

Sandbank and Valley Nursery Schools Federation Curriculum Intent

The curriculum at Sandbank and Valley Nursery Schools Federation means everything children experience and all the opportunities they have in school.

We provide an inspirational language-rich environment indoors and out with quality furniture and resources alongside well-trained and experienced staff in order to provide the best curriculum (experiences, opportunities) that enable children to develop the skills and knowledge they need right now and in preparation for the future.

Children with SEND are fully included and are supported with highly trained staff and a bespoke environment for them to access.

We plan a broad and balanced curriculum appropriate for their age and stage of development which takes account of children's interests. We provide a balance of adult-guided teaching alongside opportunities that support independence and social learning. Provocations are offered in order for children to develop their own thinking with an emphasis on learning through play providing opportunities to revisit, refine and develop skills

We enhance children's learning by changing the environment and extending their experiences and learning by providing real-life experiences about the wider world. We aim for the children to be able to understand that there are similarities and differences in people and communities and these are all valued and respected.

Genuine relationships between children, staff and families is fundamental to our curriculum and we pride ourselves on striving to be our best and being ambitious for all. We are fully inclusive, celebrate cultural diversity and have high aspirations for all. Supporting and signposting families is a crucial part of our intent in order to meet the needs of our children and the communities we serve.

From September 2021 the Federation will adopt the New EYFS Development Matters and will recognise and implement the changes which include a communication and language focus, greater adult and child interaction, less onerous observations and more relevant assessment milestones. Recent times have led to child and adult mental health and well-being of greater importance alongside the physical health including oral health. We recognise that we have a role to play in supporting children to access professional services in and out of school.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

At Sandbank and Valley Nursery Schools Federation children with SEND are fully included and their needs are met and supported in a variety of ways - through one to one support and small group activities. The key person for each SEND child will decide how everyday activities and experiences within the curriculum can be adjusted to ensure their child is fully involved at the appropriate level.

We respond to all needs of the child and the families at the earliest opportunity. We engage with external agencies and seek support and guidance wherever needed. For a child with specific special educational need, medical need or disability we can apply for additional support from the Local Authority to ensure these children with 'additional needs' are receiving the 'over and above' individual support they need.

These children are supported by a 1:1 key person who knows them well and through observations and working with them can tailor and differentiate the curriculum to meet the developmental stage, interests and enthusiasms of each child using methods of delivery that are appropriate to their needs. All support is based on their needs, closely focussed on their next steps and small steps of achievement and progress. These are celebrated in their individual learning journey.

The Early Years Foundation Stage,

The 2021 Early Years Foundation stage (EYFS) is a statutory framework for early years that sets the standards for learning, development and care for children birth to five.

This framework does not prescribe a particular teaching approach but acknowledges that play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, by taking part in play which is guided by adults, when adults respond to each child's emerging needs and they are able to guide their development through warm, positive interactions and enable children to engage in activities and experiences that stimulate their interests. In planning and guiding what children learn, practitioners must reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and adjust their practice appropriately.

The 2021 EYFS gives high importance to the development of speech and language and literacy skills throughout all teaching and learning, especially the acquisition of vocabulary, reflecting the roles these play in improving children's outcomes, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The document outlines 3 key elements:

- characteristics of effective teaching and learning
- prime areas
- specific areas

Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning

Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- **playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- **active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

The Areas of Learning

There are seven areas of learning and development that shape the learning in the early years setting. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving.

Prime areas

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

Children are also supported to learn in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

Specific areas

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

The areas of learning and development in the EYFS

Communication and Language

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. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, story-telling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Children's personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Strong, warm and supportive relationships with adults enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. Children should be supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary. Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently. Through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceably. These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.

Physical Development

Physical activity is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives⁷. Gross and fine motor experiences develop incrementally throughout

early childhood, starting with sensory explorations and the development of a child's strength, co-ordination and positional awareness through tummy time, crawling and play movement with both objects and adults. By creating games and providing opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors, adults can support children to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being. Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination, which is later linked to early literacy. Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practice of using small tools, with feedback and support from adults, allow children to develop proficiency, control and confidence.

Literacy

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).

Mathematics

Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. Children should be able to count confidently, develop a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers. By providing frequent and varied opportunities to build and apply this understanding - such as using manipulatives, including small pebbles and tens frames for organising counting - children will develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary from which mastery of mathematics is built. In addition, it is important that the curriculum includes rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures. It is important that children develop positive

attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, 'have a go', talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.

Understanding the World

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them -from visiting parks, libraries and museums to meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses and firefighters. In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains. Enriching and widening children's vocabulary will support later reading comprehension.

Expressive Arts and Design

The development of children's artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. The quality and variety of what children see, hear and participate in is crucial for developing their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate through the arts. The frequency, repetition and depth of their experiences are fundamental to their progress in interpreting and appreciating what they hear, respond to and observe.

Changes and implementation of the New EYFS 2021 areas of learning includes

Communication and language: the new description states that the development of spoken language underpins all seven areas and role of high-quality back-and-forth interactions and conversations in a language rich environment. It explains the many ways that children acquire new vocabulary, including adult modelling and commenting, conversation, storytelling and role play.

Personal, social and emotional development: now refers to the importance of attachments, within strong, warm, supportive relationships, and the role of self-regulation. Self-care has moved to this area from Physical Development.

Physical development: focuses on the development of gross and fine motor skills and talks about the importance of physical development to children's all-round health and development, including social and emotional well-being

Literacy states that developing a lifelong love of reading is crucial. Reading is broken down into comprehension, which begins from birth, and word reading which comes later. Writing is divided into transcription and composition

Mathematics: this area now focuses strongly on the importance of embedding a deep understanding of number to 10, including the patterns and relationships between these numbers and developing spatial reasoning skills. Children should be encouraged to develop a positive attitude to and interest in maths, not being afraid to make mistakes.

Understanding the world provides examples of ways in which children make sense of their physical world and their community, such as by visiting parks, libraries and museums, and meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses and firefighters. The importance of experiencing a broad selection of books and rhymes to foster the understanding of 'our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world' and associated vocabulary is included.

Expressive arts and design now also includes providing regular opportunities for children to engage with the arts and develop a cultural awareness, as well as hands on creative experiences.