



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage is the statutory framework which applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Sir Martin Frobisher Academy we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Requirement Framework for Early Years 2017.

We understand that we are required 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 is safe and suitable for purpose
- ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

At Sir Martin Frobisher Academy, children are able to join the Reception class from the September in the academic year that they turn five.

Play-based learning is paramount and children direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities provided by staff. We will enhance play and extend, as needed, to further individual learning. We enable the children to begin the process of becoming active learners by learning through play, providing an enabling environment and outdoor provision. Children are able to make choices to encourage independence, exploration and use creativity. We endeavour to ensure that children learn and develop well and keep healthy and safe. We aim to support children in their learning through teaching and providing a range of experiences through a balance of adult/child activities. We encourage children to gain a broad range of skills and have positive relationships that provide the right foundation for good progress through school and in life.

We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel motivated, confident, secure, challenged, engaged and think for themselves. The children have daily access to planned continuous provision.

Welfare

It is important to us that all children in our academy are safe. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all our children. 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. We aim to educate children on boundaries and enable them to contribute to rules, in order to help them develop an understanding of why rules exist. Children should be allowed to take risks, however they need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

All staff aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. Where possible, visits are undertaken by the Early Years teachers and Early Years Practitioners. Staff from Preschools and settings are welcome to Sir Martin Frobisher Academy to support transition and observe practice.

Equal Opportunities

All members of the school are treated as all, taking account of gender, ability,

individuals. We aim to meet the needs of ethnicity, culture, religion, language,

special educational needs, disability, and social circumstances. All staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect cultural diversity and the need to prepare pupils for life in a diverse and multi-faith society.

Inclusion/Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

All children and their families are valued at Sir Martin Frobisher Academy. Children are treated as individuals and have appropriate access to all provisions available. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. 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. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage. Any concerns will also be raised with the Academy & SENCo. 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

Importance of play

We recognise the importance of children's play. It is an essential and rich part of their learning process, supporting them in all areas of development. Play is a powerful motivator, it encourages children to be creative and to develop their ideas, understanding and language. Play is also flexible and able to suit the preferred learning style of the child. It can provide multiple ways for children to learn a variety of different skills and concepts. 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, 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 a positive attitude to learning

Through play, our children explore and develop the learning experiences that help them make sense of the world. They practice and build up their ideas, learn how to control themselves, and begin to understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively, both alongside other children, and on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They may express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

The EYFS setting at Sir Martin Frobisher Academy provides both structured and unstructured play opportunities inside and outside. These activities are designed to engage children in practical, first-hand experiences which will support children to discover, explore, investigate and develop their personal interests and areas of curiosity. It helps children to make sense of the world around them as they begin to understand specific concepts. Play opportunities are also set up to provide children with opportunities to apply newly acquired knowledge, demonstrating their skills and level of understanding.

The Learning Environment

The Early Years classroom is organised to allow children to explore, follow their interests and learn securely and safely. Children have the freedom to learn, involve themselves in learning opportunities, make decisions and self-regulate, immerse in play, be active or choose quieter moments. The room covers all learning aspects, where children can find and locate equipment and resources independently. The Early Years has its own enclosed outdoor area which has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales. It offers the children the ability to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan specific activities and resources for the children to access in order to help them develop in certain areas of learning.

The Development Matters in Early Years Foundation Stage is the guidance used to support children's learning and development from birth to five years

The Four Themes

The principles which guide the work of all at Early Years staff are grouped into four themes: These four guiding themes work together to underpin effective practice in the delivery of the EYFS and lie at the heart of all Early Years Foundation Stage provision.

- **A Unique Child** - every child is a competent learner from birth, who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- **Positive Relationships** – children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person.
- **Enabling Environments** – the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning.
- **Learning and Development** – children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. All areas of Learning and Development are equally important and inter-connected.

Religious Education and PSHE & C is also taught in the reception class following national and school-based guidelines.

The Characteristics of Effective Learning

We support children by using the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning. The characteristics of effective learning run through and underpin all seven areas of learning and development, representing processes rather than outcomes.

Playing and exploring – engagement

- Finding out and exploring
- Playing with what they know
- Being willing to 'have a go'

Active learning – motivation

- Being involved and concentrating
- Keeping trying
- Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

Creating and thinking critically –

- - Having their own ideas
- Making links
- Choosing ways to do things

Learning and Development

Teachers, Learning Support Assistants and Early Years Practitioners promote the seven areas of learning and development of which there are three prime areas and four specific areas.

The three **Prime** areas are:

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

These areas begin to develop quickly in response to relationship and experiences. The prime areas support learning in other areas

The four **Specific** areas are:

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

These specific areas include essential skills and knowledge. They grow out of the prime areas and provide contexts for learning.

The Early Years Foundation Stage guidance supports what adults can do and it also provides and indicates learning that may take place between age bands and aspects of areas of development. These are not fixed age boundaries and suggest a typical range of development.

If a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents and/or carers and agree how to support the child. At times specialist professional support may be required and this will be discussed with parent/carers in order to support the child in the best way possible.

All Practitioners are trained and supported to refer to the EYFS. The Early Years Phase Leader monitors, supervises, role models and supports colleagues. EYFS information sessions are available for parents/carers to become familiar with the curriculum. They are also invited to attend regular review meetings and access their child's profile through Tapestry, an online communication system.

Assessment

Through careful assessments and observations, including information provided by parents and other settings, children's development is recognized and monitored. These observations are recorded in the children's individual Learning Journals on Tapestry. We help children work towards their knowledge, skills and understanding to achieve their Early Learning Goals at the end of the academic year in which they turn five.

Observation

Children within the Early Years are regularly assessed and observed to ensure that Practitioners capture each child's progress and learning. Typically, observations are carried out during Child Initiated Learning (CIL) activities, so that children are in an independent environment which best demonstrates what they have learned. Each week the EYFS team will observe the children across the seven areas of learning (both prime and specific areas) and upload learning to Tapestry for parents and staff to see and engage with.

Each child will be part of objective-led planning, and children will also be observed and assessed; this will be in addition to any focussed observations taking place.

Trackers

We track a child's stages of development and make best fit judgements based on observations, evidence and shared information from parents. We track half-termly and look at evidence to indicate if learning is emerging, developing or is secure in the age band and aspect of the prime or specific areas of learning. We use this information to plan a child's next steps.

Review meeting/open evenings

The Class Teacher and parents/carers will meet termly to discuss the child's wellbeing and involvement and progress. It gives an opportunity to discuss interests, raise concerns and plan how best to support. These appointments are arranged with the teacher.

Parents as Partners

At Sir Martin Frobisher Academy we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families. We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise their role, and their future role, in educating the children and value working in partnership in many ways to support a child's learning and development. This includes:

- Offering visits, open days, events and managing enquires
- Providing information/induction sessions for parents where they receive the Information packs and Academy information which highlights start and finish times, uniform and informs the parents of the Academy vision and aims.
- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our Academy, usually through Home Visits.
- Ensuring children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school, during home visits, transition and transfer sessions.
- Encouraging parents to share and discuss queries or concerns with their child's class teacher.
- Offering parents / carers regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our Early Years class and allowing free access to the children's 'Learning journals' online and classroom displays.
- Inviting parents / carers to make comments relating to the children's achievements.
- Providing log in details to allow parents to post on the online diary, comment and share observations on Tapestry.
- Inviting parents to attend informal meetings and providing information about other areas of the curriculum, e.g. Early Reading, Maths and Phonics.
- Providing regular review meetings to discuss the child's progress and next steps. Parents also receive a written report on their child's attainment and progress during and at the end of each school year.

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- Providing parents/carers with other relevant messages/information including, curriculum guidance booklets relating to the half-termly topic/themes, invitations to help or invitations to join sessions as an observer.
- Providing opportunities to talk to the Early Years team and representatives from other areas of school life, e.g. PTA, Governors.
Gaining information from parents through the completion of an admissions form, including gaining permission for visits out of nursery/school, gaining permission for photographs to be taken for assessment purposes and gaining permission for using the internet.
- Organising a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents / carers, these may include: Stay and Play sessions, Class assemblies and Sports Day.
- Providing a website with vital information, including contact details for school staff or the appropriate member of the Senior Leadership Team, policies and procedures etc.

Objective-led planning/adult directed

As children in Reception prepare for their transition to Year One in the Summer Term, there will be more focussed adult-directed learning opportunities where children are withdrawn within small groups to replicate the type of learning that the children will need to be familiar with in September.

Sir Martin Frobisher Academy uses objective-led planning in order to provide specific learning opportunities and assessment opportunities for individual pupils. For example, there may be a focus on counting one more or one less as part of the mathematical development during a given week. The teacher will seek out a child or group of children as part of their Child Initiated Learning (CIL) and work alongside them doing whatever it is they are doing, in order to bring counting one more or less into their learning. This ensures that children relate their learning in a context, and is led by their own interests.

It is the skill of the Early Years team to provide and enhance the environment to enable each child to make good or better progress.

Reading

Sir Martin Frobisher Academy uses the Read, Write, Inc programme to teach phonics and reading. Children will be taught the first 30 sounds (set 1) and how to blend. Any child who is blending independently could begin reading Ditties and will therefore start to bring these home to read. Each child will be heard individually each week by an adult (on a rota where one week is the Class Teacher, and the other week is the Early Years Practitioner).

As children become more fluent and able readers and when they are developmentally ready, guided reading groups will be formed whereby a teacher will take a group of readers together and work with them specifically. This will be on a rota with individual reading opportunities.

Transition from Pre-school/Nursery settings

During the Summer Term prior to a child's entry into the Reception class, the following procedures have been put into place to ensure successful transition into Sir Martin Frobisher Academy:

- Parents are invited to a meeting to ensure they know about school procedures, discuss the transition process and have the opportunity to ask questions and learn about school life.
- Children are invited to visit their reception class (where possible).

- Members of staff make visits to feeder pre-school/nursery settings. The number of meetings/visits will depend on the child's needs and how much information gathering is required in order to support the child's transition.
- Home Visits may be carried out, where parents and children can feel at ease in their own home and are able to chat to the class teacher or Early Years Practitioner in a less formal way.

Additional telephone calls or face to face transitions can be organised to meet the needs of those children who may require further support transitioning to school.

From Reception Class to Key Stage 1

During the final term in Reception, the Early Years Profile (EYP) is finalised for each child. The EYP provides parents and carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1.

The Profile includes on-going observations, relevant records held by the setting, discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

Each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals. The profile indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are exceeding expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). Year One teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This informs the dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1.

Health and Safety (refer to statutory requirements and other relevant policies)

At Sir Martin Frobisher Academy there are clear procedures for assessing risk which includes procedures for keeping children safe at all time during outings and for any aspects of the environment or provision that may require a further risk assessment.

In line with the Early Years statutory framework 2017, at Sir Martin Frobisher Academy we undertake:

- Safer recruitment of staff, including suitable qualification and Enhanced Disclosure Barring checks carried out
- Information and personal records are stored and locked away.
- Secure Access is maintained at all times and all visitors have to sign in using an electronic sign in system at the school reception.
- We follow strict protocol for collection of children. All persons allowed to collect a child must be shared with the school. This is then logged for staff to access at any time. Changes of day-to-day collections must be passed to the office team who will then inform the Early Years Team.
- Staff:Child ratios are arranged to support the needs and safety of children.
- Fire procedures are in place and equipment fitted and tested regularly. Risk assessments to identify and manage potential risks of the environment or equipment are carried out. Cosh procedures and PAT testing electrical equipment is followed.

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- The Managing Medical Needs Policy ensures that there are systems in place for obtaining information about a child's needs. Medicines will not be administered unless there are exceptional circumstances, and then only if prescribed. (See Supporting Children with Medical Needs Policy). All EYFS staff have undertaken Paediatric First Aid training. Training is provided for staff where the administration of medicine requires medical or technical knowledge. A written record is kept each time a medicine is administered to a child and the child's parents and/or carers are informed on the same day.
- Food and drink is provided and any special health or dietary requirement followed. Food safety hygiene training is carried out and adequate provision provided.
- Children's dietary needs are recorded and acted upon when required. Fresh drinking water is available at all times as well as healthy snacks.
- Visits are risk assessed and the Educational Visits Policy followed.
- All EYFS staff are paediatric first aiders and are accessible at all times and a record of accidents and injuries is kept.
- We practise our fire and emergency evacuation procedures half-termly. Our E-Safety policy states how mobile phones and cameras are to be used and stored securely whilst children are in the setting. Cameras that are used in the School must not be used for personal use by staff or visitors.
- Staff undergo relevant training, regular performance management and professional development.
- We follow the governments statutory guidance and refer to guidance including *Working together to safeguard Children*, *Prevent Duty* and *Keeping children safe in Education*. (See Child Protection Policy)