

Whitby Heath Primary School



EYFS Policy

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INTRODUCTION

At Whitby Heath Primary School, we greatly value the importance of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in providing a secure foundation for future learning and development. Leaders have adopted an approach based on 'Learning through Play' with an emphasis on building language.

This policy has been developed in conjunction with the relevant DfE guidance and legislation to ensure that each child has a happy and positive start to their school life in which they can build a foundation for a love of learning.

We ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. We promote teaching and learning to ensure children's readiness for the next stage of their education and give children a broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

[EYFS Curriculum](#)

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VISION & INTENT

Our vision for the EYFS at our school is to provide our learners with a strong foundation for success as they begin their journey at Whitby Heath Primary School. Our aim is to offer them an education that they will remember; one which captures their individual interests, and inspires and ignites inside them a lifelong passion for learning.

We will deliver a carefully planned skills and knowledge curriculum which meets the requirements of the EYFS framework. The themes and topics explored will build upon prior learning, inspired by our children's interests and best prepare our children for future learning experiences to come.

We will provide our children with an enabling learning environment which supports them in becoming independent and resilient learners. Further, we will instil the importance and understanding of kindness and respect by developing and fostering meaningful relationships through supportive adult interactions.

We commit to the following:

1. To work in partnership with our parents/carers to promote independent, confident and enthusiastic learners who thrive in school and make at least good progress from their starting points
2. To provide a learning environment which promotes a strong sense of curiosity, awe and wonder, supporting our children in becoming life-long learners who are inquisitive about the world around them
3. For our children to enjoy coming to school, have high aspirations for themselves and a thirst for new skills and knowledge to build upon

4. To help our children become skilful communicators who connect with others through language and play supported by a vocabulary rich learning environment
5. To deliver a curriculum which is designed to meet the needs of every pupil and encourage them to develop their individual learning behaviours
6. To provide purposeful, enticing and well-resourced indoor and outdoor learning environments which support learning in all areas of the curriculum
7. To ensure planning is carefully matched to our children's interests and provides opportunities to consolidate and deepen prior learning, skills and knowledge and ensure children achieve their full potential
8. To provide the teaching of early reading through Read Write Inc.
9. To secure the best possible outcomes for our children by encouraging and promoting high standards in behaviour and presentation and supporting them in reaching the Early Learning Goals at the end of the EYFS
10. To work with Year 1 staff to ensure that our children are best prepared for a successful transition into Key Stage 1.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy has due regard to statutory legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Childcare Act 2006
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- GDPR
- Data Protection Act 2018
- DfE (2023) 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'
- DfE (2023) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2018) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'
- DfE (2015) 'The Prevent duty'

This policy is also intended to be used in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Feedback Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

The EYFS lead, in conjunction with the Headteacher, has responsibility for the day-to-day implementation and management of this policy.

Staff, including teachers, support staff, supply staff and volunteers, are responsible for familiarising themselves with, and following, this policy and remaining alert to any issues of concern in children.

AIMS

Through the implementation of this policy, we aim to:

- Give each child a happy and positive start to their school life, in which they can establish a solid foundation for a love of learning.
- Enable each child to develop socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally.
- Encourage children to develop independence within a secure and friendly atmosphere.
- Support children in building relationships through the development of social skills, such as cooperation and sharing.
- Work alongside parents to meet each child's individual needs to ensure they reach their full potential.

Four guiding principles shape our practice:

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning overtime. Children benefit from a strong partnership between the school and parents.
- Learning and development is important. Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

To put these principles into practice, the school:

- Provides a balanced curriculum which takes children's different stages of development into account.
- Promotes equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- Works in partnership with parents and carers
- Provides a safe and secure learning environment.

LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

The EYFS curriculum is based on an observation of children's needs, interests and stages of development. In partnership with parents, the school promotes the learning and development of pupils to ensure they are ready for the next stage of education.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape education programmes in EYFS settings. These are split into two sections – prime and specific; however, all the sections are interconnected and important.

Areas of Learning and Development			
Prime Areas			
Personal, Social and Emotional Development	Physical Development	Communication and Language	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-regulation • Managing self • Building relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gross motor skill • Fine motor skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening, attention and understanding • Speaking 	
Specific Areas			
Literacy	Mathematics	Understanding the World	Expressive Arts & Design
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehension • Word reading • Writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbers • Numerical patterns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Past and present • People, culture and communities • The natural world 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating with materials • Being imaginative and expressive

The early learning goals (ELGs) above are not used as a curriculum or in any way to limit the wide variety of rich experiences that are crucial to child development. The ELGs are used to support teachers to make a holistic, best-fit judgement about a child's development and their readiness for Year 1.

Activities are planned to reflect children's interests and individual circumstances in order to provide each child with a challenging and enjoyable experience. Children will learn through a variety of approaches, including free play and exploration, Read Write Inc phonics sessions, 1:1 and small group guided activities and whole class carpet sessions.

The school takes reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children with EAL to use English language in play and learning ensuring that these children have sufficient opportunities to reach a good standard of English which is applied to their reading and writing development.

Each area of learning and development is implemented through activities the teacher believes are the most effective for the children they are teaching. The school will respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through friendly and positive interaction.

Activities are planned with regard to three characteristics of effective teaching and learning in the EYFS:

- Playing and exploring – children investigate and experience things.
- Active learning – children concentrate, keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy their achievements.

- Creating and thinking critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

INCLUSION

All children are valued as individuals irrespective of their ethnicity, national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation. The Equal Opportunities Policy ensures that the needs of all children are met, regardless of any protected characteristics they have.

The EYFS curriculum is planned in order to meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace. The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy ensures all children receive the support they need and are given the best learning experience possible. SEND in the EYFS setting will be monitored and managed by the school's SENCO.

THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The EYFS environment is organised in such a way that children can explore and learn in a safe environment. Our Early Years classrooms (Oak & Elm) have defined areas with clearly labelled resources to ensure children can access them easily. The EYFS environment is set up in a way to provide children with experiences and activities in all of the seven areas of learning, split across the Oak & Elm classrooms, including: writing/mark making area, maths area, creative area, investigation area, book corner, role play area, construction/small world area, outdoor area and carpeted teaching area. Each of these involves an 'I wonder...' challenge which is changed on a weekly basis based on the theme and next steps in learning.

The outdoor area is an important part of the classroom with many children choosing to learn outside for much of the day. We try to ensure that the range of activities outside reflects the different curriculum areas, for example setting up quiet spaces for a maths game, reading and for construction.

Vocabulary is a prominent feature of both our indoor and outdoor EYFS environment and area specific vocabulary is displayed in each area of learning for adults to actively use and model.

The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, story-telling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

In Reception children will be learning new vocabulary and using the new vocabulary through the day. Teachers will support this by:

- Identifying new vocabulary before planning activities, for example, changes in materials: 'dissolving', 'drying', 'evaporating'; in music: 'percussion', 'tambourine'.
- Actively using the vocabulary displayed in each area of learning to build and develop children's area specific vocabulary.
- Bringing in objects, pictures and photographs to talk about, for example vegetables to taste, smell and feel.
- Discussing which category the word is in, for example: "A cabbage is a kind of vegetable. It's a bit like a sprout but much bigger". Having fun saying the word in an exaggerated manner.
- Using picture cue cards to talk about an object: "What colour is it? Where would you find it? What shape is it? What does it smell like? What does it look like? What does it feel like? What does it sound like? What does it taste like?"
- Modelling the words and phrases relevant to the area being taught, deliberately and systematically.
- Using the vocabulary repeatedly through the week.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment plays an important part in helping the school to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, plan activities, and assess the need for support.

Staff members will observe children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. This information will then be used to shape learning experiences for each child. The children are encouraged to present independent work that they are proud of in their Learning Journey folders. Parents will be kept up-to-date with their child's progress and development via Dojo and through Parents Evenings.

Formative assessments are used to assess the learning and development of children in the EYFS. These assessments will be input on Insight and used to inform discussions regarding children's' progress in regular internal moderation discussions across the academic year.

As pupils enter the EYFS, teachers will use their judgement to assess the age that they are working within. Pupils will be given an 'on entry assessment' six weeks into the first half-term. To recognise pupils' needs, understand their progress, plan activities and provide support, pupils' development and progress will be monitored by the EYFS Teacher.

The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is used to create a baseline for school-level progress measures and will measure the progress pupils make from Reception until the end of Year 6. Pupils will not 'pass' or 'fail', and no numerical score will be shared. Staff will receive a series of short, narrative statements that tell them how their pupils performed in the assessment – teachers will use these to inform their teaching approaches.

The RBA will:

- Be carried out within the first six weeks of pupils starting school.
- Be an activity-based, age-appropriate assessment of pupils' ability in language, communication and literacy, maths, and self-regulation.
- Take approximately 20 minutes per pupil.
- Be administered by a Reception teacher or suitably qualified practitioner, e.g. the SENCO.

In the final term of the year in which a child reaches age five, and no later than 30 June in that term, the EYFS profile will be completed by the child's class teacher. Profile judgements will be made on the basis of cumulative observational evidence. In accordance with the Childcare (Provision of Information About Young Children) (England) Regulations 2009, we will provide the EYFS profile data to the LA upon request, unless the Secretary of State has granted an exemption from the EYFS learning and development requirements.

For the EYFS profile, the following assessment ratings will be used to indicate the relevant EYFS judgement:

- Emerging
- Expected

We will provide additional information alongside the profile judgements to ensure that conversations with KS1 staff are meaningful, and to help the pupil make a successful transition. We will ensure that the requirements of all pupils with SEND are met, e.g. through reasonable adjustments. The headteacher will monitor all teacher judgements.

SAFEGUARDING AND WELFARE

All necessary steps are taken to keep the children in our care safe and well. Any safeguarding or welfare issues will be dealt with in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, and all members of staff in the EYFS are required to read this policy as part of their induction training.

The DSL is responsible for safeguarding children and liaising with local children's services as appropriate. The deputy DSL will undertake the duties of the DSL in their absence, but overall responsibility for safeguarding will remain with the DSL. The DSL and deputy DSL will undertake child protection training as required.

Staff will receive safeguarding training that enables them to understand the safeguarding policy and procedures, have up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues, and recognise signs of potential abuse and neglect.

STAFFING

A robust Safer Recruitment Policy is in place, which aims to ensure that members of staff employed in the EYFS are suitable. Upon employment, all EYFS staff receive induction training to ensure that they understand their roles and responsibilities, including information about emergency evacuation procedures, safeguarding, child protection and health and safety.

Staff will be supported to undertake the appropriate training and professional development to ensure children receive the best quality learning experience. All members of staff who have contact with children and families will be supervised by the EYFS lead.

The supervision will provide opportunities for staff to:

- Discuss any issues, particularly concerning the development or wellbeing of children, including any child protection concerns.
- Identify solutions to address issues.
- Receive coaching to improve their effectiveness.

There will be at least one member of staff on the school premises at all times who has a current paediatric first-aid (PFA) certificate. The school provides a staffing ratio in line with the safeguarding and welfare requirements set out in the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'.

Only under exceptional circumstances, and where the quality of care and safety of children is maintained, will changes be made to the ratios. Parents will be informed about staffing arrangements and, when relevant and practical, will be involved in staffing arrangement decisions.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

When a child gains a place at Whitby Heath Primary School, parents are offered 1:1 meetings with their child's class teacher in the days prior to them starting school. We give each family a 'Welcome to Reception' pack and parents are asked to complete admission forms, a medical form and a Home School Agreement. Additionally, we ask parents to work with their child to complete an 'All About Me' booklet to help the school to understand their character and personality.

We believe that parents and carers are a child's first educator and therefore work very closely to ensure they are involved in what we do with their child at school. We want parents to feel they can speak to us about their child at any time and feel comfortable in our setting. As well as the Reception visit days we offer parenting workshops and other sessions for parents, such as our successful Phonics and Reading workshops, etc

Parents and Carers have access to the Learning Journey folders which are sent home each half term for them to share with their child. We ask parents to select two 'proud pieces' for each half term to remain in the Learning Journey folder and they are able to keep the remaining work. Parents/Carers can also find out about weekly learning through the EYFS Newsletter which is shared via Class Dojo.

TRANSITION PERIODS

The following processes are in place to ensure children's successful transitions to school:

- In the Summer term before their children start school, new parents are provided with letters and information packs to ensure they know about school

procedures and allocation of classes, and to voice any concerns they may wish to express.

- The children are invited to a number of visits during the Summer term before they start school to allow the children to feel secure in the new environment.
- In the Summer term before children start school, Reception teachers will visit each child's nursery to meet the children in their current environment and to discuss each child's development with their key worker in order to support a smooth transition to school. If this is not possible, phone calls should be made to nurseries and handover notes should be completed.
- A combination of factors should be taken into account when allocating classes (e.g. gender, SEND, pupil premium, behavioural needs)
- Parents and children are invited to a 1:1 meeting at school in the Autumn term in the days prior to their child starting school to familiarise the child with their new learning environment, to share any concerns/key information and to ask any last minute questions they may have.

The following processes are in place to ensure children's successful transitions to Year 1:

- In the final term of the year in which a child reaches the age of five, an EYFS profile must be completed for each child. The EYFS profile must provide an outline of the child's progress, assessed against the early learning goals, and their readiness for Year 1.
- During the Summer term, prior to entry into Year 1, Reception children begin to join the main school on the playground during break times, supported by a member of Reception staff.
- Reception classes adopt a modified timetable similar to the Year 1 experience including increased guided work in maths and writing books.
- Reception children begin to attend more whole-school activities.
- Learning journals, phonics assessments, examples of writing and suggested pupil groupings are all passed on from the Reception teacher to the Year 1 teacher.
- During the first term, the Year 1 timetable, in terms of provision, planning and child-led learning, remains similar to Reception, as far as possible.
- Consideration is given to the links between the seven areas of learning in the EYFS and the national curriculum subjects.
- The more formal teaching of Year 1 is introduced gradually.