


Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



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Spring Meadow Infant and Nursery School - Our vision and values

At Spring Meadow our children are kind and resilient young people who acquire the skills and knowledge they need to succeed and compete in the diverse world in which they live. They are independent explorers who are curious and proactive, always seeking out answers to new questions and ideas. Their kindness and compassion enable them to live and grow in a safe and considerate world.

In the Early Years, we are aspirational as well as inspirational. Challenge is always present and in our safe and secure setting children feel confident to give new things a try. The children are supportive of each other and help their peers to succeed when these challenges present themselves. Our children are wonderful individuals with individual needs and we always ensure these are met and every child and family feels fully included at all times.

Our EYFS guiding principles

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2021 statutory framework of the EYFS. There are four guiding principles that shape the practice in our early years settings.

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be brave and resilient, curious and questioning, kind, confident and self-assured from a very young age
- Every child learns to be strong and independent through positive relationships which are nurtured throughout the early years.
- Every child learns and develops well in enabling environments, in which the experiences meet their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners, parents and carers.
- The EYFS framework covers the education and care of all children in early years' provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

This policy aims to ensure that:

- Leaders provide a curriculum that is ambitious and designed to give all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND, the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life.
- Consistent use of high quality assessment, focused planning approaches and high quality teaching and learning ensures every child makes good progress from their starting points.
- We have close working partnerships between practitioners, parents and carers.
- Every child is included and supported through the equality of opportunity we provide.

Curriculum

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and interconnected. 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 early years curriculum at Spring Meadow teaches key skills through these seven areas of learning, ensuring that there is a clear skills development from Nursery into Reception and then into year one and beyond.

We follow a planned set of topics from the Primary Knowledge Curriculum which are highly aspirational in terms of both knowledge and vocabulary. The knowledge acquired then inspires curiosity and creativity in the children in order for them to continue their own learning within the environment. The selection of high quality English texts in conjunction with the Talk 4 Writing approach provides a variety of opportunities for expanding and enriching the children's spoken vocabulary and developing language skills.

Focused teaching and continuous provision

Situated in a calm and welcoming environment, the provision on offer to the children on a continuous basis supports the learning and development of each area of learning. It is enhanced to reflect the topics and texts being taught and further develop purposeful play linked to the children's emerging need and interests. A mixture of teacher led and child-initiated learning opportunities are introduced through regular Learning Walks during which the children are encouraged to identify their own challenges and lines of enquiry. These challenges are revisited through Learning Talks so as to encourage the children to develop some ownership of their own learning. Practitioners support this process by responding to each child's emerging needs and interests through sustained shared thinking approaches which develop active engagement and concentration. The aim is that this approach stands the children in good stead for the transition and expectations in Key Stage 1.

In addition to the indoor and outdoor provision provided the children also have the opportunity to learn in the Forest School environment through sessions led by Qualified leaders. These sessions provide opportunities for children to develop self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation, empathy, and their social skills. These are developed through a variety of activities for example, experiencing seasonal change, cooking on open fires, building dens and shelters and looking for and identifying wildlife

Phonics: Nursery activities are provided within seven aspects to support the children with being able to: Listen attentively, enlarge their vocabulary, speak confidently to adults and other children, discriminate phonemes, reproduce audibly the phonemes they hear, in order, all through the word, use sound-talk to segment words into phonemes.

Phonics: Reception The Read Write Inc phonics program is used as a whole school approach to the teaching of phonics. This ensures consistency for all children and enables good progress from one year group to the next. The children are taught to read and identify letter sounds alongside developing blending skills. Phonics teaching begins from the first day that children begin school at Spring Meadow and continues daily with timetabled lessons. For those children who are not yet ready to join whole class lessons on the carpet, teaching takes place within the provision in a way which matches the child's individual needs.

Reading: Nursery children are exposed to a wide variety of reading books, both fiction and non-fiction. Teachers use key texts to drive the topic of the week, key reading areas as well as communication spaces enable children to access books for pleasure throughout their time in nursery. Practitioners model how a reader behaves so children can copy these, key new language is identified and shared with the children to enhance their understanding of new words. Story sacks provide resources to support play and a love of reading and parents are encouraged to take these home to enable parents and children to enjoy the reading experience.

Reading: Reception children continue to access a wide variety of reading books in the environment as well as those linked to the current topic. Children are given reading books which match the phonics teaching so as to practise their blending skills and reading of sight vocabulary. However, the love and joy of reading is the absolutely key essential factor and class teachers work to ensure develop an enjoyment of books, both fiction and non-fiction. Library books are chosen for enjoyment from the school library once a week.

Power Maths is the scheme upon which the daily maths teaching is based. Children develop their understanding of numbers and mathematical concepts through engaging, practical teacher led learning opportunities as well as group or 1:1 tasks.

Assessment

At Spring Meadow Infant and Nursery School, daily assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff work hard to develop positive relationships with the children which ensures observations of pupils identify their level of achievement and attainment, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape planning and next steps. Children in Reception undertake the Reception Baseline as directed by the Government. In addition to being assessed on entry, Children are assessed and their progress tracked throughout their time in EYFS. Children's progress is assessed regularly against Development Matters and can be seen in their individual learning evidence records and on our online assessment programme.

At the end of the EYFS a child will be assessed Against the Early Learning Goals. Most children will meet the expected standard. Some children will exceed and be challenged to work at a greater depth as they move through the Reception Year. Some children have differing needs and challenges and not meet the required expectations at the end of the Reception Year. If this is the case, parents and carers will be kept informed at all times so we can work together to enable the child to make the best progress possible. Parents and carers are provided with a comprehensive body of knowledge about their child through extended parent consultations, workshop learning events and open sessions during the school day as well as end of year reports.

Planning

The Development Matters Document provides vital information about teaching and learning – one of the key areas are the Characteristics of Effective Learning, these are:

- **playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- **active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

In order to secure these vital characteristics teachers must:

- Provide a long term overview of coverage of all areas across an academic year, these include the appropriate Development Matters statements.
- Produce and adapt plans on a weekly basis to ensure that teacher led learning and opportunities for learning within the environment meet the current needs and interests of the children.

Supportive practice

Early years staff meet weekly to discuss the needs and achievements of the children and measures which need to be taken in order to extend them further. All staff will have access to plans and have the opportunity to contribute to 'feeding forward' planning. Staff will have opportunities to be 'outward' facing and visit different settings for CPD purposes and, in line with statutory requirements, half termly supervisions take place to support staff CPD and well-being. Support from local authority advisors will be provided through meeting with Early Years staff and through local networking. The Early Years lead will meet regularly with the Headteacher and the designated Early Years governor.

Home activities and learning opportunities

Parent workshop sessions are provided as informal introductions to the approaches used in school for the teaching of phonics and maths, and regular support is offered through the use of QR codes linking to in school learning, and 'ways to help' information.

Safeguarding and welfare procedures

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy which can be located on the school's website. www.springmeadow.cambs.sch.uk

Nursery Provision

Our Nursery set up under Section 27 of the Community Powers, which means it is run by the school as a Pritvae/Voluntary/Independent setting. The Nursery Managers are Mrs Karen Hornsey and Mrs Amanda Smith, they job share the role and deputise for each other. The Nursery follow the same policies and procedures as the school. The SENDCo (and ENCO) is Mrs Libby Cross. The Designated Safeguarding Lead is the Headteacher (currently the interim Headteacher is Maria Higgins) and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is Lindsey Oakey. The Nursery cares for children between the ages of three and four years of age.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the EYFS leadership team.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.