



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

This policy meets the statutory requirements for the provision of the Early Years / Foundation Stage Curriculum.

Date approved: February 2014

Date of Next Review: February 2017



Article 29

Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.

'Play underpins the delivery of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum'

In the Foundation Stage Unit the children are cared for and provided with a stimulating and challenging environment to try to give them the best possible start. In partnership with the family and carers we enable them to begin the process of becoming active learners for life. This policy links with the school values and ethos that ensure children develop healthy lifestyles, are safe, achieve well and are ready for their next phase in learning.

Aims

At Wildmoor Heath School, our Early Years Curriculum aims to achieve the balanced and broad development of children through following the Early Learning Goals set out in the EYFS. The Early Years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- it builds on what our children already know and can do;
- it ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged;
- it offers learning that has been planned from the children's interests, content that matches the needs of the children through both indoor and outdoor learning;
- it provides a rich and stimulating environment.
- It enables children to make an effective transition from home to school.

EYFS Principles

Four guiding principles shape the EYFS. These are:

- 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**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers; and
- **children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates**. The EYFS framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

The Early Years Foundation Stage promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

The EYFS framework sets out the Characteristics of Effective Learning and the prime and specific Areas of Learning and Development. It states how these are all interconnected.

- 1) The ways in which the child engages with other people and their environment,
 - playing and exploring,
 - active learning,
 - creating and thinking critically

These underpin learning and development across all areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner.

- 2) The **prime** areas begin to develop quickly in response to relationships and experiences, and run through and support learning in all other areas. The prime areas continue to be fundamental throughout the EYFS. These are;
 - Personal, Social and emotional development,
 - Communication and Language,
 - Physical development

- 3) The **specific** areas include essential skills and knowledge. They grow out of the prime areas, and provide important contexts for learning.
 - Literacy,
 - Mathematics
 - Understanding of the World
 - Expressive art and Design

The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum

The curriculum for the Early Years Foundation Stage in our school reflects the areas of learning identified in the Early Learning Goals. The Early Learning Goals (ELGs) cover the knowledge, skills and understanding which the children should acquire by the end of the Foundation 2 year.

The seven areas of learning include:

1) Personal, Social and emotional development :

- Dispositions & Attitudes
- Self-confidence & self-esteem
- Making Relationships
- Behaviour & self-control
- Self-care
- Sense of Community

2) Communication and Language:

- Language for Communication
- Language for Thinking
- Linking Sounds & Letters
- Reading
- Writing
- Handwriting

3) Physical development:

- Movement & Space
- Health & Bodily Awareness
- Using Equipment & Materials

4) Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy:

- Numbers as labels & for counting
- Calculating
- Shape, space & measures

5) Literacy:

- Reading
- Writing

6) Knowledge and Understanding of the World:

- Exploration & Investigation
- Designing & Making
- ICT
- Time
- Place
- Communities

7) Expressive Arts:

- Being Creative - Responding to experience, expressing & communicating ideas
- Exploring Media & Materials
- Creating Music & Dance
- Developing Imagination & Imaginative Play

The experiences that our children meet often enable them to develop a number of competencies, skills and concepts across several areas of learning. None of the areas of learning can be delivered in isolation from the others and all are important to support a rounded approach to the development of each child.

Through the delivery of the curriculum, at Wildmoor Heath we observe the different ways that children learn and reflect this in our practise.

The three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

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

Good practice in our Foundation Stage Unit is:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the effective use of key person's to ensure positive relationships allowing the children to feel included, secure & valued.
- the key person's understanding of how children develop and learn, and how this impacts on their planning & teaching; we start from the child and his/her needs and plan the learning linked to our assessments (Next Steps) and observations.
- equal opportunities for all children ensuring an inclusive environment.
- providing first-hand experiences, making appropriate interventions to extend and develop play, talk or other means of communication; we believe that children learn through active, hands-on experiences both in and outside of the classroom.
- modelling good communication skills and positive behaviours.
- through our carefully planned continuous provision(based on the EYFS) we ensure children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of their Foundation 2 year;
- the variety of ways in which we enhance the continuous provision to extend the children's learning.
- the encouragement for children to communicate and share their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- the environment supports learning in all seven areas with clearly defined spaces both indoors and outdoors, allowing children to independently select resources and equipment;
- providing a good balance of child initiated and teacher led learning.
- the identification of Next Steps and future learning needs of children through 'Assessment for Learning' of children through observations, which are shared with parents in their Learning Journals;
- the clear aims and success criteria for our work, and the regular monitoring to evaluate our planning and improve what we do;
- the regular identification of training needs of all adults working within the Early Years Foundation Stage using the Performance Management system to inform this.
- providing a play-based learning environment that allows the children to develop, explore and discover within a safe and secure setting.

- constantly assessing the children and identifying any specific interventions needed to help them progress through Raising Attainment Plans.
- early reading – all children (when they are ready) will be given a reading target card and a Bug Club book and receive 1-1 reading sessions four times a week.

Assessment

We make regular assessments of children’s learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage is on-going and is an integral part of the learning and development process. Assessments are based primarily on observation of daily activities and events. Practitioners note in particular the learning which a child demonstrates spontaneously, independently and consistently in a range of contexts. Accurate assessment takes account of a range of perspectives including those of the child, parents and carers and other adults who have significant interactions with the child. Assessments are recorded as photographs, videos, in written form or work examples and kept in the child’s learning journal. The assessments are used to identify learning priorities and plan the next steps in the learning experiences for the child.

On entry to Foundation 1 the key person’s assess the children against the EYFS Development Matters and use information from parents and previous setting (if applicable) to successfully build on the children’s previous experiences. This initial assessment is completed 2 weeks after they start. Their learning is continuously tracked and is assessed against the EYFS development matters statements and age bands every half term.

On entry to Foundation 2 the key person’s assess the children against the EYFS development matters and ELG to successfully build on their previous experiences. Information from the children’s previous setting as well information gained from parents is also used to make these assessments and is completed 2 weeks after they start. Their learning is continuously tracked and is assessed against the EYFS development matters statements, age bands and ELG every half term. Towards the end of the year the children’s key worker will use the assessments collected in the children’s learning journal and what they know about the children, to make a final judgement against the ELG. This is the EYFS profile and it is used to describe children’s attainment at the end of EYFS. For each ELG, practitioners must judge whether a child is meeting the level of development expected at the end of the Reception Year (expected), exceeding this level (exceeding), or not yet reaching this level (emerging). This information is submitted to the LEA. The Learning Journals are moderated at local level in Cluster groups and by LEA advisors. Once the data has been submitted the setting’s GLD (Good Level of Development) will be published. This percentage is a measure of how successful the setting is in ensuring children is ready for their next phase of learning. (The number of children achieving ‘Expected’ in the three prime areas and Literacy and Maths)

F2 parents receive an annual report that informs them of their child’s attainment in relation to the ELG which includes a short commentary on each child’s skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This is completed and sent to parents in the Summer Term.

The completed EYFS Profile supports future curriculum planning and provides the Year 1 teacher with important information about each child’s approach to learning.

The role of parents

We believe that all parents have an important role to play in the education of their child. Parents are made to feel welcome and valued by all members of staff. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our setting;
- the children have the opportunity to spend time in the setting with their parents before starting school;
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school;
- offering parents weekly opportunities to share their child's progress through the Learning Journals;
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's key person if there are any concerns.
- having flexible admission arrangements that enable children and parents to become secure, and by allowing time to discuss each child's circumstances;
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents;
- offering a range of activities that support the involvement of parents. There is regular communication with home through the child's observation book.
- providing information on children's learning by using our display board.
- we invite all parents to parents evenings to discuss the learning that the children undertake in class.
- regular Newsletters are sent (both as electronic and paper forms) so that parent/carers are informed of whole school issues. These are also available on the school's website.