

## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Within this document, the term Early Years Foundation Stage is used to describe children who are in our Nursery and Reception classes.

### OUR SCHOOL VISION

Our school vision is to be “A community of inspiration, aspiration and enrichment”. This is the main driver for decision making in the Early Years Foundation Stage as well as the rest of the school.

### AIM

At Wheelers Lane Primary School, we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning. We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent. We value the individual child and work alongside parents and others to meet their needs and help every child to reach their full potential.

We believe that every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to achieve. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances.

We adhere to the Statutory Framework of the EYFS and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings.

- 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**

### PRINCIPLES INTO PRACTICE

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, across the seven areas of learning, using play as the vehicle for learning
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support
- Work in partnership with parents and within the wider context
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are both adult-initiated and child-initiated
- Plan activities to enable staff to develop close relationships with individual children
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment both indoors and out

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### **FOUNDATION STAGE CURRICULUM**

We provide an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve and exceed the early learning goals.

All the seven areas of learning and development are equally important and inter-connected.

There are three areas that are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

These three areas are the **prime** areas:

**Communication and Language**

**Physical Development**

**Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

Children are also supported through the four **specific** areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The **specific** areas are:

**Literacy**

**Mathematics**

**Understanding the World**

**Expressive Arts and Design**

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which they explore, think creatively and are active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

In the Early Years, we focus the learning around children's interests. The provision is informed by our observations and conversations with children. Next steps in learning are based upon our observations of children's independent practice, rather than adult supported learning.

Practitioners working with the youngest children in Nursery will focus strongly on the three prime areas, which are the basis for successful learning in the other four specific areas. The three prime areas reflect the key skills and capacities all children need to develop and learn effectively, and become ready for school. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as the children move through the Early Years and grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

Children have whole group and small group times which increase as they progress through the EYFS with times for a daily phonics session using 'Little Wandle', teaching aspects of Mathematics and Literacy, including shared reading and writing.

The curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the EYFS document.

'Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities'. We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are planned by the adults. During children's play, early years' practitioners interact to stretch and challenge children understanding further.

In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice. We create a stimulating environment to encourage children to free-flow between inside and out.

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### **ACTIVE LEARNING**

We provide and promote an Active Learning approach and believe “Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.”

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their own learning.

### **OBSERVATION & ASSESSMENT**

Assessment is an essential part of the learning and development of children in the EYFS. It involves practitioners observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations.

On entry to Nursery and Reception we carry out baseline assessments for each child. These judgments are formed through a series of observations of children’s interactions and play. We record our observations in a variety of ways. Everyone is encouraged to contribute and discussions take place regarding each child. These judgments are moderated both in school and externally with early years practitioners from other schools. As part of our daily practice we observe and assess children’s development and learning to inform our future provision. In Reception we carry out the Government required baseline, this must be completed within the first 6 weeks.

Throughout the teacher keeps progress records and learning journals; recording examples of each child’s learning in all areas of the EYFS curriculum. These progress books contain a wide range of evidence that we share with parents at each parental consultation meeting.

Tracking grids are updated at the end of each term. This provides a summary of progress for each child which feeds into the whole-school assessment and tracking process. We record each child’s level of development to be below, working towards and expected.

Within the final term of Reception, we provide parents with a report based on their child’s development against each of the 17 Early Learning Goals and the characteristics of their learning. Comments are made on whether their development within each ELG is either ‘emerging’ or ‘expected’. This information is also communicated to parents and carers in the Reception child’s end of year report.

### **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

‘Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.’ (Statutory Framework for EYFS 2014)

At Wheelers Lane Primary School, we understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2014.

- To provide a setting that is welcoming, safe and stimulating where children can grow in confidence;
- 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
- To ensure that all adults who look after the children, or who have unsupervised access to them, are suitable to do so;
- Ensure that the setting, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for the purpose it was intended for;

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- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for the safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

Children's safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why rules are in place. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. We encourage children to take risks and highlight the importance of keeping themselves safe by teaching them how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. We have stringent policies, procedures and documents in place to ensure children's safety.

We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious food, following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident. Fruit and water is on offer throughout the day and children have free access to this. We encourage children to wash their hands regularly and discuss why we need to do this.

### **SAFEGUARDING**

At Wheelers Lane we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all of our children and expect all staff, parents and volunteers to share this commitment and maintain a vigilant and safe environment. If people have concerns that a pupil is in need because they are suffering or likely to suffer any harm, please act immediately by asking to speak to one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads. (Mrs Sumner, Mr Wood, Mr Dunn, Mr Wright and Mr Canning.)

We follow whole school procedures for child protection (see separate policy). All concerns and incidents are logged centrally.

### **MOBILE PHONES**

The use of Mobile Phones are not permitted in the EYFS department. Members of staff and visitors do not use their mobile phones or personal handset devices in the classroom and are prohibited from taking photographs with their personal handsets. Members of staff do, however, use school iPads to take photographs as evidence to support the regular observation assessment cycle in the EYFS. These photographs are used in children's books, in class displays, on the school website and many may be shared on 'Class Story' on Class Dojo. All parents are asked to state if they give permission for their child's image to be used on various platforms through the paperwork in their initial starter packs.

### **TRIPS AND VISITORS**

Working with other services and organisations is integral to our practice in order to meet the needs of our children. At times we may need to share information with other professionals to provide the best support possible. We draw on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on outings and inviting members of the community into our setting. When leaving the school site thorough risk assessments are undertaken. All children and adults wear a luminous jacket, with the school name on. We actively seek parental support on Early Years trips.

Visitors also really enhance a topic and we like to have 'experts' coming in to talk to the children, a doctor for example. All visitors to the setting have to follow agreed Safeguarding Procedures.

### **PARENTS AS PARTNERS & THE WIDER CONTEXT**

We strive to create and maintain partnership with parents and carers as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child's learning. We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child's education and care in numerous ways. We ask parents to provide information about the child's interests at home and use these to inform and enhance our provision.

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Regular workshops and meetings are held to support parents in ways to help their children at home and showcase the learning occurring at school.

### **INCLUSION**

We value all our children as individuals, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meets the needs of the individual child and supports them at their own pace so that most of our children achieve and even exceed the Early Learning Goals. We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so, work closely with parents and outside agencies.

We encourage all children to start school without wearing nappies or pull ups but will support any children struggling with this. We acknowledge that young children often have 'accidents' and have stocks of spare clothes available. We ask all parents to send in a bag of spare clothes and wipes in case of an accident. We also ask parents to help keep our stocks of clothes high by returning anything their child has borrowed. Children are encouraged to change themselves and staff support this if necessary.

### **TRANSITIONS**

Transitions are carefully planned for and time given to ensure continuity of learning. At any transition, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child and other settings, including nurseries and childminders. Children attend introductory sessions to Nursery/Reception to develop familiarity with the setting and practitioners.

In the final term in Reception, the Year 1 teacher will meet with the Early Years staff and discuss each child's development against the Early Learning Goals in order to support a smooth transition to Year 1. This discussion helps the Year 1 teacher to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children.