

## SINCLAIR HOUSE

### **EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION POLICY (EYFS)**

#### **Legal Status:**

- Prepared with regard to the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (DfE: 2017)

#### **Applies to:**

- The whole school including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), the out of school care and all other activities provided by the school, inclusive of those outside of the normal school hours;
- all staff (teaching and support staff), students on placement, the proprietor and volunteers working in the school.

#### **Related Documents:**

- Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Early Education (British Association for Early Childhood Education, 2012) (Updated, 2014)
- Early Years Outcomes (DfE: 2013)
- EYFS Statutory Framework (DfE: 2017)
- Checklist for The Early Years Foundation Stage, internal audit of regulatory compliance.
- EYFS Policies applicable to our school

#### **Availability:**

This policy is made available to parents on request from the school Office. It is also available to staff on the school intranet.

#### **Monitoring and Review:**

- This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the EYFS co-ordinator, overseen by the Headmistress.
- The EYFS co-ordinator undertakes an annual review of this policy and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharge (earlier reviews can take place if changes in legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require).

Signed:

Date: 17<sup>th</sup> September 2021



Mrs. Carlotta T.M. O'Sullivan  
Principal & Proprietor

#### **Rationale**

We acknowledge the statement that "Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfill their potential. With reference to "EYFS Statutory framework 2014" a child is a young child up until 1st September following his or her fifth birthday. 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. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up." (DfE 2012)

At Sinclair House School we believe it is essential to create an environment of emotional warmth, with consistent praise and encouragement, so that each child feels individually valued, motivated and confident to meet new challenges and reach our high expectations with a sense of achievement.

We are in agreement with the Development Matters agenda as we want all of our children to be successful learners, to be confident individuals and to become responsible citizens.

### **Aims**

- to promote the social, emotional, physical, spiritual and intellectual development of each child;
- to provide a stimulating and safe environment for learning where children can engage in first-hand experiences;
- to support and extend children's learning through purposeful observation, evaluation and interaction.

### **Effectiveness**

We believe this policy will be effective only if we ensure consistency across the school by regular monitoring

### **Procedure and Structure**

#### *Role of the Headmistress*

The Headmistress has appointed a member of staff for the roles of:

- EYFS Coordinators – Melissa Trott (Prep school site) and Hayley McCarthy (Nursery site)
- Reception Class Teacher – Joanna Cunningham
- Pre-Reception Class Teacher – Melissa Trott
- Nursery Lead – Hayley McCarthy
- Academic Deputy Head – Francesca Paul

#### *Role of the Early Years Foundation Stage Coordinator*

The Early Years Foundation Stage Coordinators will:

- lead the development of the Foundation Stage;
- provide guidance and support to all staff;
- review and monitor by discussion with staff;
- ensure consistency between the EYFS coordinators on both sites;
- annually report to the Principal on the success and development of the Foundation Phase.
- review and monitor the policies specific to EYFS;
- keep up to date with new developments and resources in regards to the National Framework;
- focus efforts to continually review and promote the curriculum;

#### *Role of the Nursery Lead*

The Nursery Lead will:

- lead the development of the Nursery;
- provide guidance and support to all nursery staff;
- review and monitor by discussion with nursery staff;

#### *Role of Teaching and Support Staff*

The teaching and support staff work:

- together as a team in conjunction with the EYFS Coordinators
- to promote confident and independent learners
- to create a learning environment that reflects learning across all seven areas of the Curriculum.

#### *Organisation*

- The EYFS Coordinators are responsible for the management of the Foundation Stage team and the Foundation Stage Area.

### **Curriculum**

The Foundation Stage is based on four main principles namely:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

We believe that the Foundation Stage, which covers the development of children from birth to five years of age, is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. We greatly value the important role that the Foundation Stage plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. Play underpins the delivery of the EYFS Curriculum. We use the document "Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage" to inform planning in the Nursery and Reception classes. Our curriculum for the EYFS reflects the areas of learning identified in the Early Learning Goals from the *Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Handbook* (Standards and Testing Agency, updated 2021). Our pupils' learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skill across all the learning areas. We combine the EYFS Curriculum with the Montessori curriculum as explained in detail in the appendix document *Montessori Provision EYFS Links*.

The Early Learning Goals are organised into seven areas and provide the basis for planning throughout the EYFS, so laying secure foundations for future learning. We aim to create an attractive, welcoming and stimulating learning environment that encourages children to explore, investigate and learn through first-hand experience. Activities are planned for both inside and outside learning. Continuous provision in the EYFS includes water, tactile, sand and creative workshops, Computing, Numeracy activities, drawing, writing and cutting areas and reading and role-play areas.

The EYFS curriculum is organised into seven areas of learning, three prime areas and four specific areas:

- Three Prime Areas
  - Communication and Language
  - Physical Development
  - Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Four Specific Areas
  - Literacy
  - Mathematics
  - Understanding the World
  - Expressive Art and Design

We believe that learning is holistic and none of the mentioned areas of learning can be delivered in isolation from the others. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. One experience may provide children with opportunities to develop a range of competencies, skills and concepts across several areas of learning. Each area of learning works towards a number of relevant Early Learning Goals, which most children are expected to achieve by the end of the EYFS.

#### *Communication and Language*

Early Learning Goals (expected outcomes):

1. Children listen attentively in a range of situations. They listen to stories, accurately anticipating key events and respond to what they hear with relevant comments, questions or actions. They give their attention to what others say and respond appropriately, while engaged in another activity.
2. Children follow instructions involving several ideas or actions. They answer 'how' and 'why' questions about their experiences and in response to stories or events.
3. Children express themselves effectively, showing awareness of listeners' needs. They use past, present, and future forms accurately when talking about events that have happened or are to happen in the future. They develop their own narratives and explanations by connecting ideas or events.

In the early stages of schooling nearly all curriculum areas are covered orally. It is essential that the right environment is created to ensure the pupils use and listen to appropriate language. Whilst we want pupils to experiment with language and to be "Wrong with confidence" we believe that it is important that they hear correct structures immediately. The words please and thank you should be encouraged at all times. We ensure that even the youngest pupil will have the opportunity to speak to the whole school at some time in an assembly or school event and the EYFS teachers also create a wealth of opportunity for pupils to talk to each other and to listen to each other. They are given the opportunity to share their work with other classes and teacher building up strong communication and links throughout the whole school and nursery. At different times during the week a different child is given the opportunity to participate in Show and Tell in their class, presenting something they have prepared at home. The pupils will need to use and subsequently

understand different prepositions through interactive play and discussion. It will be important to create opportunities for pupils to gradually develop their speech patterns beyond the egocentric. Drama provides an excellent medium, as does free play.

### *Physical Development*

Early learning goals (expected outcomes):

4. Children show good control and co-ordination in large and small movements. They move confidently in a range of ways, safely negotiating space. They handle equipment and tools effectively, including pencils for writing.
5. Children know the importance for good health of physical exercise, and a healthy diet, and talk about ways to keep healthy and safe. They manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs successfully, includes dressing and going to the toilet independently.

We relate the physical development of the pupils to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals, which underpin the curriculum planning for pupils aged from birth to five years of age. We encourage the pupils to develop confidence and control of the way they move, and the way they handle tools and equipment. By the provision of equipment like mats, low tables, floor tables, the children are given the opportunity to use their whole body to lift, negotiate space safely and with increasing control. We give all pupils the opportunity to undertake activities that offer appropriate physical challenge, both indoors and outdoors, using a wide range of resources to support specific skills.

Within the Nursery, the Montessori curriculum encourages development of these skills through the Prepared Environment as well as the activities.

- The furniture is child-sized and light enough that children can move the furniture as needed to create space, either individually or as a team.
- The materials are within reach to offer children ample opportunity to practice use and mastery.
- Materials are real and provide feedback to help the child learn how to carry/use/manipulate the materials (breakable items, materials make noise when knocked, etc.)
- Montessori activities are by nature interactive, requiring the child to manipulate them, giving them opportunity to refine motor skills. Some activities specifically offer direct and indirect preparation for writing.
- Practical Life and Sensorial activities are specifically designed to teach coordination and dexterity, to build unity between mind and body (physical grace and sensorial perception), and strengthening of the hand in preparation for writing.
- The bathrooms are always accessible to the children and designed to encourage independence in hygiene and toileting.

Weekly teacher led PE sessions are held in the classroom (Nursery site) and in the school playground (Prep site), throughout the school year. During the autumn and spring terms, planning for physical development is provided through the Montessori curriculum (for the Nursery and Pre-Reception) and through the National curriculum (for Reception) focusing on topics such as Movement, Sense of space, using equipment, and Using tools and materials etc. In the summer term, planning surrounds preparation for the whole school Sports Day. The children practice different events: three-legged race, sprint, and egg and spoon. Spontaneous learning opportunities, both indoor and outdoor, are provided daily to ensure that the children are continuing to development their fine and gross motor skills. Pupils' fine motor skills will be developed through a whole range of exercises with malleable materials to develop manipulative skills. This will include the use of playdough, plasticine and other suitable materials. Reception children attend a weekly swimming lesson at the local pool.

Changing for PE: Part of the EYFS curriculum involves assessing the children's ability to dress and undress independently. At Sinclair House School in the Reception class this takes the form of children changing clothes at school for PE lessons. Dressing and undressing is a vital life skill which we feel is an essential part of the curriculum. Changing is always done with two members of staff present. Staff members assist children where necessary but do all they can to encourage children to change independently. Since Nursery, children have been pre-prepared to maintain their own self-care and dressing by the various activities offered on our dynamic Practical Life Area in the classroom. Some examples of the practice for independent

dressing include dressing frames of lacing, buttons, zips and Velcro. Through practice with these materials children are confident to apply these skills when dressing themselves.

#### *Personal, Social, and Emotional Development*

Early Learning Goals (expected outcomes):

6. Children play co-operatively, taking turns with others. They take account of one another's ideas about how to organise their needs and feelings, and form positive relationships with adults and other children.
7. Children are confident to try new activities, and say why they like some activities more than others. They are confident to speak in a familiar group, will talk about their ideas, and will choose the resources they need for their chosen activities. They say when they do or don't need help.
8. Children talk about how they and others show feelings, talk about their own and others' behaviour, and its consequences, and know that some behaviour is unacceptable. They work as part of a group or class, and understand and follow the rules. They adjust their behaviour to different situations, and take changes of routine in their stride.

Within the Nursery, the Montessori Personal, Social and Emotional element of the curriculum focuses on activities of Grace and Courtesy, as an integral part of our school and classroom. Through the ground rules and role models set by the adults, children learn the etiquette of culturally appropriate social norms. This is an essential tool for learning how to play in groups and negotiate play and conflict during such play.

The PSED curriculum also encourages each child to care for themselves and for the world around them. It also teaches our children the universal values of peace, tolerance and trust to live harmoniously in our world. Children are able to manage and resolve conflict in a calm manner whilst valuing each individual's thoughts and opinions.

The Nursery Montessori Knowledge and Understanding of the World activities teach about our earth, other cultures and religions, about botany and life and growth and to take care of our world. Through this, children will discover the personal responsibility to listen, tolerate and care for all things.

Specific teacher led Circle Time lessons are held daily to explore these issues. Through Circle Time activities children can develop social skills, acquire interpersonal relationship skills, increase awareness of their feelings and become more responsible for their behaviour. It is a time to foster a caring group feeling where each member is valued and valuable, where each child gets a chance to speak and more importantly a chance to be listened to. Circle Times should take no longer than 10 minutes and should ideally take place within small groups. Through the many Practical Life activities within our Montessori Classrooms many aspects of the PSED are covered on a one to one basis, or in small groups. Spontaneous learning opportunities, both indoor and outdoor, are provided that explore the topics taught in the teacher led activity.

#### *Literacy*

Early Learning Goals (expected outcomes):

9. Children read and understand simple sentences. They use phonic knowledge to decode regular words and read them aloud accurately. They also read some common irregular words. They demonstrate understanding when talking with others about what they have read.
10. Children use their phonic knowledge to write words in ways which match their spoken sounds. They also write some irregular common words. They write simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others. Some words are spelt correctly and others are phonetically plausible.

#### Reading.

In the EYFS Nursery and Pre-Reception the Montessori Language Program is used. The Montessori Language Program is a thorough foundation for reading and writing. It uses a concrete phonics method of teaching the letter sounds in a way that is fun and multi-sensory. Children are provided with a language-rich environment and an enriching vocabulary through work activities and conversation. Children learn to identify the different sounds in oral language, and then learn the symbols that represent those sounds using sandpaper letters and other sensorial activities.

In Reception, we use the Letters and Sounds Phonic curriculum. The program begins with creating a language rich environment for children, playing games, singing songs and rhymes and playing rhyming games and 'I Spy', helping children to identify the initial letter sounds in words. In Phase 2, children learn individual letter sounds which then leads on to word building and blending starting with 3 letter phonetic words, moving on to Phase 3 and 4. Each series is supported with related word lists, sentence strips and reading books, creating a step by step challenge for the child. Parallel to this, they begin to read sight word (High Frequency Words). The children move on to the Sinclair House School Graded Reading Scheme. Teachers should match the scheme to the reading needs of each pupil. When a pupil is increasingly becoming an independent reader there should be at least 80 - 90 % word accuracy to ensure that the pupil is not reading at frustration level. Pupils in Reception will be given a reading record along with a suitable book, which will be completed and signed regularly by a responsible adult (parent, guardian, grandparent etc.) This will continue throughout the pupil's school journey until they are able readers who 'read to learn'.

The Summer Term is used as a time for review and preparation for Year One. Specific teacher led lessons and activities are presented weekly that focus on each child's sounds and reading skills.

Spontaneous learning opportunities, both indoor and outdoor, are provided to promote their reading skills through providing a range of fiction books within the classroom at appropriate reading ages, as well as alphabet puzzles, nursery rhyme games, sand and water, matching sound cards, and role play.

#### Writing.

Before the pupil begins to learn to form letters it is essential to determine appropriate grip and flexibility of hand movement. The large pencils should be used first since they are more readily gripped by little fingers. Since Nursery, children form a concrete impression of the shape of letters through tracing Sandpaper Letters and they practice on white boards, in sand trays and chalk boards. Purposeful Practical Life exercises such as transferring large to smaller objects are used as an indirect preparation for reading and writing from 2 years of age.

Pupils will learn how to form letters as soon as they are able to control a pencil adequately. Much time in the Nursery and Reception is spent in reinforcing the manipulative skills needed to form each letter singularly. Specific teacher led activities are planned, that focus on the sounds of the week and writing skills. Sentence writing is taught and practiced, with the children creating class books and holiday cards.

Spontaneous learning opportunities, both indoor and outdoor, are provided to promote their writing skills through using a range of materials, chalk, paintbrushes, crayons, to write in a range of situations, shopping lists, letters, stories, captions, or prescriptions. The children are encouraged to include writing in all areas of learning.

#### *Mathematics*

Early learning goals (expected outcomes):

11. Children count reliably with numbers from one to 20, place them in order and say which number is one more or one less than a given number. Using quantities and objects, they add and subtract two single digit numbers or count on or back to find the answer. They solve problems, including doubling, halving and sharing.

12. Children use everyday language to talk about size, weight, capacity, position, distance, time and money to compare quantities and objects and to solve problems. They recognise, create and describe patterns. They explore characteristics of everyday objects and shapes and use mathematical language to describe them.

Within the Nursery, early exposure to Maths comes from experience with the Sensorial Montessori materials. Once the children are ready to move onto Maths, they will be introduced to the early Maths Montessori materials.

Numbers 1 – 20 are presented to children while following their individual development, through materials such as the Sandpaper Numbers and the Seguin Boards. In Pre-reception, the children whilst still using Montessori materials, will be exposed to more complex Maths skills that prepare them for the National curriculum in Reception.

Reception class is aligned to the rest of the Pre Prep in terms of curriculum and we use the White Rose Maths syllabus to review specific skills and prepare for the more structured lessons of Year 1. Specific lessons and activities are presented weekly that focus on chosen learning goals, such as adding one more or money.

Spontaneous learning opportunities, both indoor and outdoor, are provided to promote the social skills and developing Mathematical understanding of young pupils through stories, songs, rhymes and finger games, board games, sand and water, construction on a large and small scale, imaginative play, outdoor play and "playground" games, cooking and shopping, two - and three - dimensional creative work with a range of materials, and by observing numbers and patterns in the environment and daily routines.

### *Understanding of the World*

Early learning goals (expected outcomes):

13. Children talk about past and present events in their own lives and in the lives of family members. They know that other children don't always enjoy the same things and are sensitive to this. They know about similarities and differences between themselves and others, and among families, communities and traditions.
14. Children know about similarities and differences in relation to places, objects, materials, and living things. They talk about the features of their own immediate environment and how environments might vary from one another. They make observations of animals and plants and explain why some things occur and talk about changes.
15. Children recognise that a range of technology is used in places such as homes and schools. They select and use technology for particular purposes.

During termly topics such All About Me; me and My Body; and Five Senses the specific learning goal (13) is met through a variety of planned activities and Show and Tell. Each child celebrates a birthday walk, which involves their parents sharing photos, anecdotes and special moments from each year of the child's life. Spontaneous learning opportunities include: providing role play opportunities with a variety of resources reflecting diversity, sharing stories to reflect the diversity of children's experiences, and visiting different parts of the local community.

The corresponding learning goal (14) is met through units of study such as All about Me, Underwater World, Life Cycles, and Growth and New Life. These topics explore the similarities and differences between their own homes and those of others, including different animal habitats.

Spontaneous learning opportunities include: providing stories that help children make sense of different environments, providing resources to create and explore maps and plans, paintings, drawings, and models of observations of known and imaginary landscapes, and giving opportunities to design practical environments.

The EYFS curriculum covers technology topics through the specific learning area of Understanding the World and corresponding learning goal (15).

Spontaneous learning opportunities are created with the use of Smartboards in the classrooms and access to Computer room (Pre-Reception and Reception) and access to educational websites and software use on iPads (Nursery) during free play and free flow work cycle.

The EYFS covers Science topics through the specific learning area of Understanding the World and corresponding learning goals (14). Science topics are linked with units of study such as me and My Body, Growth and New Life, Underwater World: Oceans and their Marine Life and Dinosaurs and Minibeasts. The Knowledge and Understanding of the World Montessori curriculum also covers a variety of areas including Biology, Zoology, Solar System, and History. The Teachers plan activities accordingly and rotate them on a termly or child interest basis.

In Reception they explore Science through Investigation and Exploration sessions indoors and outdoors and discussions on termly topics.

Spontaneous learning opportunities, both indoor and outdoor, are provided that explore the topics taught in the teacher led activity. Our dynamic Montessori Culture Area includes scientific based materials such as floating and sinking, soluble and insoluble and magnetic and non-magnetic and a variety of experiments.

Learning outside the classroom (LOTC) through our off-site activities, known as class trips, are fundamental in exploring new environments and developing an understanding of the world. In addition, Reception partake in weekly Outdoor Classroom, focusing on learning from your environment, cooking, growing, building and team building exercises.

### *Expressive Arts and Design*

Early Learning Goals (expected outcomes):

16. Children sing songs, make music and dance, and experiment with ways of changing them. They safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function.

17. Children use what they have learnt about media and materials in original ways, thinking about uses and purposes. They represent their own ideas, thoughts and feelings through design and technology, art, music, dance, role play, and stories.

The EYFS covers the corresponding learning goals (16 and 17) through spontaneous learning and structured lessons. Spontaneous learning is provided through opportunities, both indoor and outdoor, for children to explore accessible materials and use their skills and explore concepts and ideas through their representations. Reusable resources such as Lego, Mobilo, Playdough and Magnetic construction tiles are available in the classrooms and in the playgrounds for further spontaneous learning. Planned activities are presented weekly in correspondence with the termly topic.

The EYFS covers the corresponding learning goals (16 and 17) through spontaneous learning opportunities, weekly teacher led art activities, and peripatetic lessons. Spontaneous learning opportunities are created through making materials accessible so that children are able to imagine and develop their projects and ideas and providing resources for mixing colours, joining things together and combining materials. Planned Art activities are presented at least once weekly to extend children's experiences and expand their imagination. Peripatetic lessons include weekly music lessons taught by a Music Teacher.

To appreciate the approach in EYFS please observe the pupils in this area of the school and consult the other curriculum policies, the *'Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Handbook 2013'* (Standards and Testing Agency, 2012), *'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage'* (DCFS 2012), and *'Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage'* (British Association for Early Childhood Education, 2012), The Revised EYFS Statutory Framework (Apr 2017) and our own Montessori Provision policy.

### **Organisation of Resources in the EYFS**

Montessori places great emphasis on the prepared environment meaning that there is a place for everything and everything in its place. In reflection of this, we make resources accessible to the children, wherever possible, so that they access resources independently. We ensure the safe use and storage of resources by the children, but we also support their independence and problem-solving abilities.

### **Transition in the EYFS**

#### *Induction into the Nursery*

Children will be invited into the Nursery for an induction session during the term before they are due to start and then a staggered introduction to the setting, with as much parental support as needed for the child, during the first week. This enables the children and their parents to develop positive relationships with the Nursery team. Information will be gathered from parents/carers regarding the child's home life, development, dietary requirements, favourite activities and any areas of concern, before they join the Nursery. This helps staff to build up a picture of the individual child and their family. The child will be encouraged to spend the session taking part in activities independently from their parent/carer, therefore giving staff the opportunity to assess how they might settle in the future. Parents will be communicated to, prior to their initial induction session, giving information on the MMC (My Montessori Child interactive



communication tool) and important diary dates. At the beginning of the Autumn Term, an information evening is held for all parents to discuss, structure, routine and the Early Years progression from Nursery at 2 to pre-Reception and Reception at 3+. In the Spring and Summer Term, new families joining the Nursery will receive an Information Guide and Senior Management is on hand with any follow ups.

#### *Transition from Nursery to Pre-Reception*

When the children are personally and academically ready for the transition, the Nursery Manager, as well as the Pre-Reception teacher and Prep School Head Mistress will have a meeting with the children's parents to discuss the transition and the new routine before agreeing to the transition, to ensure that all teachers and parents are happy with this transition.

The children that are remaining at Sinclair House for Reception will be a priority to transition to Pre-Reception so they can have at least one term of exposure to their new environment before heading into Reception. Once these children are prioritised, the rest of the Upper Nursery children will be considered, in order to give them the opportunity to experience a bigger Prep School environment.

The Upper Nursery teachers will begin talking to the children about moving to Pre-Reception and schedule a 'meet your teacher' event with the Pre-Reception teacher. Once they join Pre-Reception a similar settling process will happen, that allows some flexibility within the daily routine, should the child find it difficult to settle in.

#### *Transition from Pre-Reception to Reception*

During the Summer Term, the children born on or before the 31<sup>st</sup> of August, and who are going to progress to the Sinclair House Reception classes, will be prepared for the transition.

The children will spend at least one term in Pre-Reception before their transition in the Autumn term and would have been exposed to the Reception Teacher. So, the children moving up should be confident in their transition, and always have the Pre-Reception teacher on hand to help any settling, as the classroom is directly next door.

#### *Transition from the EYFS to KS1*

A transition morning is held at the end of the Reception Year for children to meet their Year One teachers and explore the new setting of the first level of the school building. Children are made familiar with the building throughout the Reception Year by visiting other classes. Reception teachers meet with the Year One teachers to share the information in the EYFS Profile work samples and photographic evidence.

#### **Planning in the EYFS**

Details of topics/themes used in our setting are logged and kept on the software we use called My Montessori Child (MMC). Planning documentation includes a long-term plan (3-year cycle), a medium-term plan outlining each topic and related activities to cover all areas of the EYFS relating to that theme. This is alongside the individual planning for each child, which their key teacher is responsible for, and overseen by the Nursery Manager and EYFS coordinators. This ensures breadth and balance of the curriculum, as well as variety of planned and free choice activities. Teachers collaborate ideas for planning activities, resources, and special events.

Planning effectively covers the whole of the EYFS curriculum in the Nursery and Pre-Reception and is based on the Montessori curriculum. EYFS curriculum planning in Reception is based on the National Curriculum.

In the Nursery, outdoor learning is planned alongside the medium-term plans and all of the outdoor resources and equipment also cover all of the areas of the EYFS curriculum. These plans include provisions for both spontaneous and teacher led activities. Provisional wet play plans are in place in the case of bad weather that inhibits outdoor learning. In Pre-Reception and Reception, outdoor learning is planned on a weekly basis, in line with the termly topic.

All specialist teachers are required to plan their lessons in advance to ensure that the lessons link to the EYFS Early Learning Goals.

### **Assessment and the EYFS profile**

We adhere to the Childcare Act Section 39(1) (a) 2006 which stipulates that Early Years providers must ensure that their provision meets the learning and development requirements as specified in the EYFS (Learning and Development Requirements) Order 2007 (amended 2012). We therefore assess each child at the end of the Reception Year against the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELGs) as set out in the Foundation Stage Profile Handbook 2013 (Standards & Testing Agency, 2012). Assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage is on-going and is an integral part of the learning and development process.

At Sinclair House School we collect evidence and knowledge throughout the year to enable us to be able to assess each child against the ELGs at the end of the year. In the Nursery setting, this evidence is collected on our only record keeping system My Montessori Child. In the Reception class, this evidence is collected on our internal SHS Progress Tracker document. This evidence is used to produce an Early Years Profile for each child in the summer term. A completed profile contains 20 items of information: the attainment of the child assessed in relation to the 17 ELG descriptors (i.e. whether they are meeting the **expected** outcome for the end of the EYFS, **exceeding** the expected outcome, or if the skill is **emerging**), together with a short narrative describing the child's three learning characteristics. The information in the EYFS profile is passed on to the Year One team at the end of the year to allow them to provide an easy transition into Key Stage One. It is also shared with the parents/carers at Parent Teacher meetings, and also in our termly reports, which allow teachers and parents to follow targets that children are working towards.

At Sinclair House School we are mindful of the fact that the EYFS profile should not be completed solely with the knowledge of a single practitioner. As such we take into account a range of viewpoints when making our final judgments for the EYFS profile in order to build a more holistic view of each child's skills and achievements. This will include information from other adults who are in contact with the children: parents, teaching assistants, peripatetic teachers and support staff (e.g. speech therapists) where applicable.

All assessment at Sinclair House School EYFS is ongoing: we collect evidence throughout the year and use the descriptors listed in the document 'Early Years Outcomes' (Department for Education, 2013) to enable us to monitor and assess children's progress continuously throughout the year and best plan for the future learning and development of the children in our care. We use a range of methods to assess. We capture spontaneous moments of learning and planned activities using methods such as photos on My Montessori Child. Methods such as the SHS Progress Tracker document and work samples are used to track children in the Reception class. In the Nursery, Staff endeavor to complete a minimum of two observation per child per week on My Montessori Child and in the Reception class, teacher complete observations in each area of learning using the SHS Progress Tracker. Our assessments are always based on our knowledge of the children in our care. These observations are then evaluated by the teacher, focusing on the areas of learning that they demonstrate, and the possible targets or areas for further development that may arise from them. Nursery parents have password protected access to their child's page on the secure portal, My Montessori Child.

When children enter Sinclair House School Reception Class, we assess their knowledge of letters and sounds. This enables us to teach each child to read in a way which best suits their learning style and needs. We assess reading continuously, by reading with every child each 'reading' day. The children's parents may also then comment on their child's progress in reading, so as to better inform the teachers, and provide an alternate perspective on each child's abilities. We also complete more formal assessments such as practical Mathematics assessments which are completed on a 1:1 basis with each child.

From September 2016, in the first half term of the autumn term, children in the Reception class will sit the CEM Baseline Assessments. They then sit the same assessment in June to assess progress.

The EYFS profile is created at the end of the year. The teacher will examine and review all the evidence collected for each Early Learning Goal (ELG), and using this and their own knowledge of the child, they make a judgment as to which of the level descriptors best fit that child. The level descriptor for each ELG makes up the child's EYFS Profile. Profile judgments are moderated internally, at moderation meetings held at the end of the year, and also externally, by the Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham on selected years.

### **Tracking children's progress in the EYFS**

We track children's development and progress across the 7 areas of learning, with the ultimate view to creating the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) profile at the end of the Reception year. Children throughout the EYFS are tracked using the MMC tool in the Nursery and the SHS Progress Tracker in the Prep. The tracking ultimately scores against the Areas of Learning identified in the document 'Early Years Outcomes' (DfE 2013) and a report is completed at the end of each term showing each individual child's development. These reports are shared with the children's parents at the end of term.

Throughout Nursery and Pre-Reception, the children's development is tracked using MMC. At periodic intervals (termly) the EYFS coordinators focus on each child's profile to ensure they are working within the age brackets that are appropriate for them, individually. This allows practitioners to identify children who are not meeting the appropriate developmental milestones for their age.

If any anomalies appear, then the EYFS coordinators will discuss this with the child's key teachers and work to identify children who are not meeting the appropriate developmental milestones for their age and offer extra intervention to allow for further support for the child's development.

Twice a year, the teachers hold a parent's evening where they discuss the child's development with their parents and answer or address any concerns in development. It is the key teachers aim to plan and observe their key children working within their appropriate age brackets, and to provide challenges to push their development. This way we ensure that all of the children are capable and ready for their transitions to the next class.

Termly reports are generated from MMC which are based on the evidence and observations that have been made by the teachers. These reports also have teacher input, in regard to commenting on the child's progress. These are shared with the parents at the end of term.

Tracking and reports in reception is done using our SHS Progress Tracker and termly reports are written based on formative and summative assessments.

Below is a summary of our more informal tracking, which is integral to our daily practice, in each of the areas of learning:

- Communication & Language- Children weekly take part in 'sharing' activities such as the 'news' or sharing special work they have created during work cycle. We conduct observations, take photos and note key moments during this time. At the end of the session these are reviewed to identify areas of communication in which pupils need more help, so that we can plan opportunities to further develop these skills
- Physical Development- We track children's fine motor skills development using weekly observations. We also monitor children's ability to do and undo their buttons and zips when dressing for swimming or after PE. We track their development with regard to gross motor skills through our weekly PE sessions, in which we complete PE assessment sheets at the end of each unit of learning.
- Personal, Social and Emotional Education- Planned observations form the main basis of our tracking for PSED, as we evaluate running observations on a daily basis as they are completed. These are then compared with previous observations, allowing teachers to monitor progression, and identify specific targets if needed, and areas of weakness. Children also complete self-assessments, which allows us to track their changing attitudes towards their own work, and that of their peers.
- Maths - We complete termly Numeracy Assessments of each child, which, when compared, allow us to chart progress. These are conducted on a 1:1 basis and allow us to assess the key areas of development in Numeracy, focussing on the target areas identified in the last assessment.
- Literacy- the Reading Records provide the basis of our methods for tracking children's ability to read, as significant developments are noted here daily, along with input from parents. The book list is kept in the working file and the regularity of children getting new books and the level of the books is monitored. This allows teachers to note a child's level in comparison to his or her peers at a glance. We track children's writing through collection of samples of writing which allow teachers to notice children who are not making progress and identify targets for future development.
- Maths and Literacy - Assessment is continuous through teacher's observation and scrutiny of work. Children complete CEM Baseline assessment at the start and end of Reception, which provide

standardised scores for individual children in Maths and Literacy. Through the Baseline assessment, we are able to track individual progress and to compare data with a national standardised average.

- Expressive Arts and Design- Observations are used during expressive arts activities, such as music, role play, games, and art sessions. These are evaluated alongside previous observations and work samples in the same area to monitor children's progression.
- Understanding of the World- Children's work samples and observations and reports from peripatetic teachers also support the tracking in Understanding of the World.

### **Involving and consulting children and their parents**

Children are involved in their own assessment at Sinclair House School, to a level which is appropriate to their age. Within the Nursery, self-assessment is built into each piece of material. The stages of completion will allow the child to review their work and progress to the next stage when an initial cycle of the material has been completed and understood. In Reception, children are encouraged to review their learning journey with the class teacher each term. At the end of each term the Reception children also complete a class self-assessment sheet in which they identify areas that they feel they need extra help with, and areas which they feel that they are progressing well in.

We believe that parents are the first educators of young children. The aim of our setting is to support their essential work and not to supplant them. We will endeavor to:

- Inform parents of the daily routine and the educational programme so that they can be involved in their child's learning.
- Make all new parents aware of the setting's systems and policies.
- Ensure that all parents are well informed on a regular basis with regards to their child's progress.
- Ensure that all parents have the opportunity to contribute from their own skills, knowledge and interests to the activities in the setting.
- Welcome contribution of parents in whatever form these may take.
- Ensure that all parents are well informed about meetings, events, etc.
- Encourage parents to play an active part in whole-class activities, such as coffee mornings, art activities mothers and fathers' day breakfast
- Make known to parents the system available to register queries, complaints or suggestions.
- Ensure that parents are actively involved in and informed about their child's learning.

We also welcome and utilise the input of parents to the EYFS profile and use initial baseline assessment completed by parents in the nursery and key information to form part of the EYFS profile. There is also MMC: My Child at Home, which allows for the parents to make their own observations on the MMC system, which are sent to the Teachers, who are then able to add them to the child's profile (although this is not mandatory, some parents make use of it.)

We ask all parents to:

- work in partnership with the school;
- attend the induction process talks which are given to Nursery and Reception parents;
- attend informal parent workshops;
- attend parent-teacher consultation meetings in the Autumn and Spring Terms;
- work with their children at home on relevant learning activities initiated by the school and;
- provide input relating to their child's learning and development to provide the school with a more rounded view of each child's skills and achievements.

### **Marking in the EYFS**

In the EYFS 'marking' involves going through activities with each child, providing verbal feedback on any written work that they may have produced. Where there has been a whole class activity, the teacher will look through each child's work with them on a 1:1 basis and correct any misunderstandings or errors that

may have arisen. At Sinclair House School EYFS we believe that marking should not be solely to focus on errors; therefore, teachers will identify strengths of the work with the child, and may suggest to the child what to focus on in the future, for e.g. 'I like the way you have remembered to use finger spaces. That's great! Next time let's also try to remember to sit our letters on the line'. In more informal, small group work, the teacher will work with the child, providing feedback as the child works through the set activity. The teacher will date the work, and where appropriate will indicate if the work has been completed independently, or with teacher assistance. When providing feedback to the child, the teacher will initial the piece of work to indicate that it has been seen and may add a sticker/stamp/smiley symbol to reward the child for good work.

### **Behaviour in the EYFS**

At Sinclair House School EYFS we recognise that behaviour management techniques must be adapted to take into account the development of young children in the foundation stage. Our behaviour management strategies in the EYFS are based upon the whole school behaviour policy, but with adaptations to account for the children's young age. In the EYFS, our behaviour management strategies are, where possible, positive. It is expected that all staff members who work at Sinclair House School EYFS will use and promote positive language with children where possible. Our behaviour management strategies at Sinclair House School EYFS are based on the following key principles:

- We model expected behaviour
- We use eye contact with children
- We use our body language as well as our words
- We use specific praise to reward positive behaviour
- Where possible, we ignore negative or attention seeking behaviour
- We phrase our requests in a positive manner
- We promote independence and responsibility
- We use our knowledge of each child as an individual
- We do not make assumptions about young children's understanding
- We empower children to choose the right course of action.

For a more detailed explanation of how each of these principles works in the EYFS, please see the Policy 'Managing and modifying behaviour through positive language in the EYFS'.

### **English as an Additional Language (EAL) in the EYFS**

In the EYFS, we plan opportunities for children to develop their English, and we provide support to help them take part in activities. The EYFS helps children learning English as an additional language by:

- building on children's experiences of language at home and in the wider community, so that their developing uses of English and of other languages support one another;
- providing a range of opportunities for children to engage in speaking and listening activities in English with peers and adults;
- ensuring that our teaching and learning environments are supplemented with visual aids and timetables;
- providing bilingual support to extend vocabulary;
- providing a variety of writing in the children's home language as well as in English, if requested;
- providing opportunities for children to hear their home languages as well as English, if requested;
- providing school information in the language of the parent's choice, if requested;
- If necessary, we also ask parents to furnish us with and continually update us with a list of key words and phrases that they and their children use in their native language so that if the child communicates with us in their native tongue at school we can support and reinforce this communication.

For further information, please see Sinclair House School EAL Policy.

### **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Inclusion**

At Sinclair House School EYFS, we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their potential by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning. In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of

our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the foundation stage. Some children progress beyond this point. For these children, we differentiate within the classroom planning more advanced stretching activities, which build upon and advance the work that the rest of the class is completing.

At Sinclair House School we are aware that some children may not progress at the expected rate as outlined in the document 'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage' (DfE 2014). We identify those children who do not meet these developmental milestones through a range of methods, including:

- Information from parents
- Information/records from Playgroups/Nurseries/Pre-Schools
- Information from outside agencies
- On-going teacher observations
- Foundation Stage Profile
- Bi-annual school reports

Those children who may need additional help to meet the Early Learning Goals are largely supported in the EYFS through in-class strategies which are implemented by the class teacher. These may include:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- Providing extra time/ 1:1 activities with the class teacher or a teaching assistant which focus on key areas for development.
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Using resources and activities which meet as many of the seven areas of learning as possible: this allows children with different learning styles to engage to their fullest potential;
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary. This may involve Speech and Language therapy an Occupational Therapy referrals.
- Applying SLT and OT strategies in the daily routine of the children under the direction of external SLT and OT services.

In the instance that in-class methods have been used and the child in question is still not making adequate progress, then a referral is made to the Sinclair House School SENCo – Francesca Monti. The SENCo will observe the child, plan and deliver an initial program of 1:1 intervention sessions to support the class teacher.

In the instance that further needs are identified, the SENCo, in partnership with parents, Nursery Lead and Class teachers meet to discuss next steps and further measures. Possible next steps include:

- Referral to NHS Speech and Language Services
- Referral to NHS OT Services
- Referral to Local Offer for an EHCP
- Referral to independent SLT and OT services linked to the setting.

For further information please see Sinclair House School SEND policy.

### **Accessibility in the EYFS**

At the nursery, children from 2 years of age to 4 years of age are accommodated in three classes across the nursery. At 159 1 class is situated in 2 open-plan classrooms on the ground level having direct access to the garden which is shared with the second open-plan class on the first floor. 1 large open – plan classroom at 196 has direct access to the garden. Changing and disabled facilities are also available on this level. Play and toileting facilities on this level can be accessed easily, with no steps.

Our Reception class is located on the ground floor of Sinclair House Preparatory School. Meals are taken in the dining room on the same floor. The outdoor space is directly accessible from the classroom.

We have experience of working with children from two to five year olds who display a range of disability, including delays in learning, and we are keen to extend our knowledge and skill in this area.

For further information, please see the EYFS Accessibility Plan.

### **Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements in the EYFS**

The Government's statutory guidance, *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013*, helps to outline individuals' responsibility in promoting the safety and welfare of all children. Our school is vigilant and alert to triggers and situations that may put children at risk, and we must be proactive in taking action. Communicating with children effectively is crucial. To do this, we need to know their personalities and be sensitive to their specific needs

The revised Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2017 still reinforces the need for our school to understand and comply with their statutory duties, saying that "Providers must comply with requirements of health and safety legislation (including fire safety and hygiene requirements)". The requirements for the Childcare Register also highlight the need for our school to "take all necessary measures to minimise any risks to the health and safety of the children and staff in their care" (Ofsted, 2014). At Sinclair House School all EYFS Department ensures that the safeguarding policy which applies to the rest of the school also applies to the EYFS.

*To be reviewed by no later than one year after the date shown above. March 2022*

Carlotta TM O'Sullivan  
Principal & Proprietor