their child's progress in the class before and after school sessions or any concerns either the teacher or parent may have.
- Inviting parents to end of term 'big question' session so they can celebrate their children's achievements alongside staff
- Setting parents up on Tapestry so they can contribute to the shared learning journey

The adults in the Early Years Team



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We provide the children with a safe and secure environment. We aim to develop good relationships with all children interacting positively with them and taking time to listen. We also model and support children in forming positive relationships and friendships with one another. All members of staff have access to continued professional development to maintain and extend their specialist expertise.

Signed: Mrs V Bending

Date: July 2023

Review Date: July 2024