

EYFS Curriculum Intent

At Southwick Community Primary School, our Early Years curriculum is carefully designed to meet the needs of our children and families. Many children join Nursery and Reception working below age-related expectations, particularly in communication and language. A significant number of our pupils also come from disadvantaged backgrounds or have additional needs, including SEND.

Our curriculum focuses on developing the essential skills children need to become confident, independent learners. We place equal importance on the Characteristics of Effective Learning - Playing and Exploring, Active Learning, and Creating and Thinking Critically - as these underpin future success both in school and beyond.

Communication and language are at the heart of everything we do. We know that strong speaking and listening skills open the door to all areas of learning, so we provide rich opportunities for children to develop vocabulary, express their ideas, and engage in meaningful conversations with adults and their peers.

Physical development is another key priority. Through a range of indoor and outdoor experiences, children develop their gross and fine motor skills, build physical strength and coordination, and gain the foundations needed for writing and self-regulation.

We also place great emphasis on children's personal, social and emotional development. Through carefully planned experiences and positive relationships, children learn how to work together, manage their feelings, show kindness, and develop resilience. High expectations for behaviour are embedded within a nurturing and supportive environment.

Our curriculum is sequenced from Nursery through to Reception to ensure children build knowledge and skills over time. Learning is regularly revisited and practised so that children can develop confidence and deepen their understanding. Whilst our curriculum is ambitious, it remains flexible enough to respond to the needs of individual children and cohorts.

Our aim is that every child leaves Reception as a confident communicator, an enthusiastic learner, and well prepared for the challenges of Key Stage 1.

Implementation

Learning in the Early Years is delivered through a balance of high-quality adult-led teaching and carefully planned child-initiated learning opportunities. Both the indoor and outdoor environments are viewed as equally important spaces for learning and development.

Adults play a crucial role in supporting progress. Through purposeful interactions, practitioners model language, introduce new vocabulary, ask thoughtful questions, extend children's thinking, and provide appropriate challenge.

As children move into Reception, they take part in daily structured teaching sessions to develop key knowledge and skills across the curriculum.

Reading and Phonics

Reading is central to our curriculum. In Reception, children participate in daily phonics sessions using the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised programme. Sessions are carefully structured and become increasingly intensive throughout the year, alongside targeted support for pupils who require additional practice.

To foster a love of reading and broaden children's experiences, a carefully chosen collection of core texts is shared regularly. These books provide opportunities to develop vocabulary, comprehension, imagination and cultural understanding. The Little Wandle handwriting programme is taught alongside phonics to support correct letter formation and early writing development.

Mathematics

In Nursery, children develop early mathematical understanding through practical, hands-on experiences inspired by Karen Wilding's approach. Learning focuses on counting, subitising, sorting, comparing, pattern and mathematical language. Resources such as Number blocks help children develop confidence and understanding through play.

In Reception, the White Rose Maths framework supports curriculum planning and progression. Teaching is adapted to meet the needs of the cohort while ensuring children develop secure mathematical understanding. Practical exploration, discussion and problem-solving are used to deepen learning and encourage mathematical thinking.

Across the Early Years, mathematical concepts are reinforced through adult-led teaching, continuous provision and everyday experiences.

Impact

Assessment is used to ensure that every child receives the support and challenge they need to make strong progress.

Before children start school, information is gathered from families and previous settings to support a smooth transition. During the first half-term, practitioners use observations and interactions to establish each child's starting point.

Reception pupils complete the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA), which provides information about children's early language, literacy and mathematical development. We also use the Nuffield Early Language Intervention (NELI) assessment to identify children who may benefit from additional support with communication and language.

Throughout the year, ongoing formative assessment informs planning and teaching. Practitioners use observations, conversations and examples of

children's work to monitor progress. Tapestry is used selectively to capture significant learning experiences without detracting from valuable teaching time. Phonics progress is assessed regularly through the Little Wandle assessment system. Children who require additional support are quickly identified and provided with targeted intervention.

Summative assessments are completed six times throughout the year and shared with parents during consultation meetings. At the end of Reception, teachers complete the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP), assessing children's attainment against the Early Learning Goals.

Final Outcomes

By the end of Reception, children have developed the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed for a successful transition into Year 1. Through a carefully planned and progressive curriculum, they are equipped with strong foundations in communication, literacy, mathematics, personal development and learning behaviours.

Children leave the Early Years as confident learners who are ready to access the Key Stage 1 curriculum and continue their educational journey successfully.