

Woodside Academy



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

***“We want the very best teaching and learning experiences for all our children”
from School Vision Statement “Excellence Through Opportunity”***

Agreed by the Governing Body: December 2024

Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the academic year in which a child has their fifth birthday.

The EYFS Policy is based on requirements set out in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#). This document also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

Intent

We follow the statutory framework and guidance detailed in the EYFS alongside the non-statutory Development Matters framework. We also use our extensive experience as early years practitioners and we observe, plan and teach children in early years.

We aim to deliver a broad and balanced Early Years curriculum:

- Through a mixture of whole class taught sessions, group sessions based around topics to support learning and consolidate and deepen the children's knowledge
- Through objective led planning to enable children to meet their next steps
- Based on children's own interests and ideas
- Whilst having a regard for the skills and attitudes the Key Stage One curriculum will demand
- By creating a challenging, purposeful and engaging learning environment both inside and outside

Aims

Our aims in EYFS are to:

- Make the child's first experience of school happy, positive and fun
- Foster a love of learning and develop enquiring minds
- Instil the characteristics of effective learning such as independence, resilience and confidence
- Promote emotional well-being
- Build positive relationships and work in partnership with families (recognising that parents are their child's first and foremost educator), carers and professionals to support every child to develop and learn
- Support children to reach their full potential from their individual starting points

Implementation

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning throughout our school. These features equally apply to teaching and learning in the EYFS. Within the EYFS the development of a holistic learner is recognised based on the idea that each person finds identity, meaning and purpose in life through connections to the community, the natural world and to humanitarian values, such as compassion.

Teaching in the EYFS

- Has a carefully planned curriculum which aims for all children to make good or better progress and achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of EYFS
- Involves creating adult and child-initiated opportunities that will encourage children to explore, create, investigate, rehearse, practise, repeat and discover
- Involves developing characteristics of effective learning
- Uses a multi-sensory, fun play-based approach
- Shows awareness of the different ways and rates by which children develop and learn; that there are many factors affecting achievement including ability, emotional state, age and maturity, and how this informs teaching strategies
- Has a high expectation of children's behaviour and attainment
- Recognises the importance of emotional well-being
- Is outside as much as possible ensuring children take ownership of their learning

Learning in the EYFS

Through a comprehensive induction programme from home to Nursery and/or from a child's F1 (Nursery) setting to F2 (Reception) we ensure prior learning and development is valued and the transition into school is supported. We encourage cross-curricular links to ensure a seamless transition into Key Stage 1 by building on previous experiences and planning those for the future.

In the EYFS children are learning when they:

- Collaborate and learn from one another through shared experiences
- Are supported to set their own challenges in their physical environment and in their learning
- Access resources independently
- Use their senses to explore and investigate
- Develop persistence and positive attitudes to learning as detail in the Characteristics of Effective Learning

Play in the EYFS

We highly value play and the learning it brings in itself as play is a tool for learning. Through play children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them to make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules, thereby developing emotional resilience and self-regulation.

Children have the opportunity to think creatively and problem solve alongside others. They express fears or relive anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations as well as re-enact positive experiences building self-awareness and self-esteem.

Inclusion in the EYFS

In consultation and working collaboratively with parents/guardians the school's Special Educational Needs Disability Co-ordinator (SENDCo) will lead on provision for children who may experience barriers to their learning, which may relate to sensory or physical impairment, learning difficulties or emotional or social development, in line with the Special Education Needs (SEN) Code of Practice (2014) and the school's SEN/Inclusion Policy.

We aim to meet the needs of all our children by:

- Setting realistic and challenging expectations. We aim for all children to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the EYFS. We achieve this by planning for different learning styles and children's varying needs and abilities, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities or medical needs, children from all social and cultural backgrounds as well as children with diverse linguistic backgrounds
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contributions of all children are valued
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping which all children have equal access to
- Monitoring children's progress and providing support where necessary, within the resources available to the school. This may include a phased transition programme dependant on a child's specific SEN needs

- Providing specific targets detailed in Individual Support Plans (ISP) and following external therapy or support programmes of work such as Speech and Language
- Working collaboratively with families or carers, the SENDCo and other professionals such as Speech and Language Therapists, Educational Psychologists and Parent Support Advisor
- Ensuring a balance across classes, within each cohort, of gender, ability, children with additional learning or medical needs and summer born children
- Acknowledging the wishes of parents and carers of twins and multiple birth siblings regarding class allocation in the EYFS. Following discussions with parents and carers the school's practice is for twins and multiple birth siblings to be allocated to separate classes in Year 1.

The EYFS Curriculum

The EYFS is statutory and is important in its own right as a basis for developing essential skills such as listening, speaking, persistence and collaborating with each other. The three prime areas cover the knowledge and skills which are the foundations for future progress, and which are applied and reinforced by the specific areas. All areas of learning are equally important and are interlinked.

The Development Matters and the Early Learning Goals guide our long-term planning together with the termly topics. In F1 activities are planned around topics and interests within each topic to ensure all areas of the EYFS curriculum are embraced.

Medium term planning is completed termly and identifies the intended learning outcomes and considers children working at the exceeding level.

Weekly Planning focuses on day-to-day organisation of activities. It considers that children's learning is not necessarily sequential and that they may need time to consolidate, repeat and extend their learning in their own way. All planning is evaluated on an ongoing basis and adapted in response to the children's needs and interests.

Assessment in the EYFS

During the children's first half term in F1 and F2 classes, the teacher assesses each child's development and learning attainment against the criteria set out in Development Matters and the Early Learning Goals. It is also a time for the teacher to discover the unique personality and interests of each child.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and use this information to ensure future planning reflects individual or group needs. Once a term, summative assessments are entered on to our OTRACK assessment system, progress is analysed and any gaps within learning are identified and planned for as a small group intervention.

Formative assessment in the Foundation Stage is continuous and takes the form of observations, examples of child-initiated work and samples of dated work from books and photographs. The teachers and teaching assistants keep observational records and use these to record examples of each child's work. These are kept electronically for each child and are available to parents and carers at all times. These records are passed from F1 to F2 and then onto Year One teachers to ensure a smooth transition.

We have regular termly parents' meetings take place to ensure parents/carers are informed of their child's progress and next steps in learning. In F1 and F2, in addition to parents' meetings in the Autumn and Spring terms, parents receive an annual report that offers detailed comments on each child's progress in each area of the Characteristics of Effective Learning. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs. The children are also given opportunity to comment on areas they would like to improve.

Reflection in the EYFS

We use audits and surveys to reflect on our practise. This enables us to keep improving our practise and keep asking questions.

We audit the EYFS based around the 3 I's; Intent, Implementation and Impact, during periods of reflection which has been developed using the Early Years Inspection Framework (2019). This enables us to evaluate our aims, the quality of our education, the behaviour and attitudes of children, personal development of children and our own leadership and management.

Working with Parents/Carers and other significant adults

We recognise the importance of working alongside parents and other significant adults during a child's education. We do this through:

- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school
- Giving the children the opportunity to spend several mornings or afternoons with their teacher before starting school
- Inviting new parents into the classroom in their child's first term to take part in Foundation activities
- Providing formal meetings for parents during the school year to discuss children's progress
- Welcoming parents to discuss any concerns with the teacher and/or teaching assistants
- Working to build good relationships with families to promote a regular two-way flow of information
- Invite parents and carers to workshops to support with home learning.
- Send out surveys to parents

The Environment and Resources in the EYFS

A rich and varied 'enabling' environment is actively planned for and continuously developed with varied multi-cultural and inclusive resources to encourage exploratory play-based learning and challenge. The learning environment encompasses both indoor and outdoor provision, which are of equal importance. Children are encouraged to experience all areas of the learning environment in all weathers. We encourage children to plan their own selection of activities balanced with adult initiated activities.

Impact

- The majority of children in Reception reach the ELG (GLoD) by the end of F2 which allows us to measure outcomes against all schools nationally
- Children develop the characteristics of effective learning which helps them through the rest of school
- Children develop the ability to manage risks
- Children enjoy being independent in managing themselves and their learning
- 100% of parents are happy with their child's progress
- Parents feel part of the school community
- Practise is improved year on year
- Everyone is included
- Children have high levels of wellbeing and involvement
- The impact of our curriculum will also be measured by how effectively it helps our pupils develop into well rounded individuals who embody our values and carry with them the knowledge, skills and attitudes which will make them lifelong learners and valuable future citizens

Safeguarding and Welfare

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

Woodside Academy ensure the following requirements are met to keep children safe and well:

- Safeguard children.
- Ensure the people who have contact with children are suitable.
- Promote good health.
- Support and understand behaviour.
- Maintain records, policies, and procedures.

We fulfil our safeguarding and welfare requirements in EYFS based on section 3 of the [Statutory EYFS Framework](#).