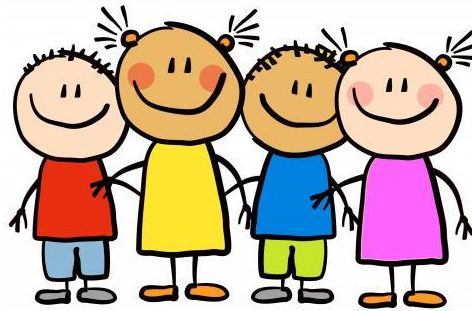




# Southwold Primary School and Early Years' Centre



Early Years Policy  
2024-2026

## Introduction

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.'

## Principles

The EYFS is based upon four principles

### **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 and at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement as well as celebrating and rewards to encourage and develop a positive attitude to learning.

### **Positive relationships.**

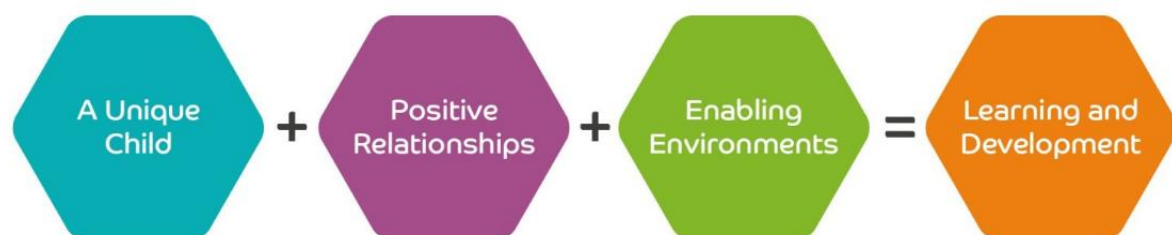
We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships and aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families.

### **Enabling environments**

We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Through observations we assess the children's interests, stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning.

### **Learning and development**

The Foundation Unit is organised for children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where children can be active, be quiet and rest. The unit is set up in learning areas where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.



Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Southwold Early Years Centre we greatly value the importance that the EYFS curriculum plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. However, we also believe that early childhood is valid in itself as part of life. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

The EYFS for children is from birth to five years of age. All children begin school with a wide variety of experiences and learning and it is the privilege of the adults working in the foundation stage to accept the task of building upon that prior learning experience. This is done through an authentic approach ensuring parent/carers, support staff and the Foundation Stage team work effectively together to support the learning and development of the children in their charge.

### **Aims**

It is every child's right to grow up safe, healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and with economic well-being. The overarching of the EYFS is to help young children to achieve these outcomes.

We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential. Each child is valued as an individual and teaching and learning is based on the understanding that children develop at different rates.

At Southwold Early Years Centre, we aim to:

- Support our children in making a happy transition from home to school
- Provide a safe, challenging, stimulating, caring and sharing environment which is sensitive to the needs of the child including children with additional needs
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress
- Enable decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence
- Work in partnership with parents and carers and value their contributions ensuring that all children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability are treated equally
- Provide opportunities whereby children experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development
- Provide experiences for all children, whatever their needs, which are inclusive rather than parallel
- Provide opportunity for our children to investigate, explore, reflect, talk and share their experiences with a variety of listeners

## Learning and Development

Learning and development is categorised into three prime areas of learning:

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

Additionally there are four specific areas of learning:

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

Characteristics of Effective Learning:

- **Playing and exploring**-children investigate and 'have a go'.
- **Active learning**-children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties.
- **Creating and thinking critically**-children have and develop their own ideas, make links and develop strategies for doing things.

## Early Reading



At Southwold Primary and Early Years Centre we provide a language-rich environment in which high quality talk is valued. All staff model good communication skills in their interactions with pupils and each other. For early phonics teaching, the school follows the Read Write Inc. (RWI) phonics scheme to ensure that we are effective in teaching children to be successful early readers. Home reading materials ensure that the children are given reading books that reflect their phonic knowledge, so phonics is the only strategy used for decoding. This sits alongside the development of children's speaking, listening and language skills which are crucial for developing children's comprehension and vocabulary, with a specific focus on closing the vocabulary gap. Adults also strive to promote a love of reading through daily story time and carefully chosen books within the learning environment. Teachers closely monitor children's progress in reading through regular phonics assessments in order that interventions are implemented to address gaps in learning promptly.



## **Early Maths**

Maths is taught through a range of experiences including counting as part of the daily routine; discreet teaching with follow up group activities and play based opportunities and experiences through the learning environment. We recognise that Maths can take place in any environment and we promote the use of learning maths skills through play-based opportunities. In reception, we adopt the White Rose Maths approach to our teaching, which ensures progression and coverage throughout the year.

### **Assessment**

At Southwold , ongoing assessment is an integral part of learning and development. We use observations to carefully shape future planning. The Reception Baseline Assessment is carried out within six weeks of a child starting in Reception. We also use a range of assessments, both formative and summative, throughout the year. At the end of Reception, teachers 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')

### **Home and School Links**

We will develop this working relationship between school and parents as follows:

- We will hold a parent consultation early in the school year to establish how a child is settling into the school environment.
- We will publish a theme project leaflet detailing the ideas we are doing and the areas of learning it covers.
- We will operate an 'open door' policy that will allow parents and carers to discuss concerns and development in an informal manner. Alternatively, if EYC Staff have concerns about a child, they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss them.
- We will conduct a further parent consultation in the spring term to inform parents and carers formally of a child's level of development and overall progress and share their learning journey.
- We will inform you of our learning through Class Dojo.

- Parents are regularly actively encouraged to share experiences from home on Class Dojo.

**Equal opportunities:**

A main principle in our approach to all aspects of teaching and learning at Southwold Primary School and Early Years' Centre is a belief in equal access to learning for all children. We aim to recognise the needs of each individual child according to ability and aptitude and our approaches and resources reflect balanced, positive images of race, gender and disability. We aim to ensure girls and boys are equally encouraged to participate positively and to achieve their potential.

**Special Educational Needs:**

For all children with Special Educational Needs the Early Years' Centre has an important role, as early identification is vital in providing internal support or gaining external support where necessary. The Staff monitor children's progress and any areas of concern are noted and discussed with the SENCO. Where a need is identified a provision map will be written in order to meet the child's needs. Close liaison with parents/carers and other agencies are essential.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Chair of Governors

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Headteacher

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

EYFS Lead

