



## Seva School Early Years Self Evaluation – 2021/22

Quality of Education  
**Intent – Outstanding**

Mrs Dosanjh  
EYFS and Phonics Lead and Teacher  
Email [m.dosanjh@seva.coventry.sch.uk](mailto:m.dosanjh@seva.coventry.sch.uk)



The ethos of Seva School is grounded in the Sikh faith, entwined with British Values.

Our ethos is one of Selfless Service, Excellence, Virtues and Aspiration, with our named virtues being: kindness, courage, honesty, tolerance respect and responsibility. Our school aims to promote an active sense of citizenship and regard for sarbat dha ballah (common good of all). At Seva School, our aim is for our whole community to actively live and breathe all that the Sikh faith encompasses and modern British Values promote.



We have designed every aspect of our curriculum with these aims in mind to create a happy, productive learning environment – from the warm welcome on the door, the calm routines, the fascinating visitors to the inspiring provocations set up for free-flow learning our curriculum involves half termly themes that have been refined over the years in response to Continuous Professional Development and reflection; continually improving enabling environments; and most importantly highly skilled, enthusiastic staff who see every moment as a learning opportunity.

We understand our crucial role as the building block for the rest of the school, both in terms of the child's learning and development, and in the relationship, we build with their families. We work tirelessly to build trust and positive attitudes to learning, knowing that our work as the first welcoming step into the school as a whole is pivotal to a child's success.

We carefully structure our day to balance short adult-led learning, with longer child-led sessions. We expect both approaches to foster the characteristics of effective learning and produce deep level learning. We have clear progression in the skills needed across the Prime (Physical Development; Personal, Social and Emotional Development; Communication and Language) and Core areas (Mathematics, Literacy, Expressive Arts and Design and Understanding the World). We plan a wide variety of experiences (both in and out of school) to enable children's development in coherent sequences. For example, our 'writing' lessons utilise fun gross motor and fine motor exercises, developing into 'I love drawing' sessions to cultivate prewriting shapes before we even start on letter formation. We also changed the way we did the Nativity in Reception, to ensure that minimal child-led learning time was lost to rehearsals and the experience was a thoroughly enjoyable one for all children involved. By putting the child at the centre, we were able to produce a high-quality product, with fabulous singing, speaking and participation from all children, whilst maintaining the children's well-being at the end of a long Autumn term.

Children in Reception benefit from the expertise of specialist teachers leading music, Physical Education and Seva Studies (Sikh-faith) lessons once a week. We effectively utilise other parts of the school such as the sports court, hall and Divan Hall to enrich our children's learning experiences. Children also have focused computing lessons planned by the computing lead of the school once a week, which uses surface pros and Beebots.

Our longstanding partnership with parents and the local community enables us to offer enriching experiences. Parents help us with cooking, reading, talking to children in different languages, explaining their jobs and helping us take children on relevant trips.



We believe in meticulous planning to utilise all opportunities, yet we also practise 'planning in the moment' where knowledgeable staff draw on their training to extend learning, and intervene effectively to support the child's next steps at that point of learning. We adjust our planning in response to our observations, be it minor tweaks or sometimes radical changes based on the needs of the cohort. For example, our post lock down baseline analyses, in reception showed us that children lacked confidence in listening and speaking, 6 children were selective mutes upon entry. We needed to include more practical activities that offered children increased opportunities to participate in activities. We enhanced our 'Fairy tales' theme by adding more story scribing, dramatic story telling and music and movement into our practise. The children also had the opportunity to participate with the theatre performance - Jack and the Beanstalk.

We understand what research tells us; that reading, writing and maths must be purposeful and connected to real-life situations for young children to learn. We deploy Rosenshine's 10 Principles of Instruction and we believe recall, revisiting and repetition are crucial for long-term memory. We



believe that to enhance our literacy and maths skills, our Prime areas must be well taught and fostered. As such we plan for exquisitely beautiful continuous provision and exceptionally engaging adult-led sessions. Developing a love of reading and the ability to communicate clearly is at the heart of all we do. We share this passion and enthusiasm with our parents in our parent events and regular communications.

Where we believe intervention is necessary to support children to make essential gains in their learning, we utilise time where they do not miss out on other curriculum areas (such as when the class is taking turns to wash hands before lunch), or we go to them in their play and skilfully support them in the moment, based on their agenda. The main exception is the Listening and Attention groups carpet time.

**Actions to sustain excellence in our intent (September 2022)**

Members of the team to continually review and amend long-term and medium-term plans in response to their training on the new EYFS framework.

To continually adjust our enabling environments to reflect child-led interest units of work.

Bespoke planning for students with SEND including homework

**Implementation – Outstanding**

All the team have excellent knowledge of child development and the progression in the curriculum we teach, due to the bespoke CPD provided for the EYFS team. Leaders ensure there are constant feedback and reflection opportunities in day-to-day practise, whilst providing cutting-edge training sessions for all the team outside of contact time, to ensure consistency of provision across the EYFS. We always attend the 'Improving Outcomes, arranged by the cluster schools. We find this an invaluable time to view, refine and reflect.

Flipcharts, visual prompts and manipulatives clearly support the learning intentions, teachers support learning by using excellent modelling, intentional vocabulary extension and the use of sentence starters, which are rehearsed, to ensure children communicate in whole sentences. Staff adapt teaching when necessary and skilfully respond to children's contributions and individual needs.

The environment, adult lesson structures and methods are designed to embed concepts long term for children. For Early Years, we use repetitive practice of putting on our own coats, or remembering what an arrangement of three can look like and how many different ways it can be rearranged. Practitioners use any available opportunity, such as counting fruit for snack, or blending words whilst waiting a few minutes to go into the playground, Divan Hall etc.

We assess children constantly, in our daily observations and team discussions so that we know our next steps. Each half term, we assess our children against the 7 areas of Development Matters and record these in a class provision map in order to make plans for intervention, adjust the environment and our teaching practice. All of these judgements are moderated by the whole team to ensure accuracy and a holistic picture of each child. This is not a burden but an enlightening exercise to see the big picture of a cohort and allow reflection.



A calm, yet high energy atmosphere is created in the outdoor area, where high levels of engagement and sustained concentration are seen throughout. We select excellent resources, whilst minimising set up, so that staff are released to pour their energies into high quality interactions during the day. Resources are linked logically to the learning intentions or skills progressions currently underway, whilst also providing open ended scenarios so that children can follow their own imagination or lines of enquiry, and be challenged or supported at any moment.

We welcome many visitors each year to our school to look at our learning environment (both physically and in terms of teaching culture). This has included Amanda King- Early Years Consultant and Advisor.

Judging by the level of engagement and the positive feedback we receive annually in our parent questionnaire, we have a strong partnership with our parent body. The information we give out weekly in our newsletter and additional support leaflets (for example on phonics or maths) sent home, the 'portal videos' and the workshops we offer, have impacted very positively not only our relationships with parents, but importantly, the progress of our children.

Recent Parent Feedback 2022 We are a listening organisation and the teachers are accessible at drop off and pick up every day. This strengthens our partnership and also provides yet another opportunity for dialogue with our parents.

#### Actions to sustain excellence in our implementation (September 2022)

To continue the development of Maths and Reading Packs.

To maintain the high quality of teaching interactions by reviewing pedagogy with the whole team weekly.



## Impact - Outstanding

### Love of reading



Our phonics teaching is logical and rigorous, following Ruth Miskin's- Read Write Inc progression). It is only a small part of our approach to nurturing a love of reading. These include:

- Daily adult-led phonics teaching
- High quality texts in all areas of the Learning Environment (inside and out)
- A wide selection of levelled reading books for children to take home which match their phonic knowledge and a library book for parents to read to them. Children select 1 library book a week and change their reading book every 3<sup>rd</sup> day.
- Reading Journals which support parents with useful reference material and facilitate home-school partnership due to space for messages, which are checked daily
- Ruth Miskin Portal video links emailed weekly to parents to give examples of teaching phonics at home.
- Systematic learning of High Frequency Words in playful ways to promote reading fluency
- A range of texts read daily by the class teacher and Leader of Learning across the EYFS, modelling reading strategies, reading for fun and critical thinking
- Music and movement utilised to enhance the wonder of story
- Dramatic story telling with the children
- Story scribing children's stories
- Guided Reading Sessions for each child daily
- Reading book boxes that are changed regularly
- Key words in the environment (on the radiator, word mats or written on the ground)
- Sharing of favourite books that children have brought in themselves
- Making of class books and individual story books
- Sharing the love for reading through world events such as 'World Book Day'

Reception class	2018	2019	2022
Seva School	61%	77%	70%
Coventry	67.8%	69%	61%
National	71.5%	71.8%	65.2% *

Year 1 teachers have observed in recent years how strong children come into Year 1 ready for the KS1 curriculum. Transition arrangements are strong for children, parents and staff. These procedures are embedded and improved each year. Amongst all this, we take great pride in connecting with the wider school through theme weeks such as Science week, DT week and World Book Day, always keeping sight of our role as ‘foundation stage’ and the importance of a wide curriculum.

**Actions to sustain excellence in our impact (September 2022)**

To further embed ‘Target Tracker’ (electronic observation system) to further our ability to assess, reflect and plan.

To further instil working developments and engagement of parents to ensure GLD remains above local and national targets.

**Behaviour and Attitudes - Outstanding**

We have high expectations of all our children. Transitions are smooth and calm. In whole class learning children are not easily distracted, maintain focus on their activity for a period of time, think of ideas and notice patterns in their experience. In free flow-learning, children bounce back after difficulties, seek challenges and take risks. Staff from across the school comment on the children’s consistently good behaviour and positive learning attitudes. The children are happy, excited and motivated by their experiences. They are well behaved, play cooperatively and develop their independence during their time outdoors. Attendance is good.



Behaviour management is consistent across the team, with nurturing, positive relationships among learners and staff being the bedrock of the positive and respectful culture. Leaders, teachers and learners create an environment where bullying, peer-on-peer abuse and discrimination are not tolerated. If they do occur, staff deal with issues quickly and effectively, in age appropriate ways, and do not allow them to spread. We use these as a teaching and learning opportunity, and liaise closely with parents.

Parents often ask us for advice; we share our 5 principles and help problem solve with them. We also share these thoughts in our school newsletters and social media to further support our parents.



### **Personal development - Outstanding**

‘Choosing time’ or ‘free-flow’ produces the ‘highest levels of engagement’, or purposeful and happy children. When this happens, we know from research that children’s brains ‘light up’; they make connections and are therefore making progress. These open-ended scenarios allow all children to shine. Our curriculum fosters Agency (being able to make choices and decisions to influence events and to have an impact on one’s world); Belonging (being cared for and part of a community) and Competence (the feeling of being successful). Children have space to develop their passions and revisit them as often as they would like. We have the highest expectations for the well-rounded personal development of all children. 100% of children in the EYFS have a freshly prepared school lunch. This time is used effectively to talk to the children, develop healthy eating habits, and encourage them to eat a wide range of foods. In addition, children build relationships with their peers and adults, as the teaching team accompany them into lunch; it is not a different lunchtime team.

Children are physically active. The learning environment is large. We are delighted our children are cultivating a love for the outdoors, which is so important for future physical and mental wellbeing, including respect for and care of the environment. Working stations are different heights within the indoor learning environment. This encourages children to have ‘tummy time’, to squat or kneel at a variety of height surfaces. There are many standing desk surfaces; this not only supports their physical development, but also facilitates their ‘willingness to have a go’ and helps them develop their interpersonal skills, since many more children gather round an activity that interests them, rather than being restricted by the number of chairs. The external areas have been designed to develop core stability and upper body strength. There are places to climb, hang and roll. All reception children have 1 hour of specialised PE a week. Our children are fit and healthy. We encourage participation in sporting events; Reception pupils participate in our annual sports day with Key Stage 1 in the summer term.

We have implemented many Mindfulness and Resilience strategies into our daily routines following recent CPD, to further help our children develop their confidence, independence and maintain mental health. Our school values have been translated into child speak and we refer to them regularly, spotting when children have displayed such characteristics:

- I try new ways of doing things (Creativity)
- I like to explore and learn new things (Curiosity)
- I know others have feelings and I look after them (Empathy)
- I can be strong and say what is true (Integrity)
- I can see opportunities and good in everything (Positivity)
- I’m sure I will be able to do it. It may take time, but it is possible (Self-Belief)
- I keep trying even if it is hard (Resilience)
- I can organise and do things for myself (Responsibility)

Induction and transition arrangements at the start and end of each year, along with arrangements for transition into Key Stage 1 are exemplary.

- Induction evenings for new Nursery and Reception parents in the summer term before they start
- Home visits by the teaching team



- Stay and play session at the start of term for reception
- Taster session for reception children and parents.
- Staggered start for reception; oldest children start first and settle in
- Baseline assessment is carried out in reception gradually over the first month, staff get to know their children very quickly in a calm and happy way.
- Reception children are part time for the first week for Reception
- 10-minute parent consultations for all Reception parents that carried before children start school have ensured we work closely, in partnership, with parents from the outset.
- A whole term of planned events for Reception to get excited and familiar with Year 1
- Year 1 follow EYFS based curriculum organisation in first half term
- Year 1 staff meet with the reception children and staff in the summer term to get to know children
- YR parents attend a transition meeting for Y1

Our children quickly learn and follow the routines and expectations of our setting. They are responsible, respectful and know that they are all needed to contribute positively to their school family. They develop their understanding and appreciation of diversity as we proactively give them opportunities to learn about each other and different cultures. We are careful to ensure a real mixture of images, books, and visitors to promote a deep culture of respect in line with British Values.

Actions to sustain excellence in 'Behaviour and Attitudes' and 'Personal Development'  
(September 2022)

To invest further in books that promote diversity and challenge stereotypes.

Utilise peer observations to share excellent practice and maintain consistency.

To offer further opportunities in the outdoor environment to free up more child-led learning time, fostering resilience and curiosity.

### **Leadership and Management - Outstanding**

A culture of good leadership has been a consistent feature of the Early Years for the last five years. Staffing has been stable and the rigour and continual desire for improvement in our effectiveness has been seamless. The EYFS lead's view and aim is as follows:

"The current team's success is because, 'We stand on the shoulders of giants.' Maintaining the high standard, we already achieve is possible because we nurture our current strengths, allow time for reflection and work collaboratively as an efficient team. We attend to colleagues' well-being by ensuring they feel protected, trusted and celebrated. When teams feel this 'Circle of Safety' (as coined by Simon Sinek), innovation can flow. We release team members to creatively grow this EYFS provision, finding 'less is more' solutions and continually deepening their understanding of how young children learn."

An effective distributed leadership model is well established. As a result, roles, responsibilities and expectations are clear. Shared values, policies and practice are a hallmark of the teaching in Early Years, as evidenced by the constant team teaching, where all members take the lead at various points. Pedagogical skills are developed through regular observations. The Early Years moderation team confirmed that assessment judgements were accurate and robust. Leadership skills are





honed through teacher involvement in the extensive partnership work that is undertaken with local schools.

Safeguarding The safety of our children is our utmost priority. We come under the whole school procedures such as annual safeguarding training and overseen by the Trustees' premises committee which annually check our indoor and outdoor learning environments. Specific EYFS points are as follows:

- The security lanyard system is part of the whole school,
- Front of house bring latecomers in. They always do this in a kind and child centred manner.
- Following the whole school audit, needs were identified, and action taken
- Safer places audit and external audit are carried out annually
- The excellent team communication ensures we are always building up a picture of the children in our care
- All staff complete safeguarding training annually. New staff are always inducted into best practice in regards to dealing with the youngest children in our school.
- First Aid: HLTA is a Paediatric certified first aiders
- Staff are alert to any arising dangers and act promptly to eradicate; for example, several fence panels came loose, the site manager immediately fixed this.

Actions to sustain excellence in Leadership and Management (September 2022)

The EYFS lead to regularly seek feedback from all team members on effectiveness and areas for improvement.

EYFS leader to monitor and increase parent engagement.