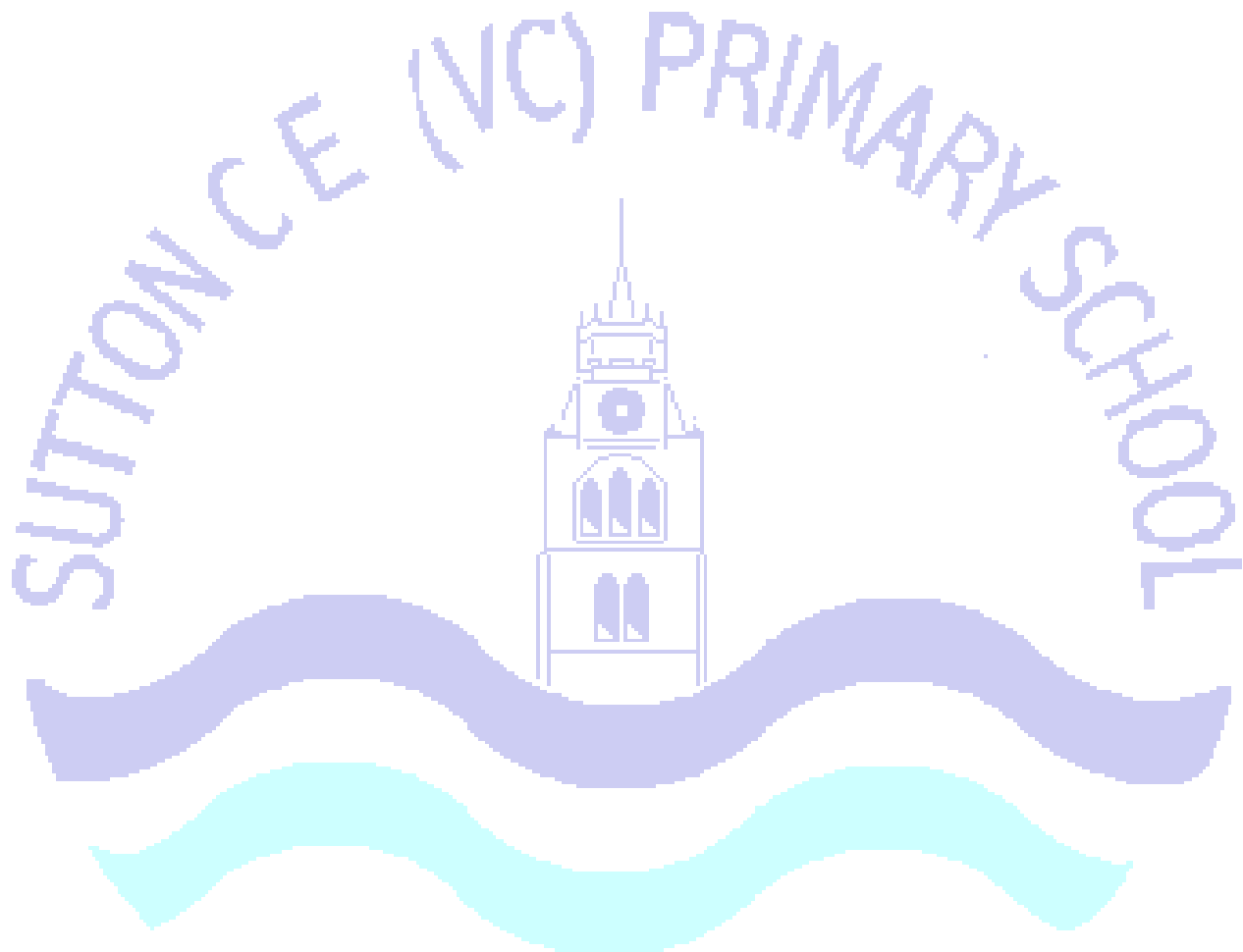




Early Years Policy

September 2025



Sutton CofE (VC) Primary School Early Years Policy

Our Values and vision

Our Christian Values are firmly rooted in this policy and underpin everything that we do. At Sutton CE (VC) Primary School we 'STRIVE' to be the very best that we can be and our values underpin our approach to ensuring the best possible start for pupils in our care.

'All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives, so their experiences in early years have a major impact on their future life chances.'

Statutory Framework for EYFS Dated: 14 July 2025 / Effective: 01 September 2025 (pg.7)

Ethos

Play underpins the delivery of the EYFS as children learn best through practical, hands-on experiences and interactions within a rich and diverse environment that supports both their interests and learning needs, enabling children to be motivated explorers of their learning. Play is one of the main ways in which children learn and develop. It helps to build self-worth by giving a child a sense of his or her own abilities and to feel good about themselves. Play is very important to a child's development; it is an integral part of a child's Early Years Foundation Stage and supports their learning journey too. Young children can develop many skills through the power of play. They may develop their language skills, emotions, creativity and social skills. Play helps to nurture imagination and give a child a sense of adventure. Through this, they can learn essential skills such as problem solving, working with others, sharing and much more.

Intent - This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the wide 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
- We create a safe, happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences which allow our children to develop and learn in different ways and at different rates
- Children's emotional wellbeing is supported through positive relationships with the adults at our school, ensuring they feel cared for and valued
- A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers to help every child reach their full potential

Structure of the EYFS at Sutton CofE (VC) Primary

Paintbox

Our Pre-school, Paintbox, takes children 2 years and 6 months, until they begin school. The Pre-school has a Manager who is responsible for staffing, systems and procedures and a Teacher who is responsible for teaching and learning. Together they oversee the day to day running of the provision,

along with Pre-school Assistants who support the children's learning and development. The whole Early Years team is line-managed by the EYFS leader.

Reception

The School has a one and a half form intake, we can admit 45 Reception age children each year. We have two Early Years Reception classes with two full time teachers as well as Teaching and Learning Assistants. Depending on the number of children in each cohort, we may mix one or both Reception classes with year 1, in accordance with our class mixing policy. The EYFS team work closely together to ensure that the Early Years provision is consistent across both Reception classes, whilst also working with the Key Stage 1 team to ensure the delivery of a consistent Year 1 curriculum. We provide well organised, planned and stimulating shared learning environments both indoors and out.

Foundation Stage Curriculum

When planning for teaching and learning we adhere to the Statutory Framework.

There are seven areas of learning and development which are equally important and inter-connected.

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

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

There are also 4 specific areas of learning which include essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society and through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied:

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

When planning and facilitating these activities we reflect on the different ways that children learn and support children in using the three Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning, essential to ensure they become effective and motivated learners for life.

- Playing and Exploring
- Active Learning
- Creating and Thinking Critically

The Early Years Foundation stage guidance identifies “Early Years Outcomes” which will be used to identify developing knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes that children need if they are to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. These goals establish the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the foundation stage.

Planning and Teaching

Teaching and learning is organised through the use of long, medium and short term plans. Both Paintbox and Reception follow themes throughout the term.

At the core of our children’s learning is the EYFS curriculum which is carefully planned to ensure we provide progression and continuity of skills in the seven areas of learning and development. These areas of learning depend on each other to support a rounded approach to early years' development. All the areas will be delivered through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. We make use of our outdoor area on a daily basis, which is an extension of our classroom. Our children also benefit from a weekly session in our ‘Forest’ area. Effective interactions between adults and children develop children’s communication, problem solving and reasoning skills as well as positively affecting their attitudes to learning and behaviour.

We plan our environment based around children’s next steps in learning, based upon where they are now and where we want them to be. We also consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in our care and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, we consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate. The most important aspect of our provision is that it is carefully considered in the light of how children play and need to play and which gives them the freedom to explore, igniting the children's imaginations and fostering a love of learning.

Inclusion in the Early Years Foundation Stage

We believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children so that they make the appropriate progress by the end of the Foundation Stage. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of all our children regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, special educational needs, disability, gender or ability, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

SEND

With support from the school’s SENDCo, practitioners plan for children with special and additional educational needs. The focus will be on removing barriers for children where they already exist, ensuring that children can develop their full potential. If a child with identified SEND enters Early Years, a transition plan will be set up before the child starts, as detailed in the SEND policy.

Observation and Assessment

Pre school practitioners observe every child from their first day at Paintbox. These observations form a baseline for tailoring provision to meet the needs of each unique child, ensuring all children make expected progress and no child falls behind.

Within the first six weeks of starting Reception all children must complete a Statutory Baseline Assessment (RBA). The RBA assesses a child in early mathematics, literacy, communication and language. The purpose of the RBA is to form the starting point for primary progress measures.

Ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. In both Paintbox pre school and Reception, children are assessed against Development Matters. During co-play and direct teaching, we observe children to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. We record them on an electronic learning journey 'Tapestry' which the parents can access from home. These observations are used to feed into planning for skills and next steps. We encourage parents to share observations and experiences from home.

The Early Years Lead, along with the Paintbox Manager and Teaching and Learning lead track and monitor developmental progress of children.

In the final term of Reception, children will be assessed to see if they have reached the expected national measure of a Good Level of Development (GLD). The 'profile' reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child.

The profile is moderated internally, EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile, which informs the dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development, learning needs and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1.

Transitions

We value the importance of children's wellbeing and confidence and we understand that starting pre-school and school can be a challenging and apprehensive time for children and their families. Therefore, we aim to ensure that children feel safe, secure and settled in their new environment by effectively implementing a transition plan across the Early Years Foundation Stage. There are many strategies taken to aid effective transition including parental involvement, environment planning and plenty of opportunities for new teachers and children to meet in a familiar context.

Paintbox:

Children who are 2 years and 6 months old and have applied to attend the Pre re-school will be invited to attend a stay and play session before they start. This session will last an hour. A further stay and play session may be offered if needed. Depending on availability, parents are able to choose the sessions that they require. They can also join the waiting list for a preferred session.

Our Induction process includes:

- Setting / School tours encouraged to all prospective parents and children

- On completion of registration paperwork, each child/family will be allocated a key worker
- The allocated key worker will phone families for a registration/induction phone call
- Children will be invited for a 1 hour visit to Paintbox without their parents
- Within a week of the child's first visit they will start their allocated sessions
- Key workers will keep in regular contact with families via face to face conversations/phone calls or Tapestry
- Children with additional needs, by mutual agreement, may begin Paintbox on a reduced timetable

Reception:

All Admissions to the school's Reception intake are handled centrally by the Local Authority. This process begins in the Autumn Term when information is sent to all parents of children who will be five years old during the next academic year. All applications need to have been received by the Local Authority by the middle of January.

Notification of the outcomes of the Admissions process are sent to parents early in the Summer Term.

Our Induction process for a new Reception intake includes:

- Visits to school for children and their parents prior to starting school to meet and familiarise the children with the school
- Reception teacher/s may visit the pre-schools to talk to children, read stories, get to know the children and chat to key workers
- A Reception information evening held in the summer term will provide an opportunity for parents to find out about the curriculum, school uniform, school lunches and to meet the Senior Leadership Team, class teachers and other parents
- In July we invite your child to a stay and play session with their parent
- Offering Home Visits or meetings at school, with their child's key adults at the start of the term. The purpose of a home visit is to get to know your family and is the perfect time to ask any questions or share any information you feel that we should know
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Safeguarding and welfare procedures

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy and we follow the guidelines set out in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements that applies from September 2025

Children's safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. We have stringent policies, procedures and documents in place to ensure children's safety. We promote the good

health of our children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of fruit snacks, drinking water being available at all times and following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident.

Staff and visitors are prohibited from using their mobile phones in our classrooms, only the class iPads or digital cameras are used to photograph. Across the EYFS unit there is always a paediatric first aider available. We have a dedicated safeguarding team which includes Mrs Garbutt, Mrs Wallace and Miss Camper (see safeguarding Policy). The Paintbox manager also has Designated Safeguarding lead training for Early Years and Childcare.

All Staff are trained to log incidents and use the safeguarding system to log any concerns regarding any aspects of safeguarding and behaviour. All staff are vigilant in reporting concerns and are aware of and understand the statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'. They have read and understood responsibilities regarding the document.

All other policies related to the EYFS can be found on our School Web pages. These include:

Child Protection & Safeguarding Policies

Health & Safety Policy

First Aid Policy

Medicines Policy

Intimate Care Policy

Sleep Policy

Complaints Policy