

# Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy Statement



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

# Sibford Gower Endowed Primary School

*We prepare our children for the future by promoting a love of learning, encouraging aspiration, valuing the individual, developing self-confidence and supporting contribution through participation.*

## 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'**

- 'Early Years Foundation Stage Profile'

Department for Children, Schools and Families 2012

Acorn Class at Sibford Endowed Primary School is the learning base of the Early Years Foundation Stage children and those children in Year 1 whose learning needs are best met by being in a learning environment that is informed by the principles and practice of the EYFS curriculum.

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## Aims and ethos

At Sibford Gower Endowed Primary School, we believe that each child is unique and is entitled to an education that builds upon their own individual experience. We recognise that each child enters school at a different stage of physical, social, emotional and intellectual development and we strive to work in partnership with parents and carers to build upon what each child already knows, to enable them to develop toward their full potential. Experience in childhood informs the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Sibford Gower Endowed Primary School we greatly value the importance that our children's experience in the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and the development of the whole child. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

## Principles

The EYFS is based upon four principles

- **A unique child:**

We recognise that every child is a learner who, with the right support, 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 celebration and rewards to encourage and develop a positive attitude to learning. Acorn class has a 'Wow' board for sharing of personal achievements, and our termly planning is shaped and informed through shared communication with parents about the interests and needs of their child.

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- **Positive relationships:**

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent through developing secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families. Each family has a key worker who visits them during the transition phase from pre-school to school and we continue this link throughout the year. Parents are able to communicate with their key worker on a daily basis, through face to face discussion, through communication books, formal/informal parent meetings and via the class email. Special family events, e.g. birthdays, birth of siblings, special visitors, unusual holiday experiences, etc. are celebrated in Acorn class and children feel that their personal and cultural life experiences are valued by the adults they work with, and their peers.

- **Enabling Environment.**

We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Acorn class and the area outside the classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and also rest. The classroom and outside area is set up so the children are able to find and access equipment independently.

- **Learning and development.**

Through close and ongoing observations, we assess the children's interests, stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging and achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning.

Our curriculum enables the child to learn and develop skills, attitudes and understanding in the following areas of learning –

**The prime areas:** Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Communication and Language, Physical Development.

**The specific areas:** Literacy, Maths, Understanding the World, Expressive Arts and Design.

For further information, please refer to **The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum** document on our school website.

### **Play**

We believe that both indoor and outside play is fundamental in supporting the ways in which young children most effectively learn. Through play, children develop skills across all the prime and specific areas of learning. They are then be able to apply these skills to in a wide range of other contexts and learning situations as they move forward through school.

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In a secure environment with effective adult support our children are able to:

- Explore, develop and represent experiences that help them make sense of the world.
- Practise and build up concepts, ideas and skills.
- Learn how to control impulses and understand the need for rules.
- Be alone, be alongside others or play co-operatively.
- Take risks and make mistakes.
- Think creatively and imaginatively.
- Communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

Adults in our setting support play by:

- Planning and resourcing a stimulating environment.
- Supporting children's learning through planned play.
- Extending and supporting children's spontaneous play.
- Extending and developing children's language and communication in their play.
- Listening to all forms of children's communication and their ideas and taking these into account when developing play and planning.
- Narrating children's play.
- Asking questions about children's play.

Adults enable children to use and apply skills learned and practised through play, to be successful in other contexts, benefiting them throughout their early education and beyond.

Our EYFS learning environment includes a large, open plan classroom, an art bay and creative area, a role play area, a well-stocked 'book corner', a small world area and a securely enclosed and well-resourced outdoor play area. The staff members in Acorn class work closely together as a supportive team, ensuring that children become familiar with all adults and routines, and promoting confidence and emotional security.

### **Planning, Recording and Assessment**

Our planning is informed by our knowledge of the children and our observations of children involved in child initiated play, and adult initiated/led activities. It is based on the principles of the Creative Curriculum. This is intended to stimulate the children's natural curiosity and fascination and foster a love of learning. We closely assess and track the children's progress, providing experiences that build upon what they already know and scaffold their next steps in learning.

### **Characteristics of learning**

The activities and opportunities provided in our EYFS environment reflect how we believe children learn best.

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Three key characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

1. **Playing and Exploring** – children investigating and experimenting with things. All children are encouraged and supported to 'have a go'.
2. **Active learning** – children actively engaged and absorbed in practical activities, persevering if they encounter difficulties and enjoying their achievements.
3. **Creativity and thinking critically** – children explore and develop their own ideas, making links between ideas and experiences as they develop strategies for problem solving and responding to their experience of the world and different learning opportunities.

## **Parents/Carers**

We believe that parents and carers have a vital role to play in the education of their children. We spend time talking to parents before entry into Acorn class and have developed a highly supportive and effective transition process so that both parents and children feel secure and supported as they join the Sibford Gower School community. This transition process includes; Nursery visits by Key workers, home visits, class visits by the children, a parent/carer information evening and Open Days. The open door policy at our school begins in the EYFS year in Acorn class, and we also operate a weekly 'drop-in' time for parents who wish to talk privately or at greater length. Parents are invited to attend formal interviews up to three times a year for discussion around their child's Learning Journey, successes, next steps in learning and future goals.

## **Transition**

We continue to foster strong links with our main pre-school provider (The Ark, Epwell). Julia (Ark Manager) attends EYFS information sessions throughout the year and visits Acorn class frequently with the children who are rising fives after the February half term. Frequent visits are also made by the key workers from Acorn class to The Ark nursery to aid smooth transition into Acorn class. These visits involve transition discussion between key workers, observations and playing alongside children.

Once the new EYFS Acorn cohort is confirmed, this process is rolled out to as many of the pre-school providers as possible.

## **Inclusion and Equal Opportunities**

We believe that all children have entitlement to the full range of the curriculum, irrespective of ability or disability, social background, culture or gender.