

Selworthy Special School

# Policy for Early Years Foundation Stage

Ratified by Local Governance Committee  
Date: January 2020

**Policy Title:** Policy for Early Years Foundation Stage

**Date of Policy:** July 2021

**Date of Review:** February 2022

**Contents:**

1. Aims	3
2. Legislation	3
3. Structure of the EYFS	3
4. Curriculum	4
5. Assessment	6
6. Working with parents	6
7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures	7
8. Monitoring arrangements	7
Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS	

## **1. Aims**

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
- Close partnership working between practitioners and with parents/carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

## **2. Legislation**

This policy is based on requirements set out in the 2022 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/974907/EYFS\\_framework\\_-\\_March\\_2021.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/974907/EYFS_framework_-_March_2021.pdf)

This document also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

## **3. Structure of the EYFS**

Our Early Years classes are based at the Oakhill Campus. There are currently two classes with mixed year groups. Careful thought and consideration are always given to organise classes, with safety being paramount.

All learners are entitled to access full time education upon entry, from the age of four.

Each learner and their family have a bespoke transition package of support on confirmation of placement and then upon entry. Careful and sensitive planning ensures the best outcomes and a smooth transition.

We ensure emotional wellbeing through building caring and supportive relationships from the outset.

Prior to arrival at Selworthy, planned pre-entry school meetings are held. At these meetings we identify and highlight specific areas where learners and their families can work alongside school to prepare the learners prior to entry for the best possible start. We acknowledge and share detailed information linked to learner's strengths and needs.

Home visits and pre-school visits are actively encouraged to gather information about the learner and a period of thorough analysis then enables us to plan for a clear way forward. Parents are fully supported to be part of the decision making and transition process. We believe this enables parents/carers to have ownership and this assists in building confidence.

Visual aids, strategies and techniques are offered and delivered alongside clear access to ongoing communication with the EYFS lead and also our learner support manager. Keeping communication open and transparent means we are already setting the tone for building positive relationships. We value that when the structure of transition is clear for all parties this assists in future success.

We embrace and collate additional support if required from external and internal sources. We always aim to establish effective partnerships and relationships with other professionals.

We work alongside the MAT EYFS cluster to support, share and challenge our practice. It forms a platform for us to discuss trends, highlight gaps and share resources.

#### **4. Curriculum**

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2022 statutory framework of the EYFS.

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

## 4.1 Planning

Staff take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care with the aim of planning a challenging and enjoyable experience tailored specifically to each child. Staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to achieve, practitioners working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas. Our planning is informed by our broad and detailed knowledge of each learner through their positive learning plans. (PLP's) Plans are updated as part of an ongoing system of annotation. They are then recorded and updated each term electronically. All staff within the EYFS fully contribute towards the PLP's and towards planning through using their observations to inform next steps. Sessions are carefully crafted around each unique child.

Staff use secure knowledge of learner need and also child development to assist in making sound judgments. We identify gaps swiftly and specific class interventions are actioned when required. Team meetings are held daily and analysis of behaviour monitored to ensure any behaviours are identified quickly and then minimised efficiently. Positive learning plans inform planning and holistic wellbeing.

The leadership strongly advocates firm knowledge about the learners and a positive team ethic. All staff are specifically trained to work interchangeably with all learners in their care. Staff know and understand the learners needs fully through the positive learning plans. Staff understand and ensure the importance of all learners being stretched and challenged. Learners are encouraged and supported to step out of their comfort zones daily in an environment where it is safe and where all staff can support.

Contextual and relevant learning opportunities ensure that learners build specific skills for the future. Preparing our learners for an independent life is always at the forefront of our practice.

The learning environment remains flexible and can be adapted for each session in line with learner need. Creative staff are encouraged to share ongoing ideas as to how to develop an environment that is stimulating and engaging.

Every space within the classroom and outdoors is utilised and is classified as a learning space.

## 4.2 Teaching

Building relationships is a strong priority in line with our whole school curriculum.

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Practitioners respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. We use a range of Total Communication resources and strategies to enhance learner's cognition, interactions, processing, transitioning and understanding

Sensory resources are incorporated within the class or the outdoors and learners are encouraged to learn how to self-regulate their sensory needs throughout the day.

The outdoor environment is promoted strongly for all learners. Learners will have access to clothing that is suitable for all weathers as this is a fundamental part of their curriculum and right to access.

Driving independence is at the core of our teaching within the EYFS. Our Selworthy levels of support assist us in enabling learners to make the transition from adult supported participation or verbal prompt, to competent individuals able to operate autonomously within the EYFS environment.

We closely align with the whole school Selworthy SPECIAL curriculum qualities 2020, which promotes lifelong learning and states,

*'Independence is the golden thread running through our entire curriculum. Preparing our learners for their future begins at the earliest ages through the development of learning behaviours for learning such as perseverance and resilience. As learners get older, we introduce explicit teaching of life skills and greater integration and participation in the local community and access and interaction with a range of positive adult and peer role models.'*

Learners are empowered, celebrated and recognised across the school and are encouraged to have high expectations.

*'Through celebration of their achievements, learners are instilled with the belief that they can achieve anything. We constantly challenge and support them and their families to strive for the next goal.'* (Selworthy SPECIAL Curriculum 2020)

The expectations for teaching assistants to be competent and follow the teaching assistant standards is high. Professionalism is sought and team work essential. Leadership expects teaching assistants to be able to develop and share skills and each teaching assistant has a responsibility to learn about each child within their class. Teaching assistants are encouraged to upskill and support each other and

drive self-improvement. Leadership models strong professional practice and the promotion of sharing skills. Leadership instills a supportive culture. The outcomes of using this approach assists in creating a cohesive environment for learning and teaching.

## **5. Assessment**

At Selworthy School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes.

Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Practitioners also take into account observations shared by parents /carers via the Evidence for Learning app. All parents/carers have access and are encouraged to share learning at home and to comment on their child's learning at school. We use a two-way process to build a profile of each child's learning and development across both settings.

We use the Evidence for Learning app to also record our observations and assessments. We have adopted the Selworthy levels of support to measure progress so that we can carefully identify and record steps, irrespective of however large or small.

We baseline against the SEND Early Support Developmental Journal so that we have an accurate comparison to their starting point on entry. We adhere to changes in government policy linked to statutory baselining and aim to access where possible the testing for our SEND learners. Statutory requirements are reported at the end of each academic year using SIMS to log each learner's data.

Learner's targets are made accessible through symbol support and this assists learners to develop their understanding of key language and expectations such as look, listen or hold, for example. In addition, it acts as a success criterion.

Accurate and ongoing assessment relies on a whole team approach to assessment gathering.

Feedback is pitched at the correct developmental level and is made clear with the use of simple language in a context that has meaning. For example, the use of video via the iPad assists in supporting learner understanding. The feedback is always timebound and the use of visuals or signing can enhance this exchange.

Our current assessment systems have been shared with the other EYFS MAT cluster schools.

Internal and external moderation is completed. Attendance at a Special School Moderation is also sought and is valuable to ensure judgements are accurate and secure.

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
- Exceeding expected levels or,
- 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.

## **6. Working with parents**

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents/carers. We strive to create and maintain parent partnerships as we know that together we can achieve greater and sustained outcomes.

We value that every family and learner is unique and requires flexibility in their communications with school. We use a range of approaches to communicate with our parents daily. We welcome and actively encourage our parents to participate confidently in their child's education. We make our engagement relevant and contextual and use strategies such as role play to engage and support parents in understanding and delivering strategies within the home environment.

Parents/carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. The progress check, The EYFS Early Support Journal and Characteristics of effective learning elements of their reports and profile helps to provide parents or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities. Parent/carer evenings are held every term. Flexibility in providing access to these meetings is always a consideration to ensure full engagement in their child's education.

Learners in the EYFS have two formal reviews each year in line with their entry arrangements and EHCP requirements.

Each child is assigned a key person who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents/carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

## **7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures**

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

We have a specific EYFS safeguarding checklist that ensures that certain requirements are in place such as staffing ratios, safeguarding and general health and safety.

We use an online system called My Concern for recording safeguarding and we use an online system called IRIS for recording incidents relating to behaviour.

## **8. Monitoring arrangements**



Monitoring will take place in line with the trust monitoring policy.

Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
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