

Stamford Junior School Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

The Early Years at Stamford Junior School comprises of the Stamford Nursery School and two Reception classes.

The term *parents* in this document refers to parents and carers and the term *child* refers to children and young people aged 0 to 19 years old (up to 25 years old for young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)).

Children receive government funding at Stamford Junior School (SJS) from the term after their third birthday until the term after their fifth birthday (whilst they remain in the Reception year). We follow the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) (DfE, 2017) throughout the Stamford Nursery School (SNS) and the Reception classes.

1.0 Aims

Fundamentally the Early Years at Stamford Junior School is guided by the SES overarching aims and ethos. In the Early Years we have specific aims relating to the care and education of children aged between 3 and 5 years old.

We aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning.

We create a safe, happy and stimulating environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences. We believe that this enables children to become confident and independent learners.

We value the individual child and work alongside parents and others to meet their needs and help every child to reach their full potential.

As outlined in the EYFS

Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. (DfE, 2014)

The following documents should be read in conjunction with this policy:

- SES Admissions Policy
- SES Safeguarding Policy
- SES Health and Safety Policy
- SES Equal Opportunities Policy
- SES Behaviour Policy and Managing Feelings and Behaviour in the Early Years at SJS.
- SES Inclusion and SEND Policy
- SES Intimate Care Policy.

2.0 Principles, approach and pedagogy

Central to our approach to care and education in the Early Years at SJS is the EYFS and the guiding principles outlined in the statutory guidance:

- 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 and/or carers
- *Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates*

These are our guiding principles, children are therefore expected to have ‘their own ideas, express opinions, make independent choices and play and work well with others’. (Thornton and Brunton, 2007:11)

As a teaching team, we have been inspired by the work of Loris Malaguzzi and the **Reggio Emilia** approach to early childhood provision. Malaguzzi described school for young children ‘as an integral, living organism, as a place of shared lives and relationships among many adults and very many children. We think of a school as a construction in motion, continuously adjusting itself’ (1998:63). We interpret this to mean that school should be a place of discovery, exploration, research and the building of relationships. It is for this reason that the curriculum is not planned for in advance, in terms of topic focus. Rather it emerges in response to the needs, interests and fascinations of the children. Please see further explanation under the heading 6.0 *EYFS assessment and planning*.

Reflective practice and adult knowledge is at the heart of providing a quality experience for our children.

The OECD have undertaken a major review of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) in participating countries, *Starting Strong II* in 2006. In 2012, *Starting Strong III* was released and the following definition explains that:

Staff qualifications/education/professional development → pedagogical quality → child outcomes.

The training and education of ECEC staff affects the quality of services and outcomes primarily through the knowledge, skills and competencies that are transmitted and encouraged by practitioners. There is strong evidence that enriched stimulating environments and high-quality pedagogy are fostered by better qualified staff; and better quality pedagogy leads to better learning outcomes, (Lijens and Taguma, 2010).

SES is committed to supporting staff development, learning and the development of communities of learning.

3.0 Principles into practice

We put these principles into practice by:

- Providing a balanced, broad, inspiring curriculum, based on the EYFS, the characteristics of learning and across the seven areas of learning, using play as the vehicle for learning
- Promoting equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support
- Creating a partnership with parents and the local community that supports and enhances the development of the children.
- Planning challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment
- Providing indoor, outdoor and emotional environments that are welcoming, rich and open to multiple learning possibilities.
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in a wide range of activity and experiences. There will be a carefully developed balance of child-initiated, adult initiated and adult led activity. It is expected that as children develop the balance will move toward more adult led opportunities by the end of the EYFS.
- Employing a key person approach to develop close relationships with individual children. This role will be primarily a child's class teacher in the Reception classes.

4.0 Organisation of the Early Years at SJS.

Stamford Nursery School (SNS)

- Goslings: Rising three year old children
- Owls: Children move into the Owls room in the September of the academic year that they have their fourth birthday.

Early Years Reception classes

- Two classes: Children enter a Reception class in the September of the academic year that they have their fifth birthday.

5.0 Staff structure and deployment

Please see appendix A for a flowchart outlining this structure.

6.0 The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), assessment and planning

The EYFS is a framework that provides statutory and non- statutory guidance for providers of education and care of children aged from 0-5 years old.

It is a principle led, play based framework rather than a curriculum to be delivered. The EYFS (DfE, 2017) development matters and Early Years Outcomes (DfE, 2012) provide an outline of what development practitioners could see in the children that they work with. It is not a checklist or a developmental list to progress through. The developmental stages are meant as a guide to practitioners.

6.1 Assessment

There are two points of statutory assessment within the EYFS. The first is the 2-year check, and the second is the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. At SJS we have decided to use our own summary of each child's development at the beginning of the Reception year based upon observations and assessments of children in their first 4-6 weeks, rather than use a government accredited Baseline package.

SNS use information ascertained from children's 2-year check to learn about the children as they join our Nursery and use observations in the same way as Reception teachers to inform a summary of each child's achievements after the first 4-6 weeks that they have been with us.

Throughout the Nursery and the Reception classes adults use observations to record children's learning and plan as a result of analysis of this learning. Analysis of learning is based on the EYFS development matters, Leuven Wellbeing and Involvement scales and the characteristics of Learning.

These observations are recorded in individual 'learning journeys' which are compiled by each child's Key Person (in SNS) or their class teacher and Teaching Assistant in the Reception classes. Children's learning journeys are collected and compiled digitally using 'Tapestry'. Consequently, they are shared regularly with parents so that we make strong connections between each child's learning experiences at home and school.

On entry to the Reception classes all families will be offered the opportunity to have a home visit where their child's class teacher will arrange to visit them at home. This is a valuable opportunity to build a strong and trusting relationship between home and school. The observations are informal and assist the teaching team in their initial assessments of the way in which children are settling into school life. This in turn will contribute to the baseline assessments taken by the end of the first half term in Reception.

At three points during the academic year children's progress in each aspect of each area of learning will be summarised on Tapestry and used for the basis of discussion regarding progress and planning ahead. The three collections of data will be known as Autumn A, Spring A and Summer A. The EYFS development matters age bands will be used to chart children's progress. This is always to be seen in context and as a tool by which to

discuss and consider a child's learning. We always remember the principle that *children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates*. In addition, each term, key person's and class teachers will complete an individual 'lines of development' for each child. This will summarise where children's development is moving in each area of learning and development as well as their characteristics of learning. This supports staff in ensuring that we are looking at each child in a holistic manner.

When a child leaves SNS a summary will be prepared for each child by their Key Person. This summary will outline the child's approach to learning in relation to the Characteristics of learning, and progress across the seven areas of learning.

At the end of the Reception Year the class teachers will make a judgement relating to each child's progress towards and/or achievement of each Early Learning Goal for each aspect of each area of learning. These judgements constitute the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP). This is a statutory assessment and must be shared with parents. We have a duty to share this data with the Local Authority if it is requested.

A key purpose of the EYFSP is to share children's learning with their Year One teacher. The following information will be shared with the Year One teachers at the end of the Reception year:

- each child's profile scores
- Spreadsheet which identifies the Early Learning Goal achievement of the cohort
- Access to each child's learning journey on Tapestry
- Current letters and sounds phase along with recent assessment of sounds and words knowledge
- Big Write assessment
- Reading records

These items of documentation will form the basis of discussion as this is seen as the most positive and effective manner in which to pass on meaningful assessment.

Project based approach. As our projects evolve and emerge we are developing the way in which we document this learning. We will use floor books and the class blog as a primary source of evidence of the projects that have evolved.

6.2 Planning

The EYFS Framework itself is essentially our long-term plan.

Planning starts with the child. Our planning is based on our knowledge of what children know, what they are interested in, passionate about and what they need. It is important that assessment is therefore meaningful and useful. The planning cycle: Observe, Assess, Plan, Do, Review is used through the Early Years. Throughout the Early Years we use a broad structure to the year 'Rhythm and Patterns of the Year' outlining key events,

celebrations, seasonal planting patterns and visits. This gives us an open ended shape with in which to develop children's fascinations and motivations.

At SNS, practitioners have a weekly planning meeting to ensure that they are sharing their understanding of the children. Whilst using an overall focus as a starting point for the whole group, key person's will then respond to children's interests and fascinations for their weekly plans. Plans are compiled and written by the room leader.

In the Reception classes, the year starts with a focus on learning about each other and new routines. From then on our project-based approach evolves and responds to children's interests. We are passionate about involving children in the planning process and each week children take part in a planning and thinking time in small groups. We work together, record what they have learnt and what they would like to learn.

In both SNS and the Reception classes we use a 'feeding forward' format to focus discussion on the previous weeks planning in order to inform the following week.

Reception weekly plans are placed on SharePoint so that the teaching team members can access them easily and amend them when needed. The weekly plans are printed off at the beginning of the week and displayed on the wall in the classrooms. The intention is that these become working documents and evolve with the children's experience.

6.3 Characteristics of Learning and Areas of Learning

'In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice.' (DfE, 2014)

The characteristics of learning guide us in this and they are: "Play and Exploring" "Active Learning" and "Creativity and Critical Thinking". The characteristics of learning are clearly connected to SES academic ethos of ILIC.

- **Play and Exploring:** this characteristic focuses on children's engagement. Children need opportunities to actively construct their own knowledge and understanding of the world through many different experiences. Adults will be looking for ways that children are engaged in
 - Finding out and exploring
 - Using what they know in their play
 - Being willing to have a go.
- **Active learning:** occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

- **Creativity and Critical thinking:** children should be given opportunities to be creative through all areas of learning and not just through the arts. Adults can support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions.

We recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and have their own learning styles and preferences. There are seven areas of learning and development that must be supported whilst following the EYFS. It is important to understand that all the seven areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

'Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities' (DfE, 2014)

The three prime areas are crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The **Prime** areas:

- **Communication and Language Development,**
- **Physical Development and Personal,**
- **Social and Emotional Development.**

As children progress and demonstrate their secure development within these prime areas practitioners ensure a more equal balance across all seven areas of development.

The four **specific** areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied, are:

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

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which they explore, think creatively and are active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

Children have whole group and small group times which increase as they progress through the EYFS with times for a daily phonics session using 'Letters and Sounds', teaching aspects of Mathematics and Literacy, including shared reading and writing.

We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are planned by the adults.

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

7.0 Role of the adult and the environment

7.1 Adults will:

- Understand that children have the right to be listened to and heard. It is understood that active listening requires adults to listen, consider and then act upon what they have heard.
- Remember Malaguzzi's '100 Languages of expression' and appreciate that children have a wide range of ways of expressing themselves; it is therefore our role as adults to find an even wider range of ways to listen.
- Guide, support, extend and challenge children's thinking during their play. Interact with children's play with sensitivity.
- Organise a learning environment that is rich in learning opportunities.
- Organise an environment that promotes play, enabling children to integrate their learning across different domains.
- Structure the environment so that it is geared to children's development and progress.

7.2 Enabling Environments

The learning environments in the Early Years are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely.

There is an appreciation of the Reggio Emilia philosophy that describes the environment as the 'third teacher'. There are areas where the children can be active, quiet, creative, challenged, focussed, supported and independent. Each room has carefully defined learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

Both SNS and the Reception classes have enclosed outdoor learning areas, and children are able to free flow between indoor and outdoor learning areas. Our understanding of the term 'free flow' relates to the notion that children are able to freely follow the 'flow' of their learning - between indoors and outdoors, between different areas in their environment.

7.2 Supervision for staff

Supervision is ... essential to help practitioners to cope with the emotional demands of work with children and their families which has an impact at all levels of intervention. (DCSF, 2008)

Supervision is a regular, planned, accountable two-way process which should offer support and develop the knowledge, skills and values of an individual, group or team. Its purpose is to monitor and support the progress of professional practice and to help staff to improve the quality of the work they do, thus assuring children's welfare is of central importance and improving outcomes for children. Supervision also provides an opportunity to discuss sensitive issues including the safeguarding of children and any

concerns raised about an individual or colleague's practice. Supervision is not part of the performance management cycle.

For members of staff, supervision provides professional one to one support and "space" away from the direct work environment to discuss progress, professional role, workload and concerns. The supervisory relationship should develop trust which will allow for free and open discussion and learning without the fear of being criticised. Staff should receive constructive feedback about their work, with concerns being challenged sensitively and honestly and successes being acknowledged on a regular basis. This hopefully increases the feeling of being valued by management at the setting which in turn, increases job satisfaction.

All members of staff will have the opportunity for supervision once a half term (every six weeks). In the first instance this will be with the Nursery Manager and the Director of Early Years.

- Supervisions will be planned ahead of time so that staff know where, when and how long their supervision will be.
- This will always take place in a private location for a minimum of 30 minutes.
- The supervisor will be responsible for taking notes with the responsibility for setting the agenda shared between supervisor and supervisee.
- These notes are confidential and kept in the locked filing cabinet in the Nursery office.

8.0 Organisation of the day in order to facilitate learning through play Nursery Timetable

The Nursery opens from 7.45 am until 6 pm during term time and 8 am – 6pm during half terms and holidays; five days a week, approximately 50 weeks a year. The Nursery school day runs between 9am – 4pm with extended nursery care available between 7.45am- 9am and 4pm – 6pm.

The timings in this routine may vary depending on each age group and the activities of the day.

7.45 – 9.15am	Children are welcomed into the Nursery.
9.15 – 9.30am	Registration.
9.30 - 9.45am	Key Person time
9.45 - 10.55am	Objective led learning, Individual child learning.
10am	Rolling snack.
11.45am	Lunch for the first sitting.
12 - 12.20pm	Circle time.
12.25pm	Lunch for second sitting.

- 1.45 pm Registration.
- 2 - 2.15pm Key person time.
- 2 - 3.45pm Objective led learning, Individual child learning.
- 2.45pm Rolling snack.
- 3.4 5 - 5.00pm End of the day routine, Story time.
- 5.00 - 6.00pm Extended nursery care and light supper.

Reception Day

7.45 – 8. 20 am	Extended care provided in the Nursery.
8.20 – 8.30 am	Reception outdoor area opened, supervised.
8.30 – 8.50am	Bell rings, enter classrooms for early morning welcome activities and registration.
8 .50 – 9.05 am	Speaking and listening activities.
9. 05 – 9.30 am	Teacher led input, for example Phonics.
9.30 – 9.40 am	Learning walks in learning groups.
9.45 – 10.45 am	Learning and choosing time. Child initiated activity and guided adult led activity.
10.45 – 11.00 am	Review and tidy up time.
11.00 – 11.30 am	Teacher led input, for example Mathematics.
11.30 – 11.45 am	Preparations for lunchtime and walking up to school for lunch time.
11.45 – 1. 00 pm	Lunchtime, in main school building.
1. 00 – 1.30 pm	Registration and ERIC
1.30 – 1.50 pm	Teacher led input, for example PSED
1.50 – 2.50 pm	Learning and choosing time. Child initiated activity and guided adult led activity.
2.50 – 3.05 pm	Review and tidy up time.
3.05 – 3. 35 pm	Teacher led input, either story time or music.
3.35 – 3.45 pm	Preparations for home time.
3.30 – 6.00 pm	Extended day available at Wagtails, based in the Nursery building.

9.0 Partnership with Parents and the Wider Context

‘Early years practitioners have a key role to play in working with parents to support their young children... Parents and families are central to a child’s well-being and a practitioner should support this important relationship by sharing information and offering support to learning in the home’ EYFS 2014.

We strive to create and maintain partnership with parents as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child’s learning.

We draw on our links with the community to enrich children’s experiences by taking them on outings and inviting members of the community into our setting.

Home-School Links

When children join SJS we outline the school's expectations in the Code of Conduct.

We hold a welcome evening at the beginning of the academic year to explain and outline the academic expectations and rhythms of the year for Reception parents. In addition we organise an 'Early Childhood' development evening for parents of both Nursery and Reception where we share understanding of Early Childhood development.

In Reception we share our class blog every week, explaining key items of learning that have taken place during the week, children's fascinations and where the learning will be progressing. SNS share a regular 'home links' document with parents that highlights key examples of the children's learning.

We operate an open door policy, where parents are warmly welcomed and encouraged to discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner.

All members of staff have emails which parents are also encouraged to use as a form of communication with teaching staff.

At SNS there are regular opportunities throughout the year for parents to meet with their child's key person.

SNS organise termly stay and play sessions where families can come and spend time with their children in the Nursery setting.

In the Reception classes we invite parents to join us for a 'Saturday Play date' whereby families come along with their children and use the Reception classes. This is a good opportunity for teaching staff to demonstrate and discuss learning through play – and consequently for parents to feel involved with the child's learning.

10.0 Prevent Duty in the Early Years

We will adhere to the SES guidance with regard to the Prevent Duty, as outlined in the SES Safeguarding Policy.

From 1 July 2015 we are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism".

We are following 'The Prevent Duty: Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers', June 2015.

11.0 Intimate care

'Intimate' care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. However, depending on a child's age and stage of development, they may

need some support, for example dressing, wiping their bottom, appropriate washing after using the toilet and changing underwear following an accident.

Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to individual children.

Express written permission will be requested from parents when their children start at the Nursery.

11.1 Changing procedure.

We follow the SES Intimate Care Policy and in addition have these guidelines referring to the children in Stamford Nursery School (SNS) and the Reception classes.

The SNS have their own permissions form relating to the changing of nappies. This is read and signed by parents as part of the 'starting pack'.

Parents agree to supply their own nappies/pull ups and cream.

Each child who needs nappies will have an individually named basket. All medication to do with nappy changing will be kept on a high shelf in the changing area.

There are set times for changing nappies: mid-morning, after lunch and mid-afternoon – unless a child needs changing sooner and we are responsive to their needs.

Children are always treated with respect and will be asked their permission first before being changed.

This is recorded on an individual sheet which identifies time, condition of the nappy, whether cream has been applied and it is signed (initialled) by the person who changed the child's nappy.

Changing areas including the changing unit in the Nursery are located to ensure maximum appropriate privacy for the child however, the adult is visible and the area is fully accessible with no closed doors.

Should a child require a shower, we ensure that two members of staff are present.

When a child requires assistance with changing the adult responsible will always inform other members of staff where they are going and what they are doing.

12.0 Complaints.

We follow the overarching guidance outlined in the SES complaints procedure, with the addition of the following advice from the EYFS. We understand that we must investigate written complaints relating to our fulfilment of the EYFS requirements and notify complainants of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of having received the complaint. The record of complaints must be made available to ISI on request. The contact details for ISI are:

- **ISI, CAP House, 9–12 Long Lane, London EC1A 9HA, or to concerns@isi.net.** You can also contact the Department for Education [online](#) or on **0370 000 2288**.

13.0 Finance and Payment for the Stamford Nursery School

The parents of the Nursery are charged monthly in arrears through the Endowed School's finance office, situated on St Paul's Street, Stamford.

Stamford Nursery School encourages prompt payment but recognises that at times some parents/carers may encounter financial obstacles. All financial matters will be dealt with the utmost understanding and consideration and in confidence.

All sessions which have been booked will be charged in full if the child is absent. If a child is to leave the setting a months written notice must be given.

If there are any queries parents should contact the finance office and the nursery manager.

Tax Credit

Stamford Nursery School is registered with Ofsted, therefore where appropriate parents/carers are able to claim child tax credits. Details are available upon request.

Childcare Vouchers

Stamford Nursery School is registered with a variety of organizations regarding Childcare Vouchers. Details are available on request.

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Thornton, P. and Brunton, L. (2007) *Bringing the Reggio Approach to Your Early Years Setting*. Oxon. Routledge

Mrs Samantha Weeks, Director of Early Years
B.Ed. (Hons) (QTS), MA Education (Early Years), PGCTHE, Certificate in Therapeutic Play.
Member of SJS SLT, named safeguarding person.

Stamford Nursery School

Mrs Nicola Woodward, Nursery Manager
BTEC National Diploma in Nursery Nursing, BA (Hons) Professional Studies, Early Childhood (Level 6)
Health and Safety Lead

Miss Hollie Dalgleish, Nursery Deputy Manager, Owl Room leader
BA (Hons) Professional Studies, Early Childhood (Level 6)

Miss Lindsay Asprey, Early Years SENCO
N.V.Q (Level 3) Childcare and Education
N.V.Q (Level 2) Team leading
Goslings room leader

Mrs Anita Moulds
Forest Schools Leader
Children's and Young Peoples Diploma (Level 3).
Forest School leader (level 3).

Miss Lisa Couper, Gosling room practitioner
NNEB, CYPW diploma (Level 3)
Miss Becky Allen, Gosling room practitioner
Early Years Foundation Degree (level 5)

Miss Lucy Scullion, Owl room practitioner
CYPW Diploma (Level 3).
Ms Alison Mullan **Mrs Karen Balchin**
Owl room Owl room
Practitioner Practitioner
CYPW Diploma (Level 3) N.V.Q. (Level 2)

The Reception classes

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Mrs Samantha Weeks, Director of Early Years

B.Ed. (Hons) (QTS), MA Education (Early Years), PGCTHE, Certificate in Therapeutic Play.

Member of SJS SLT, named safeguarding person.

Mrs Sarah Wade

Reception Class teacher

B.Ed Education (QTS)

Mrs Tracey Worthington

Reception Class teacher

(QTS)

Mrs Christine Norton

Reception teaching
assistant

Lead role in supporting
children's reading.

Cert. Ed.

Mrs Kate Chaloner

Reception teaching
assistant

Lead role in developing
the learning
environment.

RGN.

**Early Years Educator
(Level 3)**