



# Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

## Aims

**“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential” The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, 2012.**

At Kemsley Primary Academy we want every child to be the best that they can be. We believe that this starts with a solid foundation and enjoyment of learning from the very beginning of a child’s school journey. We aim to provide the highest quality care and education for every child.

We strive to create a welcoming, safe and happy environment and an enriching curriculum which both challenges and supports pupils to achieve their potential and to become independent, confident learners.

Our practitioners aim to create an environment of emotional warmth, with positive praise and encouragement within clear and consistent boundaries and routines.

The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage provides the structure for our curriculum and approach. We use the four guiding principles to shape our practise:

- 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; and
- 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 educational needs and disabilities.

## Approach

Lessons and activities are delivered in an interactive, stimulating environment, which is well equipped, organised, spacious and attractive. Staff ensure that the seven areas of the curriculum are planned for both inside and outside and that all children are able to learn through their play in a broad cross curricular approach. Children are taught to follow the school rules by being kind, safe and responsible. All adults are committed to enabling every child to become independent, enthusiastic learners with a range of skills that they can draw upon and develop throughout their schooling. The adults play a vital role in supporting and extending children’s learning through play, building on their interests and involving them fully in reflecting on what they have learned. We strive to enable every child to achieve or exceed the expected levels of development by the end of Reception. While this may not be possible for some children we want to ensure that all children make good or better progress.

## Curriculum

Our curriculum is based on the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2012 and supported by Developmental Matters 2012. There are seven areas of learning.

Three **prime areas**, which are crucial and build children’s capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive;

- **Communication and Language**
- **Physical Development**

- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development.**

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

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

Staff working in the nursery focus strongly on the development of the three prime areas as the foundation for the pupils learning, this also applies to pupils in Reception, who are developmentally working at a Nursery level in one or more areas. Staff in Reception focus on all seven areas of the curriculum, with emphasis on the development of the four specific areas, building upon the learning that has taken place in Nursery as appropriate for each child.

### **Phonics**

At Kemsley we value phonics as an essential tool for the development of pupil's literacy skills. In Early Years staff are trained to deliver systematic high quality phonics, using the "Letters and sounds" programme as a basis for planning and assessment. Children are taught in ability groups according to the phonic phase in which they are working. On entry to Reception, children are informally assessed to ascertain their prior learning and knowledge of phonics; they are then levelled and put into an appropriate phonics group. Phonics assessment continues once per term to ensure pupils are working at the most appropriate level for their ability.

### **Planning**

The Early Years team plan together and meet regularly to contribute ideas and suggestions for the next topic. Planning is thematic and based on children's interests using the Cornerstones interest based learning projects. Staff use Developmental Matters and the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2012 to devise learning opportunities for each area of development that are suitably challenging and developmentally appropriate.

### **Reading**

At Kemsley we want all children to develop an enthusiasm for reading and storytelling along with an enjoyment of books which leads to a desire to want to read for both pleasure and for information. In Early Years we use a mixture of core books which the children become familiar with and focus books for each topic. Children learn a range of skills through shared reading of the texts, and they are also taught to find information in nonfiction texts. Children have the opportunity to read with adults informally during play, in ability groups and individually throughout the week. In Reception children are given levelled reading books to read and/or talk about. These books are given according to individual developmental needs and according to their phonics level. These books initially may just contain illustrations and not words. These books are sent home weekly for the children to practise reading with an adult at home. In addition children are free to borrow books from the class library during the week.

### **Observation and Assessment**

Observation of pupils is an essential tool in Early Years, and contributes greatly to a practitioner's knowledge of a pupil's holistic development. Observations are made of each pupil frequently and recorded

in their on line learning journey. The information gathered by all the adults allows us to record and ascertain when specific milestones have been reached and enables staff to identify next steps and possible lines of development for that pupil.. Observations should be discreet and may not always be formally recorded. It is essential for pupil/practitioner dialogue about their key children's progress. All progress is recorded termly on the schools assessment programme.

Parents/carers are invited to a formal parents meeting twice a year, to observe their child in their learning and discuss their progress with their key person and the class teacher. Parents/carers are also invited to contribute to their child's "Unique story" to create a picture of their interests and achievements.

Each child's achievement is summarised at the end of the Reception year, this provides important information for both parents/carers and also the year 1 teacher. This ensures each child leaves the Early Years Foundation Stage with their strengths acknowledged and next steps for learning identified.

### **Inclusion**

In Early Years we personalise the learning for all pupils, and we believe that every child has the right to an education and should be supported in order to achieve their full potential. Early intervention is crucial to children's learning and social development and we work closely with the Inclusion Manager to identify and support pupils with additional needs. We use Developmental Matters as a tool to enable us to provide developmentally appropriate learning for individuals and groups of pupils. We utilise our staff to ensure that children have additional support where it is needed and to provide Speech and Language groups when necessary. We are developing close relationships with our feeder schools, pre-schools and nurseries to ensure that when a pupil starts at Kemsley we are aware of their individual needs and can plan for and support them appropriately.

### **Safeguarding and Welfare**

**"Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them." Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2012**

At Kemsley, the health, safety and wellbeing of the children in our care is paramount. We teach children to be safe, follow rules and respect boundaries. Through our curriculum and activities, children learn to make safe choices.

All staff have child protection training on an annual basis, they know who the Designated Safeguarding Lead is and will refer to this person when it is appropriate to. Staff regularly take part in First Aid training, and at least the minimum number of staff are trained in Paediatric First Aid and accompany all EYFS children on trips.

Staff conduct risk assessments of the inside and outside areas on a daily basis. If and when an accident does occur, procedures are followed to ensure that children are well looked after, their injuries or ailments are treated and their parents are informed, either during the session by telephone or verbally at the end of the session. All accidents are recorded and the accident book is reviewed to identify any reoccurring problems.

Within the nursery there is always a minimum ratio of 1 adult for every 13 children, one of these adults is usually a qualified teacher, where the teacher is not present the ratio is 1 adult to 8 children for 3 year olds.

In Reception there is 1 teacher per 30 children, in addition to this the Reception class have the support of 2 teaching assistants.

### **Key Person**

As required in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2012, every pupil in Early Years has a key person allocated to them and their family.

The key person will:

- Develop strong relationships with the child and their family to build up a picture of the child and their needs and interests
- Support their children with some activities in small groups
- Monitor and record the children's progress in those activities
- Deliver specific activities that will help those children progress and learn
- Be able to discuss the child's learning needs and progress with their parents/carers and contribute to writing their report

### **Home Learning**

In Early Years we believe that learning should be shared between school and home. In Nursery and Reception we provide an individual learning book for each child. The purpose of this book is to provide topic based, developmentally appropriate activities for parents/carers to share with their child at home. It should also be used by families to share their child's home experiences with school.

### **Home School Partnership**

At Kemsley we value the contribution that parents/carers make to their child's education. Parents are a child's first educators and thus the impact of a parent's influence on learning is significant. We have an open door policy in Early Years and at the start of the session, parents are welcome to come into the classroom to settle their child. Staff are usually available for informal chats at both the beginning and end of the day.

We endeavour to arrange a variety of informal opportunities for parents to come and see what their child has been learning, such as assemblies and events. These are excellent opportunities for parents to get involved and observe their child's learning and play, and we always welcome parent's contributions and input.

### **Transition**

Smooth transitions are essential for pupils to feel settled, secure and ready to learn. Prospective parents are invited to various open day events where they have the opportunity to explore the Early Years environment, ask questions and meet the staff. In Nursery, new children have a home visit prior to starting and are invited to bring their child to visit the setting. Parents are given information about the school and a welcome to Nursery booklet. Staff make good use of any information that is shared by previous settings and spend time with the child and their parents to build trusting and positive relationships.

Children in our Nursery have a number of different opportunities to get to know their new teachers during the summer term prior to starting in Reception. These include shared child initiated time, new class visits and coming in for lunch.

On entry to Reception, children may be visited in their pre-school setting where staff are able to have a dialogue with the child as well as their key person to ascertain the child's needs, like and interests. Parents and pupils are invited to a number of play sessions with their new class and teachers during the summer term. There is also an opportunity for parents/carers to attend a meeting to find out about school, meet the head teacher and class teachers and to have a tour of the school. At this meeting parents are informed about uniform, procedures, routines and expectations. We understand that children settle differently, therefore we are flexible and personalise our approach during the settling in periods for Nursery and Reception.

### **The Wider Community**

Children learn through hands-on experiences and we enrich the curriculum by taking part in a range of activities. We make optimum use of the local environment, including the use of our school woodland area, as a tool to enhance learning opportunities for the pupils. We endeavour to arrange trips and/or visitors to the school for each new topic.