

Early Years Policy



Our Vision

We aspire for all our children to become confident, secure, caring individuals who achieve personal success and develop a love of learning.

- ◆ To provide a warm welcoming secure environment for all children
- ◆ To encourage, value and extend the contribution of each child to the school
- ◆ To recognise and celebrate success in everyone and reward through their perseverance
- ◆ To provide a broad, balanced, carefully planned curriculum
- ◆ To build strong collaborative partnerships with families and the local community
- ◆ To encourage and enable the continuing professional development of all staff

Aims of the EYFS

We believe The Foundation Stage is a unique phase in a child's life and is crucial to successful future learning.

Through this policy we aim to provide;

- **Quality Learning Experiences** in all three classrooms so that every child makes good progress
- **A secure foundation** through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each individual child and are assessed and reviewed regularly
- **Partnership** working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- **Equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported

We aim to ensure a consistent approach where parents, carers, teachers and practitioners work together to give children the best possible start. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is the statutory framework which sets standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well; and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children are ready for school; and stimulates the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the foundation for good future progress through school and life. All children at Silverdale work within this framework.

It details four key principles which shape our practice;

A Unique Child

Positive Relationships

Enabling Environments

Learning and Development

A Unique Child:

We recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We understand that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates and join us on their own learning path. All children are included and valued equally.

Settling in and Transition

We like to get to know the new children and families before they start school. In the summer term, staff visit nurseries and talk to the children in a familiar setting. Our on-site nursery have additional links where staff and children visit every week, staff also visit the nursery. We hold a picnic in the summer term for all the parents and children. We also hold an introductory meeting with new parents. This is followed by story times and a 'taster session' for the children to get to know their teachers, explore the new environment and meet other children. In September, the staff make home visits or on site school visits, this is a chance for the parents to talk about their child's needs and interests. The start of the term is slightly staggered so that the children can get used to the new environment and routines in a smaller group.

Inclusion in the Foundation Stage/Special Educational Needs

All children and their families are valued. Children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all provisions available. All children are encouraged to achieve their full potential and planning is in response to the observed needs of all groups and abilities.

Assessments and observations take into account contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential special educational needs is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage and further support can be accessed through our Academy SENCO. Adapted and flexible timetables maybe put into place.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary

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 Early Years Foundation Stage 2014

At Silverdale all children have the right to feel safe. The safety of our children is paramount. We encourage the children to take risks in a safe learning environment by helping them to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children within Early Years. We ensure that our current practice and provision complies with the welfare requirements as stated in the Ofsted Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage.

Our team works collaboratively to;

- Promote the welfare and safeguarding of children.
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.

- Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment are safe and suitable for purpose.
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.

See Safeguarding Children Policy: Safeguarding Children in Education and Child Protection Policy.

Positive Relationships:

At Silverdale, we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents and carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children.

We foster positive relationships with parents through:

- Inviting all parents/carers to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school
- Comprehensive settling in and transition programmes. In September we visit children and families and have a half hour chat to ascertain the children's individual needs and interests.
- Arranging a range of activities such as special occasion celebrations
- Arranging for children to have a staggered start to school, over the first two weeks so that the teacher can welcome each child individually to our academy;
- 'Proud Clouds' and 'Ask Me About' speech bubbles link home achievements with school and home.
- Child interest sheets and boxes are sent home to inform our curriculum and planning.
- Staff are welcoming and available to chat every day.
- Encouraging parents/carers to attend workshops around the curriculum and supporting at home.
- The Academy Newsletter is shared on the website to inform home about learning at school.
- Inviting parents to open afternoons as an informal opportunity to talk and look at learning journeys.
- Two scheduled consultation evenings are held each year. Parents are given written feedback outlining children's achievements and next steps in advance of these meetings. The parents' comments are included in the child's Learning Journal and are used to inform planning and provision
- Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of Reception.
- Next Steps in learning are sent home so support can be given at home as well as school.

Enabling Environments:

We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up to provide development within all areas.

Learning and Development:

We recognise that children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. At Silverdale, we understand that young children achieve well when learning is engaging and well matched to their interests and previous learning. Learning is often play based with increasing challenge and expectations as a child develops.

Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2021.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

The specific areas are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the world
- Expressive arts and design

The Prime Areas are essential for fostering early learning skills and are promoted heavily through our planning and provision. Successful mastery of these skills supports children to achieve well in Specific Areas of Learning.

Weekly and Termly Curriculum planning is in place to promote a wide ranging curriculum where children are challenged with new experiences. It is made up of a range of broad themes and based on our core books and rhymes. These are also often linked to seasonal changes whilst being flexible to respond to observed needs and current interests.

Our planning identifies intended learning, with outcomes, for children working towards the Early Learning Goals, and also for those working towards exceeding levels. We observe and monitor progress with these skills and report these to parents.

Every day, all children have opportunities to develop the **characteristics of effective learning as follows:**

To;

- **Be engaged** – to play and explore to find out and explore, to play with what they know, to be willing to ‘have a go’,
- **Be motivated** – to be active learners to be involved and concentrate, to keep trying and not give up, to enjoy achieving what they set out to do,
- **Think critically** – to create and think critically to have their own ideas, to make links, to choose their own way to do things and be independent.

Assessment

“Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children’s progress, understand their needs and to plan activities and support.”

Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2021

Ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes at Silverdale Primary Academy. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

At the **end of the EYFS**, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels (‘emerging’)

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters [guidance](#)) and in partnership with other local academies, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

Phonics

The development of language and vocabulary is integral to our teaching. We follow the whole school phonics programme of Bug Club Phonics. Children begin their phonics learning on day 1, through activities which are phase one level, which involves lots of listening to sounds outside and indoors. We move onto phase 2, which is when the children learn the letters and sounds. This is a daily programme of interactive experiences that promote phonological awareness and key skills for reading and spelling.

See Academy English/Phonics Policy

Home Learning

At Silverdale, we understand the impact of high quality liaison between home and school and strive to ensure that our pupils are keen to learn at every opportunity. For this reason, we believe that the extension of learning out of the classroom, including the provision of home learning, is a vital addition to a child's learning. In the Reception classes, when the children are settled, challenges and projects are sent home. Regular reading is encouraged at home and this should be recorded in our Home School Diary.

British Values/Academy Values

The fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs are embedded in the Early Years Foundation Stage. We actively seek to promote these values through modelling behaviour, challenging stereotypes and ensuring that our children receive a rich and varied curriculum. When appropriate, we demonstrate democracy in action, and support the decisions that children make and ensure they are given opportunities to develop enquiring minds in an atmosphere where questions are valued. We provide opportunities for children to develop the skills of self-regulation through building their self-knowledge, self-esteem and increase their confidence in their own abilities. We allow children to explore the language of feelings and responsibility, reflect on their differences and understand we are free to have different opinions.

