

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

The Early Years at Stamford Junior School comprises of the Stamford Nursery & Preschool and Reception.

The term *parents* in this document refers to parents and carers and the term *child* refers to children and young people aged 0 to 19 years old (up to 25 years old for young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)).

Children receive government funding at Stamford Junior School (SJS) from the term after their third birthday until the term of their fifth birthday (whilst they remain in the Reception year). We follow the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) (DfE, 2024) throughout Stamford Nursery & Preschool (SNPS) and Reception.

Aims

Fundamentally the Early Years at Stamford Junior School is guided by the SES overarching aims and ethos. In the Early Years we have specific aims relating to the care and education of children aged between 2 and 5 years old.

We aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning.

We create a safe, happy and stimulating environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences. We believe that this enables children to become confident and independent learners.

We value the individual child and work alongside parents and others to meet their needs and help every child to reach their full potential.

The following documents should be read in conjunction with this policy:

- EYFS Framework
- SES Admissions Policy
- SES Safeguarding Policy
- SES Health and Safety Policy

- SES Equal Opportunities Policy
- SES Guidelines for Promoting Good Behaviour.
- SES Inclusion and SEND Policy
- Parent Manual and terms and conditions
- SES Intimate Care Policy
- SES Complaints Procedure
- SES School Fees and Charging Policy

Principles, approach and pedagogy

Our Early Years Provision is inspired by the work of Loris Malaguzzi and the Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood learning. Believing that our EYFS provision:

- Should be a place of discovery, exploration, research and the building of relationships.
- effective practice and adult knowledge is at the heart of providing a quality experience for our children.
- SES is committed to supporting staff development, learning and the development of communities of learning.

Central to our approach to care and education in the Early Years at SJS is the EYFS and the guiding principles outlined in the statutory guidance:

- 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*

Principles into practice

We put these principles into practice by:

- Providing a balanced, broad, inspiring curriculum, based on the EYFS, the characteristics of learning and across the seven areas of learning, using high quality play as the vehicle for learning.
- Promoting equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support.
- Creating a partnership with parents and the local community that supports and enhances the development of the children.
- Planning challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment.
- Providing indoor, outdoor and emotional environments that are welcoming, rich and open to multiple learning possibilities.
- Employing a key person approach to develop close relationships with individual children. In Reception this role will be primarily be the child's class teacher.
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in a wide range of activity and experiences. There will be a carefully developed balance of child-initiated, adult initiated and adult led activity. It is expected that as children develop the balance will move toward more adult led opportunities by the end of the EYFS.

Organisation of the Early Years at SJS

Stamford Nursery & Preschool (SNPS)

- Nursery Badgers: Two year old children
- Preschool: Children move into the Preschool room in the September of the academic year that they have their fourth birthday.

Early Years Reception

- Children enter a Reception class in the September of the academic year that they have their fifth birthday.

Qualifications and ratios

All Early Years providers working with children from birth to five years old must follow the Early Years Statutory Guidance and adhere to the adult:child ratios; The number of staff assigned to supervise a specific number of children, depending on the age of the children and the qualification of the adult. To ensure the needs of all children at different stages of development and their safety is met.

These ratios are laid out in the Early years qualification requirements and standards; March 2025.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-qualification-requirements-and-standards>

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), assessment and planning

The EYFS is a framework that provides statutory and non- statutory guidance for providers of education and care of children aged from 0-5 years old.

Assessment

There are two points of statutory assessment within the EYFS. The first is the 2-year check, and the second is the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile.

Throughout SNPS and Reception, adults use observations to record children's learning and plan as a result of analysis of this learning. Assessment of learning is based on the EYFS Educational Programmes and the Characteristics of Effective Learning.

These observations are recorded in individual 'learning journeys' which are compiled by each child's Key Person (in SNPS) or their Class Teacher and Learning Support Assistant in Reception. Children's learning journeys are collected and compiled digitally using 'Tapestry'. They are shared regularly with parents so that we make strong connections between each child's learning experiences at home and school.

At three points during the academic year children's progress in each aspect of each area of learning will be summarised and used for the basis of discussion regarding progress and planning ahead. The three collections of data will be known as Autumn Baseline, Spring Mid-Year and Summer Year End. In line with the new EYFS, children will be assessed to be either 'on track' or 'not on track' based on their stage of development. This is always to be seen in context and as a tool by which to discuss and consider a child's learning. We always remember the principle that *children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates*. If a child is considered to be 'not on track' their progress and additional support will be recorded on the relevant Provision Map for that year group.

Nursery & Preschool

When a child starts at SNS, a baseline assessment is undertaken at the end of the first term. When a child is two years, six months and depending on how long they have attended the setting, the 2+ check will be undertaken. SNPS use the information collected at the child's 2-year check (either our own assessment or one carried out by another setting) alongside observations, to inform a summary of each child's achievements.

When a child leaves SNPS a summary will be prepared for each child by their Key Person. This summary will outline the child's approach to learning in relation to the Characteristics of Learning, and progress across the seven areas of learning. When children move through to the Junior School, an in-depth hand over is given to the reception teacher and any documents relating to any support received during their time in SNPS is passed on.

At SJS we use our own summary of each child's development at the beginning of the Reception year based upon observations and assessments of children in their first 4-6 weeks, rather than use a government accredited Baseline package.

On entry to Reception all families will be offered the opportunity to have a meeting with their child's Reception Teacher. This is a valuable opportunity to build a strong and trusting relationship between home and school.

At the end of the Reception Year the class teachers will make a judgement relating to each child's progress towards and/or achievement of each Early Learning Goal for each aspect of each area of learning. These judgements constitute the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP). This is a statutory assessment and is shared with parents as part of the child's year end report. We also share this data with the Local Authority.

A key purpose of the EYFSP is to share children's learning with their Year One Teacher. The following information will be shared with the Year One Teachers at the end of the Reception year:

- Transition
- Each child's profile scores
- Spreadsheet which identifies the Early Learning Goal achievement of the cohort
- Access to each child's learning journey on Tapestry
- Year End Spede Bird Phonics Assessment
- Independent Writing Assessment
- Reading Records

This documentation will form the basis of the transition meeting, as this is seen as the most positive and effective manner in which to pass on meaningful assessment.

Planning

The EYFS Framework and Educational Programmes inform our long-term planning. Whilst the Characteristics of Effective Learning are used to reflect the different ways in which children learn. Underpinning our overall planning and continuous provision are the key

principles of Reggio Emilia. Projects based on the children's interests provide the backbone of the children's and teachers' learning experiences. They are based on the strong convictions that learning by doing is of great importance. Project ideas can come from the experiences of the children and teachers, a provocation, a chance event or problem posed. They can last from a few days to several months.

Planning always starts with the child. Our planning is based on our knowledge of what children know, what they are interested in, passionate about and what they need. It is important that assessment is therefore meaningful and useful. The planning cycle: Observe, Assess, Plan, Do, Review is used through the Early Years. Throughout the Early Years we use a broad structure to the year outlining key events, celebrations, seasonal planting patterns and visits. This gives us an open-ended shape within which to develop children's fascinations and motivations.

At SNPS, learning is planned in the moment. Staff add to the 'in the moment planning' book as the 'activity' takes place. On a Friday practitioners have a weekly planning meeting to ensure that they are sharing their understanding of the children and their individual learning needs; the environment is discussed and it is agreed how it will be enhanced for the following week.

Whilst using an overall focus as a starting point for the whole group, key person's will then respond to children's interests and fascinations for their weekly plans.

The year starts with a focus on learning about each other and new routines. From then on our project-based approach evolves and responds to children's interests. Reception weekly plans are stored on SharePoint so that the teaching team members can access them easily and amend them when needed. The weekly plans are printed off at the beginning of the week and displayed on the wall in the classrooms. The intention is that these become working documents and evolve with the children's experience.

We recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and have their own learning styles and preferences. There are seven areas of learning and development that must be supported whilst following the EYFS. It is important to understand that all the seven areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

The **Prime** areas:

- **Communication and Language Development**
- **Physical Development and Personal**
- **Social and Emotional Development**

The four **specific** areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied, are:

- **Literacy**
- **Mathematics**
- **Understanding the World**
- **Expressive Arts and Design**

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which they explore, think creatively and are active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

Children have whole group and small group times which increase as they progress through the EYFS. Timetables include an adult led daily phonics session using 'Spede Bird Phonics', along with Mathematics and English lessons.

Project based approach

Projects of the cohort learning will be shared, at the end of a project, in a variety of ways including:

- Videos and QR codes
- Class Blog
- Tapestry
- Floor Books

Enabling Environments

The learning environment within the early years is inspired by the Reggio Emilia Philosophy, describing it as 'the third teacher', is a planned purposeful space, allowing the children to develop their curiosity, creativity and independence. The individual planned areas, support the children in their learning, by following their own individual fascinations and interests, enabling them the opportunities to explore and discover through purposeful adult supported activities and their own ideas and experiences. There is a free flow access to the secure outdoor spaces, both at SNPS and in reception where the children develop their physical abilities, confidence, resilience, and wellbeing.

Supervision for staff

Supervision is a regular, planned, accountable two-way process which should offer support and develop the knowledge, skills and values of an individual, group or team. Its purpose is to monitor and support the progress of professional practice and to help staff to improve the quality of the work they do, thus assuring children's welfare is of central importance and improving outcomes for children. Supervision also provides an opportunity to discuss

sensitive issues including the safeguarding of children and any concerns raised about an individual or colleague's practice. Supervision is not part of the performance management cycle.

In SNPS, members of staff will have the opportunity for supervision once a term.

- Supervisions will be planned ahead of time so that staff know where, when and how long their supervision will be.
- This will always take place in a private location for a minimum of 30 minutes.
- The supervisor will be responsible for taking notes with the responsibility for setting the agenda shared between supervisor and supervisee.

Partnership with Parents and the Wider Context

We strive to create and maintain partnership with parents as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child's learning. We draw on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on outings and inviting members of the community into our setting.

Home-School Links

When children join SJS we outline the school's expectations in the Code of Conduct.

We hold a welcome evening at the beginning of the academic year to explain and outline the academic expectations and curriculum for Reception parents. In addition, we organise events such as an 'Early Reading' evening for parents of both SNPS and Reception where we share understanding of how children learn to read through our Phonics Scheme..

In Reception we share our class blog every week, explaining key items of learning that have taken place during the week, children's fascinations and where the learning will be progressing. SNPS share highlights of key examples of the children's learning, through a Facebook page and Instagram.

We operate an open-door policy, where parents are warmly welcomed and encouraged to discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner.

All members of staff have emails which parents are also encouraged to use as a form of communication with teaching staff.

At SNPS there are regular opportunities throughout the year for parents to meet with their child's key person.

SNPS organise termly stay and play sessions where families can come and spend time with their children in the each age group.

Intimate care

'Intimate' care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. However, depending on a child's age and stage of development, they may need some support, for example dressing, wiping their bottom, appropriate washing after using the toilet and changing underwear following an accident.

Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to individual children.

Express written permission will be requested from parents when their children start at the Nursery.

Changing procedure

We follow the SES Intimate Care Policy and in addition have these guidelines referring to the children in Stamford Nursery & Preschool (SNPS) and the Reception classes.

The SNPS have their own permissions form relating to the changing of nappies. This is read and signed by parents as part of the starting information sent to them.

Parents agree to supply their own nappies/pull ups and cream.

Each child who needs nappies will have an individually named basket/ draw string bag. All medication to do with nappy changing will be kept on a high shelf in the changing area.

There are set times for changing nappies: mid-morning, after lunch and mid-afternoon – unless a child needs changing sooner and we are responsive to their needs.

Children are always treated with respect and will be asked their permission first before being changed.

This is recorded on an individual sheet which identifies time, condition of the nappy, whether cream has been applied and it is signed (initialled) by the person who changed the child's nappy.

Changing areas including the changing unit in SNSP are located to ensure maximum appropriate privacy for the child however, the adult is visible and the area is fully accessible with no closed doors.

Should a child require a shower, we ensure that two members of staff are present.

When a child requires assistance with changing the adult responsible will always inform other members of staff where they are going and what they are doing.

Absence Policy

Any absences for a child in either SNPS or Reception which is not reported by parents or carers in the morning will be followed up to confirm why the child is absence. This will be carried out by the Junior School administrator or the Nursery Manager.

ComplaintsWe follow the overarching guidance outlined in the SES complaints procedure, with the addition of the following advice from the EYFS. We understand that we must investigate written complaints relating to our fulfilment of the EYFS requirements and notify complainants of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of having received the complaint. The record of complaints must be made available to ISI on request. The contact details for ISI are:

- ISI, CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, London EC1A 9HA, or to concerns@isi.net. You can also contact the Department for Education [online](#) or on 0370 000 2288.

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