

# **Sir James Knott Nursery School**



## **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

**“Creating strong and lasting foundations for learning”**

**Certified as reviewed and approved by the Governing Body: October 2016**

**Next review date: October 2019 or as necessary**



## **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

*“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfill their potential. A child’s experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life changes. A secure safe and happy childhood is important in its own right, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. When parents choose to use early years services they want to know the provision will keep their children safe and help them to thrive. The Early Years Foundation Stage is the framework that provides that assurance”.*  
(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2014)

### **Introduction**

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. At Sir James Knott Nursery School we offer 2 year old provision as well as nursery provision.

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Sir James Knott Nursery School we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development.

However as a staff team we also believe that early childhood is valid in itself as part of life. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

### **Aims and Objectives 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 ensure a consistent approach where parents/ carers, teachers and practitioners work together to give children the best possible start.

We aim to support all children to become independent and collaborative learners. We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential.

At Sir James Knott Nursery School, we will;

- Provide a happy, safe, stimulating and challenging programme of learning and development for the children to experience as they begin their lifelong journey.
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for future learning and development in First and Primary Schools and beyond and enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence.

- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress.
- Develop excellent relationships with parents and carers to build a strong partnership in supporting their children.
- Provide a caring and inclusive learning environment which is sensitive to the requirements of the individual child including those who have additional needs.

The early years education we offer our children is based on the following principles;

- It builds upon what our children already know and can do;
- It ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged;
- It offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children, and opportunities and experiences for learning within the indoor and outdoor learning environments;
- It provides a rich and stimulating environment;
- It acknowledges the importance of an effective working partnership between parents, carers and the setting.

The EYFS is the statutory framework which sets standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure 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 within Sir James Knott Nursery School 2 year old provision and Nursery classes work within this framework.

#### **The EYFS is based upon four themes;**

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

#### **A Unique Child**

At Sir James Knott Nursery School we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. 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; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and rewards, to encourage children to develop positive attitudes to learning and to feel included and valued during their time with us.

#### **Settling in and Transition**

In our Nursery we offer 'Settling in Sessions' where children get to know their Key Person, explore the new environment and meet other children. Parents share important information around needs, interests and routines. This is achieved through discussion and completing the 'All about Me' booklet.

We work in close partnership with our local schools to ensure the transition into the next stage of their education is seamless. We actively arrange for teachers to visit our setting to see the child within an familiar environment to them and we discuss children's achievements and next steps for their learning and development.

## **Inclusion in the Foundation Stage/ Special Educational Needs and Disability**

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and believe that every child matters. All children at Sir James Knott Nursery School are treated fairly regardless of race, gender, religion or abilities. All families are valued within our school.

We give our children every opportunity to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. We do this by taking account of our children's age of life experiences when we are planning for their learning.

Assessments 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 the Nursery SENCO and Headteacher.

In the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children so that they make good progress from their starting points. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds. In order to accommodate the individual's particular learning style provision will be planned wherever possible in a multi-sensory way so that various experiences can be accessed by all in the spirit of inclusion.

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 learn effectively;
- Offering a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Employing resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- Planning challenging activities to meet all learners needs;
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary (such as referrals to speech therapy) as necessary.
- Working closely with parents/ carers and other outside agencies to ensure all children's needs are met and we enable them to access the curriculum and make good progress.

*See Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy*

### **Early Years Pupil Premium**

We ensure we quickly identify children who are entitled to Early Years Pupil Premium. Through baseline assessment we ascertain in which areas children are attaining and

how we can further support through resources, expertise or intervention. Progress is rigorously monitored and tracked.

See also North Tyneside SEND Local Offer information

[http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk/browse-sub-cat.shtml?p\\_subjectCategory=1618](http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk/browse-sub-cat.shtml?p_subjectCategory=1618)

## **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 2014)*

At Sir James Knott Nursery School all children have the right to feel and be 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 the Early Years we ensure that our current practice and provision complies with the welfare requirements as stated in the DfE Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage.

Our staff work 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 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 Child Protection Policy*

## **Positive Relationships**

At Sir James Knott Nursery School we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent as a result of strong relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families. Families are given clear guidance on the staff they will meet and their role in the setting.

## **Key Person**

To enable children to make secure attachments to staff and to develop positive relationships, we have a key worker system within our 2 year old provision and Nursery classes.

*See Key Person Policy*

## **Parents as Partners**

We recognise that parents and carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value being partners with them in their child's education through;

- Talking to parents/carers at our open afternoons and induction meetings before their child starts school.
- Providing a handbook of information about commencing Nursery at Sir James Knott Nursery School.
- Providing an induction meeting for Nursery parents/carers to meet with staff to discuss school routines, expectations and to answer any questions parents/carers may have.
- Holding a parent consultation early in the academic year to establish how a child is settling into the school environment.
- Operating an open door policy for parents/carers with any queries or concerns. Conversely, if Foundation staff have concerns about the progress of a child, they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss them.
- Written contact through school newsletters and e mails.
- Inviting parents to attend informal meetings about areas of the curriculum, such as phonics or reading.
- Sharing regularly the children's 'Learning Journey' with parents/carers and valuing the on-going contributions to this from parents/carers.
- Offering two parent/teacher consultation meetings per year at which their child's progress is discussed.
- Sending a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of their time in Nursery.
- Asking parents to sign a generic permission form for visits, food tasting and photographs
- Parents are invited to a range of activities throughout the school year such as assemblies, workshops, Christmas productions and sports day etc.
- Offering opportunities for parents and carers to visit the school on a volunteer basis to assist with the children's learning e.g. hearing readers or attending school trips.
- Offering a range of activities, throughout the year, to encourage specific collaboration between child, school and parents e.g. Dads and Lads reading event, topic outcome events and celebrations.

## **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 learning environment that is set up to provide planned continuous provision which incorporates all areas of learning.

Play-based learning is paramount and children have opportunities to direct their own learning with planned opportunities provided by staff.

Within our indoor and outdoor learning environments children can access a range of self-directed challenges alongside structured adult led learning experiences. The environment encourages a positive attitude to learning and reflects the individual's interests, passions and abilities. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage children to

make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe this encourages independent learning. We ensure that the resources and learning environments are safe to use and checked regularly.

Learning environments are clearly defined and resources are easily accessible so that children can develop as independent learners by following their own schemas and fascinations.

We recognise the importance of open ended experiences to promote purposeful and challenging play. Staff observe and extend this play as appropriate, using inspiring language to promote Sustained Shared Thinking. They further use these observations to enhance provision and extend individual's learning.

## **Learning and Development**

We recognise that children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. At Sir James Knott Nursery School 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.

## **The EYFS Curriculum**

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. None of the areas of learning can be delivered in isolation from the others. Our children's learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skill across a number of learning areas.

They require a balance of adult led and child initiated activities in order for most children to reach the levels required at the end of EYFS. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The three Prime areas are:

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

Staff will also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

Specific Areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding 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.

Children's development levels are assessed and as the year progresses, the balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning, as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas. However, if a child's progress in any of the prime areas gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents/carers and agree how to support the child. Nursery children also participate in a daily phonics sessions, following the guidance in the "Letters & Sounds" document and following the Read Write Inc. programme of work.

### **Characteristics of Effective Learning**

We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning;

#### **Playing and exploring**

Children will have opportunities to investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.

*"Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development".*

Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

#### **Active learning**

Children will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements.

*"Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods".*

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need 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.

#### **Creating and thinking critically**

We encourage and support children to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

*"When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions".*



Children should be given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning. Adults can support children's thinking and help them make connections by showing interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open ended questions. Children can access resources and move around the classroom freely and purposefully to extend their learning.

### **Creative and Critical Thinking**

Children should be given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children's thinking and support them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the indoor and outdoor learning environments to extend their learning.

### **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 2014)*

The Early Years Outcomes and Early Learning Goals provide the basis for assessment throughout the Foundation Stage. Children are quickly assessed on entry to our 2 year old provision and Nursery within the first 4 weeks to establish a baseline. Progress is monitored and tracked using Target Tracker and termly pupil progress meetings take place between the Head Teacher and teachers to reflect upon the data and to identify any interventions that maybe needed for certain children.

Staff make regular assessments of children's learning and these high quality observations are key to the assessment and planning cycle. Next Steps are planned in response to these and shared with parents on Tapestry- our online Learning Journey. Next Steps also include how parents can extend/ consolidate their child's learning at home.

There are several summative assessment points throughout the Foundation Stage;

- Two Year Old Progress Check in conjunction with Health Visitors and parents.
- A Good Level of Development measure is made at the end of the Reception Year.

### **Home Learning**

At Sir James Knott Nursery School, 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 outside of the classroom, including the provision of home learning, is a vital addition to a child's learning.

Within our Nursery provision children's Key Persons may suggest ways to support at home in particular areas of learning. Ideas for learning experiences at home are offered weekly in our "Me and My World Books".

Throughout the year we will also be sending home a library book the child has chosen. We are actively promoting a love of reading and reading for pleasure.

## **Healthy Choices**

All children are provided with a healthy snack each day as well as being given the choice of milk or water. Children can access water at all times throughout the session.

Some of our children stay for school lunches and teas. These menus have been devised looking at the Eat Better Start Better guidelines from the Children's Food Trust. Menus are updated with the seasons; Autumn/ Winter, Spring/ Summer.

## **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 after using the toilet and changing underwear following an accident. In most cases, intimate care is to do with personal hygiene.

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 an individual child. No intimate care is to be given without the written permission of the parent/carer. All parents/carers will be asked to provide this permission when their child joins Sir James Knott Nursery School.

*See Intimate Care Policy*

## **British 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 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.

*See British Values Policy*

## **Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC)**

At Sir James Knott Nursery School we recognise that the personal development of children, spiritually, morally and culturally, plays a significant part in their ability to learn and achieve. It permeates all aspects of the curriculum, supports all areas of learning and contributes to our children's motivation to learn. We therefore aim to provide an

education that provides children with opportunities to explore and develop their own values and beliefs, spiritual awareness, high standards of personal behaviour, a positive caring attitude towards other people, an understanding of their social and cultural traditions and an appreciation of the diversity and richness of different cultures.

It is recognised that such development will be most successful when the values and attitudes promoted by the staff provide a model of behaviour for the children. We believe that our SMSC development contributes towards the individual appreciation of life's experiences and their relationships with others in communities around us.

*See Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) Policy*

### **Monitoring and Review**

It is the responsibility of those working within the 2 year old provision and Nursery classes to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Head Teacher will carry out monitoring as part of the school's monitoring schedule. The Teaching and Learning Sub-Committee of the Governing Body will also form part of this process.