

Woodlands Schools



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Introduction

At Woodlands Schools we are committed to providing the highest quality of care and education and ensuring that all children enjoy a happy, confident start to school life. We aim to inspire a lifelong love of learning, whilst enabling children to achieve their potential.

We aim to provide our children with a happy and stimulating environment. We consider the age, development and learning style of each child, and aim to provide a careful balance of care and education which meets individual requirements. Through gentle encouragement and support, children feel safe, secure and develop confidence to learn. Play and exploration opportunities are provided both indoors and outside around our extensive facilities.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is vital as it sows the seeds for future learning. It provides the basis for children to build on and develop their knowledge and understanding in later schooling.

The Aims and Objectives of the Foundation Stage

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. 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. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.'

The Early Years Foundation Stage supports pupils between the ages of three to five years. (Kindergarten 3-4 years and Reception 4-5 years). During these stages we aim to further the emotional, social, physical and cognitive development of each child, building on previous

Our Objectives

- To provide a warm friendly atmosphere where children and their families feel secure and valued.
- To help children develop confidence, independence and a positive self image.
- To provide a stimulating, exciting and varied environment in which children are encouraged to develop a positive attitude to learning.
- To provide a broad and balanced curriculum, which is appropriate to the age and development of each child.
- To encourage children to be active learners, providing a meaningful curriculum, related to their existing knowledge and interests.
- To extend the knowledge, skills and understanding of every child.
- To foster attitudes, values and beliefs to encourage children to become responsible, caring individuals with a multicultural society.
- To establish a successful home/school partnership ensuring effective relationships with parents/carers.
- To prepare emotionally, socially and academically for the various transitions within the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- To provide a stimulating curriculum that demonstrates a balance between child-led and adult led activities appropriate to the needs of the pupils.

Learning and Development

There are seven main areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in Early Years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. The Framework sets out the three prime areas of learning that underpin everything in the Early Years:

Three Prime Areas:

- ***Communication and Language Development***
'Giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment, to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations'
- ***Physical Development***
'Providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; to develop their co-ordination, control and movement. To help them to understand the importance of physical activity and to make healthy choices in relation to food'.
- ***Personal, Social and Emotional Development***
'Helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups and have confidence in their own abilities.'

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

Four Specific Areas:

- ***Literacy***
'Encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Providing children with a wide range of reading materials to ignite their interest'.
- ***Mathematics***
'Providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems, and to describe shapes, spaces and measures'.
- ***Understanding the World***
'Guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.'
- ***Expressive Arts and Design***
Enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play and design and technology.

Early Learning Goals

EYFS Development Matters: Playing & Exploring, Active Learning, and Creating & Thinking
Critically support children’s learning across all areas.

Area of Learning	Aspect	Early Learning Goals
Personal, Social and Emotional Development	Self-Regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly. • Set and work towards simple goals, being able to wait for what they want and control their immediate impulses when appropriate. • Give focused attention to what the teacher says, responding appropriately even when engaged in activity, and show an ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.
	Managing Self	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge. • Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly. • Manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet and understanding the importance of healthy food choices.
	Building Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others. • Form positive attachments to adults and friendships with peers. • Show sensitivity to their own and to others’ needs.

Communication and Language	Listening, Attention and Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions. • Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding. • Hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers.
	Speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary. • Offer explanations for why things might happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems when appropriate. • Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher.

Physical Development	Gross Motor Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiate space and obstacles safely, with consideration for themselves and others. • Demonstrate strength, balance and coordination when playing. • Move energetically, such as running, jumping, dancing, hopping, skipping and climbing.
	Fine Motor Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases. • Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paintbrushes and cutlery. • Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing.

Literacy	Comprehension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary. • Anticipate (where appropriate) key events in stories. • Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems and during role play.
	Word Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs. • Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by sound-blending. • Read aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent with their phonic knowledge, including some common exception words.
	Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed. • Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters. • Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.

Maths	Number	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a deep understanding of number to 10, including the composition of each number. • Subitise (recognise quantities without counting) up to 5. • Automatically recall (without reference to rhymes, counting or other aids) number bonds up to 5 (including subtraction facts) and some number bonds to 10, including double facts.
	Numerical Patterns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbally count beyond 20, recognising the pattern of the counting system. • Compare quantities up to 10 in different contexts, recognising when one quantity is greater than, less than or the same as the other quantity. • Explore and represent patterns within numbers up to 10, including evens and odds, double facts and how quantities can be distributed equally.

Understanding the World	Past and Present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society. • Know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class. • Understand the past through settings, characters and events encountered in books read in class and storytelling.
	People, Culture and Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts and maps. • Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class. • Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and (when appropriate) maps.
	The Natural World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants. • Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class. • Understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter.

Expressive Arts and Design	Creating with Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function. • Share their creations, explaining the process they have used. • Make use of props and materials when role playing characters in narratives and stories.
	Being Imaginative and Expressive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invent, adapt and recount narratives and stories with peers and their teacher. • Sing a range of well-known nursery rhymes and songs. • Perform songs, rhymes, poems and stories with others, and (when appropriate) try to move in time with music.

The delivery of the curriculum to Kindergarten and Reception children will be through a thematic approach planning annually, termly and weekly in line with the Early Learning Goals and objectives outlined in the EYFS Framework, combined with an abundance of activities centred around each child's individual needs. Staff understand that children learn in different ways and the 3 characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework are reflected in their practice:

Playing and Exploring

The way in which children investigate and experience things and 'have a go'.

Active Learning

Children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements.

Creating and Thinking Critically

Children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

Teaching and Learning

At Woodlands Schools, good practice relating to the Early Years Foundation Stage includes:

- ✓ Working in partnership with parents to ensure regular communication relating to children's welfare, education and progress.
- ✓ Use a range of suitable approaches that consider how each child learns and responds, staff listen attentively and provide time for each child to respond and express themselves during communication and learning.
- ✓ Staff are aware of children's individual learning needs to ensure requirements are met
- ✓ Children are able to access a variety of play and learning opportunities indoors and outside, using equipment and resources.
- ✓ Plan, implement and evaluate a balanced and varied curriculum which builds on children's experiences and extends knowledge and learning.
- ✓ Staff implement the school's policies and procedures relating to health and safety during teaching and learning to ensure the safety of all children and adults.

Curriculum, Planning and Play

The Early Years Foundation Stage follows a thematic approach which aims to provide a variety of subjects children will find both interesting and stimulating. The age and development of the children are carefully considered when linking activities and tasks to these topics. The areas of learning are carefully considered to ensure a rich mixture of opportunities is delivered in a creative and effective way.

The Early Years Foundation Stage teaching staff are responsible for providing long, medium and short term planning.

Staff make effective use of local amenities and resources providing opportunities for educational visits and trips.

Activities are planned, implemented and evaluated considering the learning outcome for each child. Information gained from evaluations and observations are used to inform future planning, ensuring needs continue to be met and progress is achieved.

The curriculum includes:

- P.E and games
- Swimming
- French
- Music and movement
- ICT
- Speech and drama

Play

We believe children learn through play and ensure a balance of structured and unstructured play opportunities are provided for every child. Staff plan a variety of play opportunities suitable to the indoor and outdoor environment. Children are provided with opportunities to explore, investigate and initiate their own play. Spontaneous play is encouraged by practitioners supporting children's needs and requirements as opportunities arise. Children are encouraged to be active learners and communicate their thoughts and ideas. Practitioners use observation methods to observe and record children's preferences to play and take this into account when future planning. Children are carefully listened to and provision is provided to meet the 7 areas of learning, often with a holistic approach. Staff provide appropriate resources and equipment which is age and development appropriate, the resources provide a challenge which is achievable and enjoyable for the children.

Induction and Transition

During the term before entry into Kindergarten and Reception, children will be invited in for a series of settling in visits. They will meet their class teacher and familiarise themselves with the setting.

Children starting Kindergarten who are currently attending Little Acorns will have become familiar with the setting as they will have attended play sessions throughout the upcoming half-term they will start. To ensure a smooth and happy transition, children will be given the opportunity to spend time with their new class with their new teacher before the end of the year.

Each member of staff holds a 'handover' meeting with the next teacher. During this meeting, each child's particular needs, abilities and requirements are discussed. Learning Journeys and tracking assessments are discussed and handed over to the new teacher.

Where appropriate, meetings are held with parents to discuss any additional requirements or needs for example where a child has health or medical needs.

Assessment, Record Keeping and Monitoring

At Woodlands Schools, we undertake assessment for learning. We analyse and review what we know about each child's development and learning, noticing what they can do and what they know and then make informed decisions about the child's progress. This enables us to plan the next steps to meet development and learning needs. All practitioners interacting with the child contribute to the assessment process.

Formative assessment

This type of assessment informs everyday planning and is based on on-going observational assessment of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles. Formative assessment may take the form of anecdotal observations, focused observations, photographs and information from parents. Each child has an individual profile which we add to each half term. We plan for observational assessment when undertaking our medium and short term planning.

Summative assessment

The EYFS Profile summarises all of the formative assessment undertaken and makes statements about the child's achievement against the Early Learning Goals. This information is recorded in their profile. It summarises children's progress. All practitioners in Reception contribute to the profile. On a termly basis teachers meet with parents and children to share progress relating to the child's profile. At the end of the year a written report is sent home.

The Head teacher monitors teaching and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The Foundation Leader monitors teaching and learning across the foundation stage each year and analyses the EYFS Profile data in conjunction with the Head teacher.

Assessment

Regular assessment of children's learning is essential in order to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Teachers in the Foundation Stage follow the school's Assessment Policy and the EYFS Profile. Children in Reception are assessed using Pira in the Spring and Summer and Puma in the Summer Term. In Kindergarten and Reception assessment takes place through planned observations, directed tasks and child initiated activities; covering all areas of the curriculum. This ensures the teaching programme for individual children can be adjusted to meet all of their needs. Throughout the year samples of work and photographs of achievement are collected to document the children's progress.

Each term Kindergarten and Reception teachers assess which children are working below, within or secure in the prime and specific areas of learning. Any children that are working below are discussed within the EYFS team where strategies will be put into place to further support the child.

At the end of Reception, the Early Years Foundation Stage profile will be completed for each child, indicating if the child is meeting expected levels of development or not yet reaching expected levels (emerging). The results of the Foundation Stage Profile are shared through the end of year report. To ensure that the individual needs of each child is met as they make their transition to Year 1, copy of the profile report, and their Learning Journey will be handed to the Year 1 teacher and fully discussed.

Inclusion

We value all our children as individuals at Woodlands Schools, 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 support 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. Whilst we recognise that our children are only young, we are aware that they may already be demonstrating ability or talent in a given area; where appropriate we will implement a personalised learning programme.

Staff Training

- We take great care to apply the Equal Opportunities Policy when advertising for, interviewing and appointing staff.
- We keep staff informed and updated on new legislation, and train them accordingly. We display information on new national initiatives and Early Years Development and Childcare Partnerships (EYDCP) courses.
- We give the opportunity to attend courses to staff who have identified an area in which they wish to improve their own knowledge and expertise have been identified through an inspection or an in-house appraisal as having a training need and want to further their own personal development.
- We expect all staff to behave in a professional manner, follow the above policy and try to be consistent, sensitive and fair. We expect them to challenge others who make inadvertent racist, sexist or insensitive remarks.
- One member of staff has the role of Equalities Named Coordinator (ENCo). Their goal is to work collaboratively with colleagues and the Senior Leadership team to develop and enhance the anti-discriminatory, rights and equality promoting inclusive practice of all practitioners in the setting.
- All members of staff are involved in training days.
- Additional training is arranged in response to the needs of individual member of staff and the school.
- Whole school staff meetings are held weekly after school.
- Early Years Foundation Stage meetings are held weekly after school. These sessions allow staff the opportunity to discuss concerns, achievement and individual observations and provide an opportunity to discuss each child's needs and appropriate next steps.

Class Teacher

The role of the Class Teacher is to ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs, to help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and to build a relationship with their parents. They advise and support parents and carers in guiding their child's development at home and help them to engage with more specialist support if appropriate. At Woodlands Schools we follow a Class Teacher system in line with the principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Training

All members of staff are involved in training days, which are held each term. Staff undertake regular training in the following areas to ensure knowledge is up-to-date:

- Paediatric First Aid
- Food Hygiene Awareness

Health and Safety Awareness

Child Protection Fully qualified and well trained staff are allocated to each class and department to ensure the smooth running of the school and the continuity of care for the children and their parents.

- EYFS Curriculum, Practice and Training
- SEN courses and training
- ENCo training
- Infection control

- Fire Extinguisher training
- Prevent training.

Staff Development and Appraisal

The arrangements for appraisal and development include classroom observations and structured discussions with individual members of staff where achievements are recognised and professional development and training need are identified in with Ofsted and ISI guidelines. All staff have a Supervision meeting with the Head of Foundation Stage each term. This is in addition to staff appraisals.

Parents as Partners Policy

“Parents are children’s first and most enduring educates. When parents and practitioners work together in the Early Years settings, the results have a positive impact on children’s development and learning.”

(Taken from the second principle of the Early Years Foundation Stage. 2.2. Parents as Partners.)

At Woodlands we believe that we can best meet the needs of individual children by working closely with parents/carers. We aim to develop partnerships between parents/carers and staff which are based on mutual trust and respect, which promote the sharing of information and knowledge for the benefit of the children in our care.

Sharing Information

- We invite parent/carers to a briefing meeting as well as settling in visits before their child’s admission to discuss policies and procedures and the running of the school day.
- We ask parents/carers for information about their children, their individual needs and requirements in order to ensure the best possible care for them.
- Parents receive regular newsletters from the Headteacher.
- We provide information about themes and weekly plans through, for example, curriculum letters, regular letters, wall displays, photographs and parentmail and Seesaw.
- We provide bi-annual written reports to all parents as well as one consultation evening per term. Teachers have the opportunity to speak to parents at the beginning/end of the school day or by appointment.
- We believe that the child’s class teacher is central to every exchange of information. We aim to provide the school an open door atmosphere where parents/carers are welcome within the school at any time. We also continue to invite parents and relatives in to school to see the children’s productions.
- We ensure that each child has their own Learning Journey, a book to celebrate his/hers experiences and achievements. We encourage parents to contribute to this with photographs and personal comments.
- When we propose changes we inform all parents and when it is appropriate seek their views.
- Parents are able to access their child’s Foundation Stage Profile at any time, but a written request must be given to have access to their personal file and Data Protection Legislation will be taken into account.
- Parents are invited to our Friday Celebration Assembly.