

Our Vision
Achievement for all

Our Mission
To fulfil this through developing every child’s personality abilities and talents to the full, to be the best that they can be.

This school is a Rights Respecting school and we support children’s entitlement as expressed in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The rights which apply to this policy are:

Right 2. Non-discrimination. No child should be treated unfairly on any basis.

Right 3. The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all things that affect children.

Right 6. Survival and development. Children should survive and develop healthily.

Right 28. Right to education. Young people should be encouraged to reach the highest level of education of which they are capable.

Right 29. Goals of education. Children should develop their personality, talents and abilities to the fullest.

EQUALITY IMPACT

This policy gives access to all of our students in the Early Years Stage and promotes positive first interactions with the school system.

Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Sandgate we recognise that children are not “School Ready” at this point, and so the Early Years methodology continues until each child is ready to move on to formal learning as tracked through Sandgate Steps Children are directed to Sandgate School due to their Special Educational Need. This usually happens after the age of four, but some students may enter the school before their fourth birthday due to individual need and circumstance. In partnership with parents and carers we enable the children to begin the process of becoming active learners for life.

We endeavour to ensure that children “learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respect their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. We acknowledge that children develop and learn at different rates and support this with consideration of The Characteristics of Effective Learning. We aim to support children in their learning through “teaching and experiences that gives children the broad range of skills, knowledge and attitudes that provide the right foundations for future progress.” (Statutory Framework for the EYFS effective from 4th January 2024)

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The EYFS is based upon four guiding principles:

- A unique child – who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured individuals.
- Positive relationships – supporting the children in becoming strong and independent.
- Enabling environments – where opportunities and experiences respond to the individual needs of the child by developing a strong partnership between practitioners, parents/carers and the child.
- Learning and developing – An acknowledgement that children learn in different ways and at different rates

A Unique Child

We recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children’s attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Learning and Development through an Enabled Environment.

How we teach:

We aim to present a considered and informed view of the breadth and depth of the curriculum appropriate to the needs of each of our pupils, and the levels of achievement that are possible. Our pupils individual learning and sensory processing needs remain a priority and determine the whole of the curriculum delivery throughout a pupil’s time in their EYFS class.

We work to defined priorities to facilitate children’s leaning.

We strive through our pupils’ success: our work is characterised by a positive approach.

We present selected and sharply focused learning opportunities to maximize success.

Assessment is continuous, and is supported by teacher and keyworker assessments and key learning captured on the Evidence for Learning platform both within school and at home. We focus sharply on Baseline Assessments through Sandgate Pre-Steps, Sensory Profiling and Communication Programs - working closely with Speech and Language and Occupational Therapy. Sandgate School has also developed pupil Personal Pathways – MEADOWS, SEAS & LAKES. These pathways ensure a focus on both sensory needs based learning and academic achievement. All these assessments determine how we will engage each child in the Effective Characteristics of Learning.

Constant observation and evaluation ensure that our work is appropriate and relevant to the needs of the individual. Assessment with consideration to the Sandgate Pedagogy Cycle supports future planning and offers evidence to the quality of teaching and learning. We place great emphasis on the Sensory Needs of each individual learner and this is key to the way we promote engagement, motivation and thinking.

We place great emphasis on the development of personal qualities such as self-esteem, self-awareness and adaptability. Such qualities enable our children to develop the tools which will help widen their worlds and enable their families to live a fuller and more inclusive life within the community.

We provide a safe, low arousal environment, which allows the children to be present in the space, and available to learn. We provide engagement opportunities which support the children’s Sensory Profile and EHCP focus.

Sessions are run through Sensory Motivation, where staff will monitor and observe. Through this we build on each child’s skills and develop positive learning attributes.

We devote a large amount of time to Communication and Communication Programs, working closely

2

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with Speech and Language therapists, and these provide our foundation for our Literacy, Language and Communication sessions. Alongside this, there are daily opportunities for Reading, Writing and Number, whilst exploring the world through the Sandgate Theme Curriculum, in an appropriate way for each learning pathway.

We provide ample physical movement activities to comply with the guidelines of our students needing to be active for 3 hours in a whole school day. We also provide opportunities for the children to regulate emotionally and give opportunities for them to meet their vestibular and proprioception needs.

Another major focus of the Catbells Curriculum is Outdoor Learning which takes place weekly. Through this we hope to help the children develop the skills to process different environments and the tools to cope with them, thus supporting parents to be able to access their local community.

Welfare and Behaviour

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See our Safeguarding Policy) Where appropriate, a child who is displaying challenging or difficult behaviour will have a Positive Handling Plan written to address their particular needs and support them. We also focus on individual learning attributes of each child and, where appropriate, follow a specific behaviour profile in order to maintain each child's sense of safety.

"Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them."

At Sandgate School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2024. We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare and safeguarding of children.
- promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
ensure all adults who look after the children are suitable to do so.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

Positive Relationships

At Sandgate we recognise that children learn to be strong independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families and any other agencies involved.

Parents as Partners

3

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We recognise that parents are children’s first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children.

We do this through:

- having strong home/school links supported by a class teacher and familiar support staff, to support individual pupils needs, help the child and parent to become familiar with the setting and help to build a positive relationship between home and school.
- having an EYFS information page on the school website.
- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school. This may include attending the Sandgate Preschool Stay and Play group.
- giving children the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during transfer sessions;
- encouraging parents to talk to the child’s teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents once a year at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child’s progress in private with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child’s attainment and progress at the end of each school year.
- providing a termly support group so that parents can meet each other, and talk about common problems.
- Inviting parents to attend Annual Reviews/EHCP’s during the school year.
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: school plays, coffee mornings, church services.
- giving written daily contact through home school diary/TEAMS as well as the acknowledgement that parents can ring and email school to contact key workers. Staff regularly email and ring parents to discuss key events or concerns.
- ensuring all parents know that their child’s teacher and teaching assistant are their key workers providing support during a transition

Health and Safety

At Sandgate, there are clear procedures for assessing risk which includes procedures for keeping children safe during outings and for any aspects of the environment or provision that may require a further risk assessment. We adhere to safeguarding and child protection policies.

In line with the EYFS statutory framework 2024, at Sandgate we undertake;

- A whole school medicines policy ensuring that there are systems in place to ensure that medicines and the systems for obtaining information about a child’s needs for medication are kept up to date. Medicines will not be administered unless they have been prescribed by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist. Training is provided for staff where the administration of medicine requires medical or technical knowledge. Medicines (both prescription and non-prescription) are only administered to a child where written permission for that particular medicine has been obtained from the child’s parent and/or carer.” A written record is kept each time a medicine is administered to a
- Pupils will medical conditions are displayed inside class cupboard to ensure all staff can refer to this, or new staff are aware of needs.
- Fresh drinking water is available at all times.

4

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- Children’s’ dietary needs are recorded and acted upon when required.
- Each classroom has a snack and sink area that can provide healthy snacks and drinks.
- A first aid box is accessible at all times and a record of accidents and injuries is kept by SLT. Staff are trained in paediatric first aid in line with recommendations.
- A health and safety policy and procedures which cover identifying, reporting and dealing with accidents, hazards and faulty equipment.
- Fire and emergency evacuation procedures.
- A safeguarding policy stating how mobile phones and cameras are to be used and stored securely whilst children are in the setting. Cameras that are used in school must not be used for staff own personal use. Mobile phones are carried by staff when on trips.
- All staff have an enhanced DBS certificate
- Appropriate clothing, in particular in relation to the wearing of heels (stilettos or a heel that comes to a point). Staff are expected to wear clothing that supports them in getting to a child’s level and playing and engaging with children at floor level.
- Staff are up to date with ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ guidelines. A copy is kept in class as a reminder to be vigilant and can be referred to at any time needed.

Qualified Staff and High Quality Training

At Sandgate, we believe in equality for all and there are clear procedures for staff inductions, roles and responsibilities and staff monitoring through, which are supported by the Equalities Act 2010.

- All staff are given Induction Training.
- Professional Development is supported twice yearly meetings and targets for personal progression are set in collaboration with individuals and tracked through Perspective.
- Weekly minuted class meetings are held to discuss any issues concerning children’s development or wellbeing, including child protection concerns, to identify solutions and to support team coaching and improvements in personal effectiveness (EYF Framework 2021)
- Key person/Teacher conversations to support the best outcomes for pupils and staff development.

Information, Records

At Sandgate, we believe ensure that personal data is held securely and that permissions are sort to ensure that parents and carers are in agreement to the use of their child’s data being shared.

- EHCP’s, review paperwork and other relating documents are stored in a secure electronic folder that is only available to staff who have the professional right to see them.
- Photo consent is signed and agreed on entry to the school, to allow pupils photos and work to be published on school social media.
- Photos and work are deleted at the end of each academic year, if this is not required for the following year.
- Staff are aware of the importance of personal data and confidentiality.

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