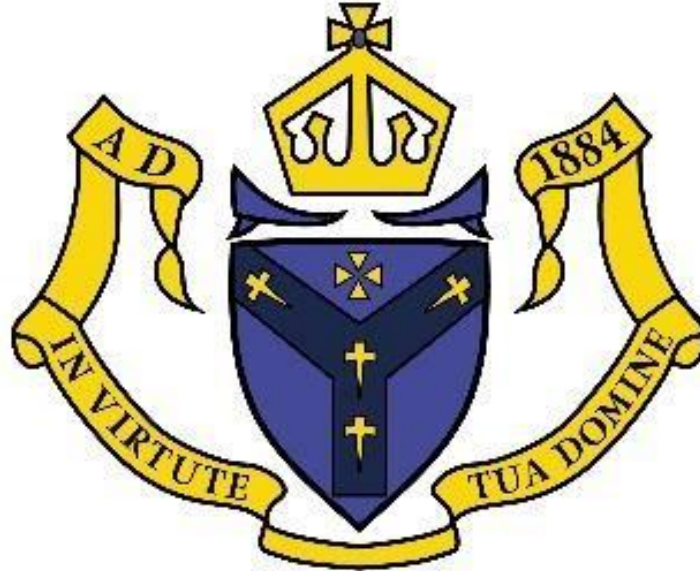




Sissinghurst VA Church of England Primary School

Enjoy, Achieve and Celebrate Together in Faith



The Governors and Staff of Sissinghurst (VA) Church of England Primary School believe the policies and procedures we write help us to continuously improve the school and develop our pupils to become life-long learners and valuable citizens of the future.

Our School Vision

We are a strong 'family', passionate about providing creative and aspirational learning opportunities. We are courageous advocates for the planet, learning to speak out for others' locally, nationally and globally. Rooted in the strength of God, we respect, cherish and nurture the unique abilities of each member of our community.

We are dedicated to providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. Our Christian values of:

Kindness Forgiveness Courage Service

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| Policy Title: | Early Years Foundation Stage Policy |
| Date: | March 2022 |
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| Reviewed By: | |
| Approved By: | |

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1. Our Vision

“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

In the Early Years at Sissinghurst we understand that starting school is an important step in a child’s learning journey and in Lion Class we aim to provide the children a safe and stimulating environment to enable every child to fulfil their potential. The curriculum is carefully designed so that each term the children can become immersed in their learning with our hooks for learning throughout our topics (Stunning Starts, Marvellous Middles and Fabulous Finishes).

We provide the EYFS is based upon these guiding principles:

- Sissinghurst school values of courage, forgiveness and kindness provides the children with a space where children can feel confident and comfortable to be ready to learn.
- Pupil safeguarding and well-being is always our priority.
- Self-regulation, autonomy and language development are vital for effective learning (see our Curriculum Models for more information).
- Adult directed time is carefully planned so that it is purposeful, creative and inspiring.
- Through child-initiated time children are able explore their own learning where support and extension are given promptly by the adults when needed.
- Pupils who need further support are identified quickly and targeted effectively individually and in small groups.

2. 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.
- 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.

3. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) that applies from September 2021](#).

At Sissinghurst School 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/sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

4. Structure of the EYFS

At Sissinghurst School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

The EYFS classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active or quiet and rest. The classroom is set up in learning areas, where there is continuous provision available so that the children can find and locate equipment and resources independently, linked to the EYFS. The EYFS class has its own enclosed outdoor area, which has a positive effect on children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for the child to do things in diverse ways and on a different scale than indoors. It offers children opportunities to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors (including our forest and farm school areas) that help the children to develop in all seven areas of learning. We also recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are inter connected.

5. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the [EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2021](#).

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

- 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

All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

We have developed the curriculum giving communication and language skills a high priority. This is in line with Development Matters 2020: "The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively."

A high priority is also given to the teaching of early reading guided by [The Reading Framework \(July 2021\)](#). We aim to teach children to read and develop a love of books as soon as they arrive at Sissinghurst School and books are used to teach topics and to enhance our whole curriculum. We follow a systematic approach to phonics teaching based on the Supersonic Phonics Friends scheme. This DfE approved resource is exceptional and unique which ensures maximum engagement and learning from the children. In reception children will start with their individual reading books that are decodable and children can apply their phonetical knowledge.

We underpin our curriculum with the Personal Social and Emotional Development of all our children. We strive to enable children to be safe, happy, confident individuals. We also encourage self-regulation as much as possible and introduce rules and boundaries through modelling good behaviour and reflection time using our Zones of Regulation. We teach the children the Sissinghurst

School Values of courage, forgiveness, service and kindness and these values are followed on throughout the school.

6. Teaching and Learning

We believe in the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning that are set out in Development Matters 2021. These are:

Child Initiated Learning

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practice and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Active Learning

At Sissinghurst we encourage all children to be active learners. 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

At Sissinghurst children are given opportunities to be creative through all areas of learning, 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. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

7. Assessment

During the first term in Reception, the teacher assesses the ability of each child using a mixture of the statutory government baseline and also through teacher observations. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children. We record each child's level of development throughout the year and record whether each child is on track or not on track to meet a Good Level of Development (GLD) at the end of the year in July. We also record the children's well-being and involvement level using the Leuven's Scale.

Throughout the year, children are observed during the school day in a range of contexts and observation as our main form of assessment. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests, next steps and informs future planning. We use the online learning journal 'Evidence Me' to record child-initiated learning. By taking photographs and videos to record the significant learning that has taken place. The adult may also record the process of learning that has taken place using the characteristics of effective learning and the level of well-being and involvement using the Leuven Scales.

We record each child's level of development throughout the year. Concerns about individual pupils' progress are discussed regularly at EYFS pupil progress meetings. Pupils who are not 'On track' for end of year attainment goals are identified and discussed with the senior leadership team at pupil progress meetings and extra provision plans can be put in place to support these children.

At the end of the final term in Reception we assess whether each child is 'emerging' or 'expected' in each strand within each area of learning and submit this data to the local authority. This information is also shared with the child's next teacher who uses this information to make plans for the year ahead. We also share this information in the end-of-year report along with a written report that offers detailed comments on each child's progress and their characteristics of learning. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs, and gives details of the child's general progress.

8. Inclusion

All children will receive quality first teaching on a daily basis and activities will be differentiated accordingly. In addition to this, where children have been identified as having a specific need, intervention programmes will be implemented. Teachers and Teaching Assistants plan programmes together at least termly and where needed liaise with the Special Needs Co-ordinator. This ensures children with special educational needs are identified and supported as early as possible.

9. Parents as Partners

At Sissinghurst School we recognise that children learn to be strong, independent and form secure relationships. 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
- the teacher offers to visit all children in their home setting during the first few weeks of them starting school
- the children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher in their new class before starting school during induction afternoons in July
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our reception class and allowing regular access to their child's 'Learning Journal' files.
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents each term at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress, the child is also invited to this meeting. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: Celebration assemblies, Class assemblies, Sports Day, Open

Afternoon etc

- Encouraging parents to make regular contributions with their child in their termly homework projects
- Teachers and guardians to regularly observations of learning and progress on Evidence Me.
- Give curriculum updates and reminders through a weekly learning intention letter, phonics newsletters, termly parent topic leaflet and topic overview.
- Encouraging parents to support their child in homework tasks and giving feedback to class teacher through Google Classroom
- Provide opportunities for parents/carers to visit the school on a volunteer basis to assist with the children's learning e.g. hearing readers, class trips etc.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At our school the EYFS teacher acts a 'Key Person' to all children in EYFS, supported by the Teaching Assistant.

10. Effective Transitions

We work hard to ensure an effective transition between Nursery and Reception by having good links with Sissinghurst Learning Tree Preschool. Regular visits are undertaken by the EYFS teacher. The EYFS teacher meets with staff to discuss new intake children. Staff and children from preschool are regularly invited to school events. All children fill in a questionnaire before starting at Sissinghurst to give staff the opportunity to get to know the children before they start. However, we also arrange home visits before the children start school with staggered start dates and morning sessions initially. We ensuring every child has a Year 5 buddy that they meet when they start school. The Year 5 children visit them when they start school, help them on the playground during lunchtime.

The transition between Reception and Year 1 is another key transition for the children and in Term 6 the Reception and Year 1 Class Teachers meet to discuss the needs and achievements of every child. This information is used by the Year 1 Teacher to plan for each individual child on arrival in Year 1. In Year 1 children continue to have the opportunity for some Child Initiated Learning with planned provision to help children with their learning needs.

11. Safeguarding and Welfare

"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." DFE 2014

At Sissinghurst School every member of staff is fully trained on safeguarding children and our procedures are outlined in our Safeguarding Policy and meet the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021). The children are always supervised with at least one member who is fully trained in Pediatric First Aid. There is a first aid kit in the classroom and full first aid kits available from the Medical Room. We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare of children.
- promote good health, preventing the spread of infection (see Risk Assessment

for Covid19 for details) and taking appropriate action when children are ill.

- manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment are safe and suitable for purpose
- ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.