



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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Signature:			

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child’s experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.”

“Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage”, Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2007

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. Here, at Wyre Forest School, we extend the principles and ethos of effective early years practice for all pupils until the end of Year 2.

Children join us, part time, from 3 years of age in the Nursery Assessment Class (NAC), if they have been highlighted by the pre-school forum as having significant needs in one or more areas of Communication, PSEMH, Physical Development or Thinking Skills. During their time at NAC a range of observations and assessments will take place in order to establish the level of support a pupil will need when starting school.

At the end of their Nursery year the children go on to attend a range of settings from mainstream primary schools to a variety of special schools, including Wyre Forest School.

The EYFS is based upon four important principles:

1. A Unique Child
2. Positive Relationships
3. Enabling Environments
4. Learning and Development

1. A Unique Child

We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children’s attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning. Across the Early Years Phase we set realistic yet challenging expectations to meet the needs of all of our children based on comprehensive assessment of needs, barriers to learning and learning styles.

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;
- Providing a curriculum which takes account of, and responds to, the children’s developmental needs and allows them to make progress related to their differing abilities. “What the child can do” will always be our starting point.
- Providing a safe, supportive and motivating learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;

- Using resources which reflect diversity, embrace equal opportunities and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- Monitoring children's progress regularly and providing support as necessary. We ensure that the children have positive experiences of success at their own level in order to give them confidence and motivation for lifelong learning.
- Creating a partnership with parents and carers in order to support and enhance the development of each child.

It is vital that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. 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 understand that we are required to:

- Promote the welfare 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 for safe, efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

2. Positive Relationships

We recognise that children learn through secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families through the key worker system

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- Talking to parents in detail about their child before they start attending our school. Home visits take place for all pupils starting the Nursery Assessment Class.
- Providing children with the opportunity to spend time in class during the half term before starting school. Parents are welcome to accompany their child during the initial stages of this introduction.
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school and providing on-going opportunities for parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns.

- There is an initial review meeting of the child's Education, Health and Care Plan during their first year at school at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress. Parents also receive a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of the summer term.
- Parent consultation meetings take place at least twice a year.
- Parents receive regular information regarding their child, and parents can contact staff at any time. Parents are also encouraged to contribute to their child's learning journey through sharing 'Wow!' moments from home, and their thoughts about areas of progress.

All staff involved with the EYFS develop positive relationships with all children, interacting with them and taking time to observe and listen to them to better understand their needs, interests, stages of development, barriers to learning and learning styles. Where children attend other settings in a day, we aim to ensure continuity and coherence by sharing information about the children, and meeting with other providers.

3. Enabling Environments

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We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development. Through observation we assess the children's understanding, before planning challenging, achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning. Although we adhere to EYFS environmental principles the needs of specific learner groups may require us to adapt classroom and outside learning areas.

4. Learning and Development

The EYFS learning and development requirements cover the following which we adapt to meet the needs of individual pupils at our school:

- The areas of learning and development which shape activities and experiences for the children.
- The Early Learning Goals that we help children work towards- these are the knowledge, skills and understanding children should have at the end of the academic year in which they turn five.
- Assessment arrangements for measuring progress and requirements for reporting to parents and carers.

The Early Years classes are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. Children can access enclosed outdoor areas offering further opportunities to explore, use their senses, develop their language skills and be physically active. We plan activities and resources both inside and outside enabling the children to develop in all the areas of learning.

Areas of Learning

We recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and have their own learning styles. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are often linked.

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. These are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These are called the Prime Areas;

Prime Areas:

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

We also support children's development in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

Specific Areas:

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

The Characteristics of Effective Learning support the development of the Unique Child in **how** children are learning;

Characteristics of Effective Learning

Playing and exploring – engagement

- Finding out and exploring;
- playing with what they know;
- being willing to 'have a go'.

Active learning – motivation

- Being involved and concentrating;
- keeping trying;
- enjoying achieving what they set out to do.

Creating and thinking critically – thinking

- Having their own ideas;
- making links;
- choosing ways to do things.

All adults consider the Characteristics of Effective Learning within their observations, assessment and planning.

Extending Outstanding Early Years Practice and Pedagogy across the School

At Wyre Forest School we recognise the importance of these EYFS principles for all of our pupils, especially until the end of Key Stage One. A play based, child-centred, creative curriculum that focuses on the Characteristics of Effective Learning as well as the National Curriculum is delivered.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

Planning within the EYFS and Early Years Classes is based around half-termly themes which inform weekly planning. These plans are personalised to enable each child to access learning according to their individual priority needs. Topics may be altered to take into account children's interests. Planning sheets identify the key areas of Communication, PSEMH (Personal, Social and Emotional Mental Health), Physical Development and Thinking skills.

Adult focused and independent activities are planned on a weekly basis. Children have the opportunity to work in each of the learning areas within the classroom and outdoors. Whole class, group and individual activities are used to develop skills in all areas of the curriculum, where appropriate.

We make regular assessments of children's needs and their learning and use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment involves the class staff and other adults as appropriate including the speech and language therapist, specialist communication team staff, occupational therapist, physiotherapist and psychologists.

Assessment takes place on an on-going basis through planned and informal

observations during lessons and activities as well as interactions with the child. We use *the Early Years Outcomes* (Early Education 2013, supported by DfE) to assess all our pupils in Reception, as well as the Worcestershire *Early Support Document*, for children with more complex needs. These are used as an ongoing tool to record progress on Evidence For Learning. In time, this will become a two-way sharing tool with parents. Assessments are continually reviewed and linked to each child's next steps within the teacher's planning.

Attainment across the 7 areas of the EYFS is reported to the Local Authority at the end of the Reception year. Staff completing assessment profiles for all reception pupils attend an external annual moderation meeting or are visited by an external moderator in school.

We share information about progress with parents and carers at the end of the pupils' Reception year, using *Early Years Outcomes and Early Support* monthly bandings in each of the areas of development. We also show parents and carers how much progress our pupils have made relative to their chronological age and developmental starting points.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of the class teachers to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Headteacher, Senior Leadership Team and Phase Leader carry out monitoring of the EYFS through observation and discussion as part of the whole school monitoring schedule. There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. This governor has the opportunity to discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion.

All quotations included in this document are taken from the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage*, published by the DfE in March 2012.