South Avenue Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Version (Date): **September 2026**

Review (Date): **September 2027**

Member of Staff Responsible: **Miss Sills**

This document provides an overview of the policy, philosophy and practice in the EYFS at South Avenue Primary School. It outlines our intentions in the EYFS and how we implement this within our provision.

Aim

At South Avenue Primary School, we are strongly committed to the value that the Early Years Foundation stage plays in the development of children's learning. We aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children and strive to give them a strong foundation for their future learning. We are dedicated to ensuring that our children develop as independent and collaborative learners. We endeavor to develop a deep love of learning and a thirst for enquiry. It is essential that we provide a curriculum that enables each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically and creatively to their full potential. We ensure all children have a secure and confident start to their school life.

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework for group and school-based providers, dated 13 July 2026 and effective from 1 September 2026.

We adhere to the statutory framework and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings;

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**.
- Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents/carers.
- **Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates**.

A Unique Child

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 times and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion/Special Educational Needs (SEND)

In EYFS we aim to identify the needs of pupils with SEND as early as possible. This is most effectively done by gathering information from parents, education, health and care services and nurseries prior to the child's entry into the school.

- Monitor the progress of all pupils in order to aid the identification of pupils with SEND. Continuous monitoring of those pupils with SEND by their teachers will help to ensure that they are able to reach their full potential.
- Make appropriate provision which endeavor to overcome barriers to learning and ensure pupils with SEND have full access to the National Curriculum. This will be coordinated by the SENDCo and Inclusion Leader and will be carefully monitored and regularly reviewed in order to ensure that individual targets are being met and all pupils' needs are catered for.
- Work with parents to gain a better understanding of their child, and involve them in all stages of their child's education. This includes supporting them in terms of understanding SEND procedures and practices, providing regular reports on their child's progress, and providing information on the provisions for pupils within the school as a whole, and the effectiveness of the SEND Policy and the school's SEND work.
- Work with and in support of outside agencies when the pupils' needs cannot be met by the school alone. Create a school environment where pupils feel safe to voice their opinions of their own needs. This will be made easier by carefully monitoring the progress of all pupils. Pupil participation is a right. This will be reflected in decision-making but also encouraged through wider opportunities for participation in school life.

For more information about SEND at South Avenue Primary School please see our SEND policy and information report.

Parents as Partners

At South Avenue Primary School, we recognise that children learn to be strong in independence from having secure relationships in place. 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 the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

• talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school through home visits and nursery visits.

• encouraging parents to support their child's independence by providing them with information of functional tasks which will help their child to prepare for school

• Supporting children through the transition from pre-school to Reception, with the children attending transition stay and play sessions in the Summer term before they are due to start school. Also, all families are offered a home visit to have a more individual conversation with the Reception staff. Thus, enabling staff and parents to get to know each other, as well as supporting the children to settle in their new environment.

• Inviting all parents to regular home learning afternoons and workshops during the Reception year in order to detail how we aim to work with their child particularly in relation to Communication and Language, Physical Development, Phonics, Literacy and Maths.

• Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents twice a year at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. Parents also receive a full report about their child's attainment and progress. Teachers have an open-door policy and are available to see parents daily before school and after school as appropriate. Where face to face meetings cannot take place telephone calls are offered.

• Providing parents opportunities to celebrate their child's learning and development by coming into school to share their work and achievements whenever possible.

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 with planned continuous provision and enhanced with discrete learning opportunities, allowing imagination to grow. Effective learning builds and extends upon prior learning and following children's interest. This planning is informed by observations of the children to ensure we follow and build upon their current interests and experiences. Play based learning is paramount and children direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities provided by staff. Staff enhance play, scaffold and extend as needed to further individual learning and continually provide next step challenges.

The importance of play

'Play is fundamental to young children's learning and development. Children learn best when they are actively involved in enjoyable, absorbing and stimulating activities'

At South Avenue Primary School, we are aware of how children learn and develop most effectively in the Early Years. We know that effective education requires an appropriate curriculum and practitioners who understand and are able to implement the curriculum requirements. We believe that the most useful learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage arises from play; which allows children to develop understanding and gain confidence in their own abilities almost as a by-product of having fun.

Play provides an opportunity for children to understand themselves, their culture and language, other people in the world and make sense of real-life situations. Play provides opportunities for exploration, investigation, problem solving and for children to practise their skills. It provides opportunities for them to represent their familiar experiences and use what they have learned in a variety of ways.

At South Avenue Primary school our major focus is that play needs to be child-initiated in order that children can begin to make their own decisions and select what they do. Each day the children take part in child-initiated sessions during both the morning and afternoon. Whilst the planning for these sessions is based upon the children's interest, we also ensure that a balance is provided across the curriculum.

We value the importance of play at South Avenue Primary School because;

- It is the natural and most enjoyable way for children to learn
- It is an essential part of enabling the learning process to be effective
- It allows children to develop, consolidate and apply new skills and ideas, investigate, experiment and solve problems, explore and make sense of the world around them. They learn to make choices, decisions and to take risks without fear of failure.
- Enable children to be in charge of their own learning
- Enables children to develop their personal qualities and attitudes and to develop social skills and form relationships
- It allows children to reap the benefits of learning both indoors and outdoors

At South Avenue Primary School, we believe that play should have a balance between child-initiated and adult led tasks. The adult led tasks are planned and purposeful in order to extend and support learning. We commit a great deal of time to ensuring that learning takes place in a well-structured environment and within a meaningful context.

Structure of the EYFS

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At South Avenue Primary School, children join the Reception class in the year that they turn five. We have two Reception classes at South Avenue Primary School and they are taught by qualified primary school teachers. The school does not provide nursery provision. The classes also have a full time, experienced EYFS teaching assistant. Extra teaching assistants are employed for children who have an Education Health and Care Plan.

Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2026 EYFS statutory framework.

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 prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 **specific areas**:

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

Planning and Teacher initiated activities will reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. We believe it essential that the Characteristics of Effective Learning underpin all our Early Years Practice.

The **Characteristics of Effective Learning** are;

- Playing and exploring (engagement) – children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go' through hands on activities, recreating and representing in their own play and developing narrative thought, appreciation of different perspectives and symbolic thinking.
- Active learning (motivation) – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements, supporting resilience and developing motivation.
- Creating and thinking critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for solving problems and being inventive.

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities based on a theme; which is equally flexible to meet the needs of the children. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, loosely guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

At South Avenue Primary School, we focus strongly on the 3 prime areas within the first term of school as they form the foundation for successful learning in the other 4 specific areas. The 3 prime areas reflect the key skills and capacities all children need to develop and learn effectively. As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more equal focus on all areas of learning and increased adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1.

A range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences are provided, in which children explore, think creatively and are active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development. This is carried out through a series of themes or topics which are planned using the EYFS documents.

Children have whole class and small group sessions which include times for daily phonics learning using 'Twinkl Phonics', Mathematics and Literacy, including shared reading and writing.

The Curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the EYFS.

'Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities'

Assessment

Baseline assessment

On entry to school all children will complete both the DfE baseline assessment requirement- Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) focusing on their Literacy and Mathematical knowledge. All assessments are undertaken through observation. This Baseline assessment will inform future differentiated planning for each child and help to monitor individual progress.

Formative assessment

At South Avenue Primary School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. As part of our daily practice, staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning.

Summative assessment

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 in the form of a written report and through discussion.

The profile is moderated internally and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

All the information about the child including their end of year assessments against the profile are shared in detail with the Year one teachers as part of our transition process.

Transition

At South Avenue Primary School, we value all the opportunities to share information and learn about the children from those people who know them best, therefore we ensure we provide a comprehensive transition period to enable staff, parents and children as many options as possible to meet and share information.

From Pre-school to Reception

During the Summer term prior to a child's entry into the Reception year, the following procedures have been put into place to ensure successful transition;

- Parents are invited to a meeting in school, to ensure they know about school procedures, allocation of classes and any information they may wish to express. This also provides an opportunity to meet with our uniform supplier to discuss any queries and place orders. Also, there is an opportunity to meet our school dinner supplier.
- Reception class teachers offer 'Meet and the teacher' sessions
- The new children are invited in to a 'stay and play' session in their allocated class; firstly, with their parents and then on their own.
- Members of staff from South Avenue Primary School make visits to as many feeder settings as possible. Telephone conversations and reciprocal visits are also welcomed.

From Reception Class to Key Stage 1

During the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile 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. The Profile includes on-going observation, all 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 not yet reaching expected levels; Emerging. Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report and a meeting takes place between teachers to talk through the child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key Characteristics of Effective Learning. The pupils get opportunities to meet their Year 1 teacher and their new classroom throughout the Summer Term so that relationships can be formed. Constructive dialogue occurs between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs. This then assists with the planning of activities in Year 1. These discussions continue into their first term in Year 1 and often beyond.

Safeguarding and Welfare Procedures

We recognise that 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 follow safeguarding and welfare requirements to provide a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence.
We make sure that the appropriate statutory staff:child ratios are maintained in our setting to meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety:

- We comply with infant class size legislation and have at least 1 teacher per 30 pupils.
- We have at least 1 person with a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate on the premises and available at all times when children are present, including on outings. This PFA certificate is renewed every 3 years as required.

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in reception by talking to children about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- Visiting the dentist
- The importance of brushing your teeth
- We provide healthy snack choices to promote good oral health.

From 1 September 2026, the school has regard to the Department for Education's guidance on children screen use in early years settings. Screen use in Reception is limited, carefully planned, age-appropriate and linked to a clear learning, communication or accessibility purpose. Children do not access screen content without adult oversight, and screens do not replace high-quality interaction, practical play, stories, physical activity or outdoor learning. Appropriate assistive technology for pupils with SEND is considered according to individual need.

The school safeguarding arrangements set out how mobile phones, cameras and other electronic devices with imaging or sharing capabilities may be used. Digital content is checked before use; advertising, autoplay, algorithm-driven content and unsuitable artificial intelligence tools are avoided in Reception.

The school follows the safer-recruitment and suitability requirements in the EYFS framework and Keeping Children Safe in Education. Staff and regular volunteers working directly with Reception children must have the appropriate identity, reference, enhanced DBS and, where eligible, children

barred-list checks before starting. Occasional supervised helpers are managed through the school risk-assessment and volunteer procedures. Staff and prospective staff must disclose relevant information that may affect their suitability, subject to the legal rules on protected convictions and cautions.

Banned dog breeds within section 1 of the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991, including the XL Bully type, must not be kept or present on the school premises at any time, including where a dog has a certificate of exemption.

The detailed safer-sleep requirements for children under two are not applicable because the school provides Reception provision only. If a Reception pupil needs to rest or sleep because of a medical condition, disability or other identified need, an individual plan and risk assessment will specify safe supervision and care arrangements.

When Reception pupils attend school-run breakfast or after-school care, the safeguarding and welfare requirements in section 3 of the EYFS framework continue to apply. The learning, development and assessment requirements in sections 1 and 2 do not apply to wraparound-only care for children who normally attend Reception or an older class during the school day.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the EYFS Lead in conjunction with SLT.

Following review, the policy will be submitted to the Governing Board for formal approval. The Governing Board will approve the policy on an annual basis.

Linked Policies:

- **Safeguarding policy and procedures:** See child protection and safeguarding policy
- **Procedure for responding to illness:** See health and safety policy
- **Administering medicines policy:** See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
- **Emergency evacuation procedure:** See health and safety policy
- **Procedure for checking the identity of visitors:** See child protection and safeguarding policy
- **Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children:** See child protection and safeguarding policy
- **Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints:** See complaints policy
- **Children's screen use and use of mobile phones, cameras and electronic devices:** See online safety policy, child protection and safeguarding policy, and staff code of conduct
- **Safer recruitment, staff suitability and volunteer checks:** See child protection and safeguarding policy, safer-recruitment procedures, and single central record
- **Banned dog breeds and premises controls:** See health and safety, visitor, and lettings arrangements
- **Safeguarding and welfare during school-run wraparound care attended by Reception pupils:** See child protection and safeguarding policy and wraparound care procedures