



Whiston Willis Community Primary School



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Lead Responsibility	J. Watkins Approved By Governors	Date: September 2016
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The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. The EYFS is based upon four overarching principles:

- 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;
- **children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates**. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

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.

Inclusion/Special Educational Needs (SEN)

All children and their families are valued at Whiston Willis Community Primary School. Children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all provisions available. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. Assessments take into account contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential special educational needs is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parent/carers at an early stage and the schools Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (Mrs Drohan) is called upon for further information and advice. Appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the school's policy for SEN.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

Welfare

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 School Safeguarding Policy)

At Whiston Willis Community Primary 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 2014. 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 or who have unsupervised access to them 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 to meet the needs of the children.

Positive Relationships

At Whiston Willis Community Primary School we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parent/Carers as Partners

We recognise that parent/carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We do this through:

- inviting all parent/carers to an induction meeting during the summer term before their child starts and again during the first half term of the child's Reception year in order to give them an insight into the EYFS curriculum and how to support their child at home;
- inviting parent/carers to a mid-year review of their child's progress towards the Early Learning Goals.
- arranging activities throughout the school year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parent/carers.
- providing parent/carers an opportunity to celebrate their child's learning and development by completing "wow" moments which inform planning and provision;
- daily face to face contact and written contact through their child's Communication Book as well as the acknowledgement that parent/carers can ring the school to contact the class teacher;
- inviting parents/carers to support the school in various events e.g. 'Stay & Learn' mornings.
- running targeted workshops for parents, for example 'Phonics Training'.

Enabling Environments

We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident and secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision. Effective learning builds and extends upon prior learning and following children's interest.

Displays in and around the classroom reflect the rich and varied experiences, with a balance between displays that provide information and the children's own work. Some displays are interactive to encourage the children to question, investigate and use their prior knowledge.

Learning and Development

There are seven 'Areas of Learning and Development' of which three are 'Prime Areas' and four 'Specific Areas'.

The prime areas are:

- Communication and Language Development
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development.

The specific areas are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Through careful assessments and observations, including information provided by parent/carers, children's development levels are assessed. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas. However, if a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parent/carer and agree how to support the child. This may also include a discussion with the school's SENCO in order to access Special Educational Needs support.

At Whiston Willis Community Primary School each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Play is used as an essential part of children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. There is an on-going judgement to be made by practitioners about the balance between activities led by children, and activities led or guided by adults. Practitioners must respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. As children grow older, and as their development allows, 'it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1' (Statutory Framework for EYFS 2014).

Characteristics of Effective Learning

Planning and guided children's activities will reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. These 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 (taken from Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2014).

Assessment Data

At Whiston Willis Community Primary School we use a computer based tracking system called 'Early Years Target Tracker'. Towards the end of each half term the Reception teacher will enter current assessments judgements for each child into the system. Target Tracker allows us to closely track and compare individual and groups of children's progress at the touch of a button, and hence know who is on track to meet the ELG's and who may require further support or intervention in a particular Area of Learning. This system also allows us to create and present EYFS data in various formats which can then be shared with others e.g. the School Leadership Team, School Governors and Ofsted.

Transition

During the final term in Reception, the 'EYFS Profile' is completed for each child. The Profile provides parent/carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile includes on-going observation, all relevant records held by the setting, discussions with parent/carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent/carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

Each child's level of development is assessed against the 'Early Learning Goals'. The profile indicates whether children are meeting 'expected' levels of development, if they are 'exceeding' expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key 'characteristics of effective learning'. This informs the dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1.