



Edgar Sewter Primary School

Early Years Policy

Date Agreed by the Governing Body:

Review Date : September 2020

"Play is the highest form of research." – Albert Einstein

"It is a happy talent to know how to play." – Ralph Waldo Emerson

Our Saplings Early Years department at Edgar Sewter Primary School is a motivating and nurturing environment, where children are encouraged to lead their learning through play and exploration. We tailor the learning opportunities provided to ensure that every child is making progress from their existing developmental stage.

Planning and Organising

At Edgar Sewter Primary we plan for learning and development in accordance with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Development Matters documents.

Planning will:

- Be written by the class teachers following discussion with the Early Years Team. This is in-line with the whole-school topic approach, but also values the interests of pupils and responds to these.
- Be clear and concise to provide broad and balanced opportunities and experiences which provide scope for flexibility, differentiation and annotation.
- Be informed by observations of children on what they can do and what their next steps are.

Saplings will

- Include a balance of child-initiated, adult-framed and adult-led activities.
- The staff in Saplings also plan for school visits and trips to the local community and surrounding areas and welcome visitors into the school to share their skills and knowledge. This provides the children with first hand, real-life experiences as a foundation to their learning.
- Places for both Nursery and Reception are offered in-line with LEA expectations. Nursery is now able to offer some places as 30 hour provision, including a lunch-club.
- Across the key-stage, high quality transition is planned for, with all children offered a range of events and sessions to attend, before taking up their full-time places.
- Each EYFS class has a full-time teacher and teaching assistant. Nursery has 3 qualified adults for each session.

Teaching and Learning

- We deliver the EYFS curriculum in Nursery and Reception. This continues with transition from Reception into Year 1.
- Teachers and staff in Saplings, value the role of play at all stages of a child's development and recognise that through play, children consolidate the teaching and learning experiences and opportunities they have had.
- We support children in building and developing the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning. Children in the EYFS learn by playing and exploring, being active, and through creative and critical thinking which takes place both inside and outside. There are 3 characteristics of effective learning which help us to focus on and understand how

children learn. These characteristics of learning are expanded here to provide further information and give examples of the ways in which children learn and what they learn.

By playing and exploring children are able to:

- *Find out and explore
- *Use what they know in their play
- *Be willing to have a go

Through active learning children are able to:

- *Be involved and concentrate
- *Keep on trying
- *Enjoy achieving what they set out to do

By creating and thinking critically children are able to:

- *Have their own ideas and evaluate their ideas

Saplings

- *Use what they already know to do new things
 - *Choose ways to do things and find ways to solve problems.
 - Learning is planned through the inside and outside environments, where children can access and select opportunities that interest them and where these opportunities can be revisited. (Continuous Provision). Learning is also planned by setting tasks with clearly specified aims and intentions, using a range of equipment and embedding learning opportunities in the environment, (Enhanced Provision).
 - Communication and Language, Physical Development, Personal Social and Emotional Development, Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding of the World, Expressive Arts and Design and Phonics skills are taught in a fun, practical way and where possible, with links and connections to real life.
 - We ensure that the activities provide opportunities for children's different learning styles, including visual, auditory and kinaesthetic approaches.
 - Activities will be differentiated to cater for a wide range of abilities including S.E.N.D, EAL and talented and more able children.
 - Making choices and decisions are key factors in the development of children's self-esteem and confidence.
 - All staff work together to create a relaxed happy learning environment where high expectations of positive behaviour are encouraged.
 - The children are encouraged to participate in all activities with a high level of involvement and to become active, independent learners.
 - Children's individual learning and development is recorded in individual online Learning Journeys - Tapestry, and in their Teacher-Led books.
- This work and evidence is cross referenced to the Development Matters documents.

Partnership with Parents/Carers:

In Saplings we promote an active partnership with parents/carers. We understand that an effective partnership between school and home will have a positive impact on children's learning and development.

- We offer home visits to families who accept places at our Nursery and to families who are new when children start in Reception. This provides the opportunity for parents/carers and staff to exchange information. Staff make visits to existing settings for new pupils too.

A programme of transition events is offered to all pupils starting in Nursery and Reception, including story times and 'happy hour' sessions, to ensure that pupils and parents are really comfortable with their new settings.

- We hold an introductory meeting for Reception parents/carers prior to starting, where they are given information about the school day and what to expect when their child starts school. Parents/carers are invited to ask questions.
- Parents/carers are invited to attend consultations with staff regarding their child's achievements and possible concerns at set times over the year and at least once a term.
- At the end of the EYFS parents/carers are invited to discuss their child's development levels.
- Daily contact is available as parents are welcomed into the classrooms as part of an open start in the morning. For the Autumn Term until 9.15am, the Spring term until 9.10am and a far more relaxed soft start approach for Nursery. Each child has a Home/School Contact book too.
- Parents are invited to various school events, and regular, (half termly) Stay and Play sessions. The staff also encourage parents to book time when they want to spend the morning in Saplings and this can be accommodated at any time.
- Support and advice from the S.E.N.C.O is available for the parents of children with additional and special needs.
- Parents are invited to help in school and at many of our school events.
- Half-termly news letters are available online and where requested, sent home with information and diary dates of future events.
- Each child in Reception has a Reading Record and a Home/School Communication Book, which are used to communicate between home and school about children's reading development.

Transition

All children have several opportunities to visit the school throughout the summer term before the September that they start, whether they are Nursery or Reception age. Saplings staff also make visits to the setting that the pupils are currently attending. Parents/Carers and staff from those settings are also encouraged to come and visit or stay on transition days.

Network links are made regularly between the main feeder settings and Saplings.

Assessment and record keeping

Assessment in Nursery and Reception is an ongoing procedure using many techniques e.g. tracking, observations, through drawing, mark making etc, and photographs/videos which are linked to the EYFS and used to inform the Early Years' Foundation Stage Development levels.

- A baseline EYFS profile made for the Reception and Nursery children in the first 6 weeks of school.
- In Nursery and Reception, class teachers identify 'next steps' for each child, in their learning and development. These are shared with parents/carers regularly and are recorded as NS.

Saplings staff use Scholarpack to monitor progress in all areas of development, in line with the rest of the school.

Tapestry

All Saplings staff are trained to use Tapestry and to record all observations along with connected media and next steps. All Saplings staff have key children.

Parents and staff have password access and both are responsible for adding observations. Assessments are not shown on parent's access and are shared in person at regular parent's evenings and written reports.

The E-safety of the pupils is our top priority and we are governed by the terms and conditions of Tapestry. Parents are also asked to sign an Image Consent document. If a family has separated, both parents can be connected on Tapestry to their child.

We encourage child minders to be attached to their children's Learning Journeys for further observations.

Tapestry pages give the option to add replies to observations so that parents can communicate with their child's key worker.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- The Early Years' Foundation Stage has a Leader who oversees planning, teaching, provision and assessment. The leader also implements long term plans and risk assessments.
- The head-teacher, the deputy head-teacher and subject leaders observe and evaluate opportunities and experiences that are provided for the children.
- The head-teacher monitors assessment.
- The class teacher will evaluate their own practice on a daily basis.
- The EYFS profile will be updated regularly throughout the year, through the use of Tapestry and Scholarpack. Pupil Progress meetings will plan and evaluate staffing needs and intervention needs and outcomes of this will be planned for.
- The EYFSP will be moderated by the SLT and when necessary, outside agencies and the cluster group and outcomes of this will be planned for.