



## **Early Years Foundation Stage**

Using the statutory EYFS Framework 2024 and non-statutory guidance Development Matters 2020 as a basis, we aim to provide a bespoke curriculum for ALL children in our setting that is carefully planned, implemented and regularly reviewed by our team of experienced practitioners. We want every child in our care to make at least good progress from their starting point. We want every child to be equipped with the skills and knowledge that they need to be ready for Year 1.

At the heart of our Early Years curriculum lie our **core school values** and the **characteristics of effective teaching and learning**.

### **Our Christian Values:**

#### **R respect**

We believe in upholding high levels of respect for all, where everyone is valued and appreciated.

#### **O optimism**

We believe optimism means embracing reality and accepting that there will be bad days, as well as many good days. When we are grounded in reality, we know where we are and how far we need to go. Optimism gives us the motivation to make plans to get to where we want to go.

#### **C compassion**

We believe that compassion, kindness and care are at the core of good human nature and are the basis for successful futures and positive relationships. As compassionate people, we try to understand how others might be feeling in a situation and do our best to help.

#### **K koinonia** (community)

We believe that the members of our school family are interdependent: all are needed and valued and each person is important to the whole. We work together to ensure all feel included and valued. As a community we look after each other and we are welcomed and accepted, no matter who we are.

### **The Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning:**

#### **Playing & Exploring**

- We encourage children to play with what they know and to develop the **confidence** to “have a go”.
- We aim to foster **a love of learning** within a safe and stimulating environment.
- We create secure and trusting relationships built on **respect** which allow our children to flourish.

#### **Active Learning**

- We set-up and resource our learning environment so that children become motivated to be **independent** learners.
- We support children in becoming **resilient**; to keep on trying and achieve what they set out to do.
- We encourage children to lead their own learning and allow time for them to **explore** ideas and be creative.
- We want children to concentrate and become fully **engaged** in their learning.

#### **Creating and Thinking Critically**

- We aim to provide a broad range of activities that enable children to develop their own ideas, and **make links** between ideas, experiences and learning.
- We encourage children to **actively think** about the meaning of what they are doing and **reflect on** their learning.
- We want our children to develop their own strategies and become **problem solvers**.

## **INTENT:**

The EYFS framework 2024 includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. Our curriculum places a strong emphasis on the three prime areas which are particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

- Personal, social and emotional development
- Physical development
- Communication and language

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

**Personal, social and emotional development:** We want our children to be safe, happy and independent. To enable this, we will develop strong, warm and supportive relationships with our children. We will support them in managing and communicating their emotions and encourage them to develop a positive sense of self and have confidence in their own abilities. As well as recognising and valuing their own unique individuality, we want our children to respect and celebrate differences.

**Physical Development:** Through games and opportunities for play, both indoors and outdoors, we will support children to develop their core strength, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility. We want our children to lead healthy and active lives, and to begin to understand the relationship between physical health and a happy and healthy mind. Through hand-eye co-ordination and fine motor control activities we want to ensure children gain the skills necessary for writing.

**Communication and Language:** Through the sharing of stories, frequent and quality conversations, story-telling, role-play, rhymes, songs and poems we want our children to be articulate communicators and effective listeners who are comfortable using a range of vocabulary in different contexts. At Woolhampton we place emphasis on oracy skills. We recognise that oracy not only improves academic outcomes but is a life skill needed to ensure success beyond school, in life and future employment.

**Literacy:** It is crucial for our children to develop a life-long love of reading! We will share and enjoy stories, non-fiction, rhymes, poems and songs every day. We aim to provide strong foundations in early literacy skills such as listening, becoming attuned to sounds, rhyming and alliteration, which we hope will form secure building blocks for their future phonics learning. The children will progress through our Supersonic Phonic Friends scheme to be able to decode efficiently and become fluent and independent early readers and writers.

**Mathematics:** The children will develop a strong grounding in number, learning to count and represent numbers accurately, and exploring the relationship between numbers to 10. We will explore shape, space and measure and learn to spot connections and just have a go! We want our children to develop the ability to independently apply their mathematical understanding in their play and to recognise mathematics in real life.

**Understanding the World:** Through a range of experiences, physical world and our community we strive to give children knowledge about the world around them at Woolhampton as well as the rest of the wider world. We want to foster a sense of awe, wonder and curiosity about objects, people and places and to develop a drive to find out more about people and the world. We want our children to know the important role they have in the future of our planet.

**Expressive Arts and Design:** We want our children to explore their ideas and express themselves through a variety of ways. We want to foster a love of creativity and for children to feel confident to sing songs, make music, dance, perform and create using a wide range of media and materials.

## **IMPLEMENTATION:**

Four guiding principles shape the practice in our setting. These are:

- a unique child
- positive relationships
- enabling environments
- learning and development

### **A UNIQUE CHILD**

*“Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.”*

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage July 2020

Within the first two weeks of the Autumn term, we follow a **settling-in timetable** where we introduce the learning environment and we play, chat and model behaviour. We spend time getting to know the children, their interests and their passions, their strengths, and their individual needs. During this time, we make observations which help us get to know each child’s **unique** character and gives us an indication of their **starting points**. We recognise that children begin school with a wide variety of experiences and learning, and that each child’s starting point is different. We discuss as a team where the children are and where they need to go next. We plan the most effective ways of doing this, trying to take into account everything we have already learned about the children.

### **POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS**

*“Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.”*

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Children learn best when they are happy, settled and have a sense of belonging. We value the importance of **getting to know each child and their family** on an individual basis and spend a large chunk of time doing so at the start of each year. At the end of the summer term prior to the children starting school, we visit nurseries and preschools where we chat with keyworkers and get to know the children. We have ‘stay-and play’ sessions where both children and parents come into the setting, get a feel for the environment, and get to know US! This includes a warm welcome meeting where parents are given key information and are able to ask any questions. Our SENCO contacts any outside agencies that we are made aware of at this point to arrange in-person meetings. During the first week of the Autumn Term we go on ‘Home Visits’, allowing for a more personal meeting and parental input. We spend time during the first few weeks of school building relationships with the children by listening, talking to them, and joining in their play.

### **ENABLING ENVIRONMENTS**

*“Children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time.”*

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage

We follow a **daily routine** and **timetable** that children quickly become familiar with. The timetable is structured so that children have a mixture of whole class directed teaching, small group activities and child-initiated learning time. We set-up and maintain an **enabling learning environment** that allows children to consolidate their learning through play, during what we call ‘Independent Learning’ times. Children have open access to both indoor and outdoor learning environments, which have a ‘learning area’ approach. The learning areas are planned to develop purposeful play and promote learning opportunities. In each area resources are engaging and relevant, clearly stored, labelled and accessible so that children can be independent. This is called our **Continuous Provision** which forms the basis of our EYFS Curriculum and supports and encourages our children and staff to have a lifelong love of learning. Throughout the environment, both inside and outside, we hope that what you will see is busy children actively engaged in a wide range of activities that they themselves have chosen!

## LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

*"Children develop and learn 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.."*

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage July 2020

We welcome all children as individuals who develop and learn at different rates. We try our hardest to ensure that children receive the support they need to learn and develop at their own pace, and understand that some children may need greater support than others. We believe that young children learn best through play and exploration, when they are feeling safe and regulated, and in their own time. As such, we ensure that our children are given lots of time to engage in child-initiated learning. During this time, we encourage children to follow their own interests and fascinations and to try things out for themselves, at their own pace, using the resources and activities available in our continuous provision. We encourage children to adopt a Plan-Do-Review approach to their learning. As adults we are continually joining in with play, asking questions, modelling behaviour and skills. All adults get involved during child-initiated learning time to help scaffold learning or challenge thinking, depending on need.

Our timetable is structured so that children have a mixture of whole class directed teaching, small group activities and child-initiated learning time ('Independent Learning'). Children have directed teaching in **Phonics, Maths and English** every day. We put great emphasis on early phonic skills such as speaking and listening, getting children attuned to sounds around them, rhyming and alliteration and making sure children are ready to begin developing oral blending and segmenting skills. This is crucial in providing those strong foundations in early literacy. We follow a systematic approach to teaching phonics through our scheme **Supersonic Phonic Friends** which encourages the continuation of these key early skills throughout. Phonics lessons are taught daily for 25 minutes. Same day intervention is used whenever possible to support children who need phonics keep-up or catch-up. In addition to daily phonics, children are heard reading by an adult at least once a week. They are given a high quality, decodable book that matches their phonic knowledge. Children are also encouraged to take home an age-appropriate book from our class library once a fortnight.

Every day we share and enjoy stories, non-fiction books, rhymes, poems and songs with our children. During focussed literacy sessions we use high-quality age-appropriate texts that have been specifically chosen to develop oracy, vocabulary and comprehension skills. We also use these texts and/or songs and rhymes that we have been learning to enhance our continuous provision e.g. through role-play, small-world and story-making opportunities. We introduce **writing** straight away and teach handwriting alongside the **Supersonic Phonic Friends** curriculum. Children are also encouraged to write during 'Independent Learning' time, either at our specific 'Writing Area' or on clipboards wherever they choose to go! They are provided with interesting and inviting writing tools such as gel pens, note pads, cards and envelopes, a range of pencils and other stationary. Fine motor skills are developed through 'funky fingers' activities that are set-up as an enhancement to the continuous provision. We also have regular **Dough Disco** or **Write Dance** directed sessions.

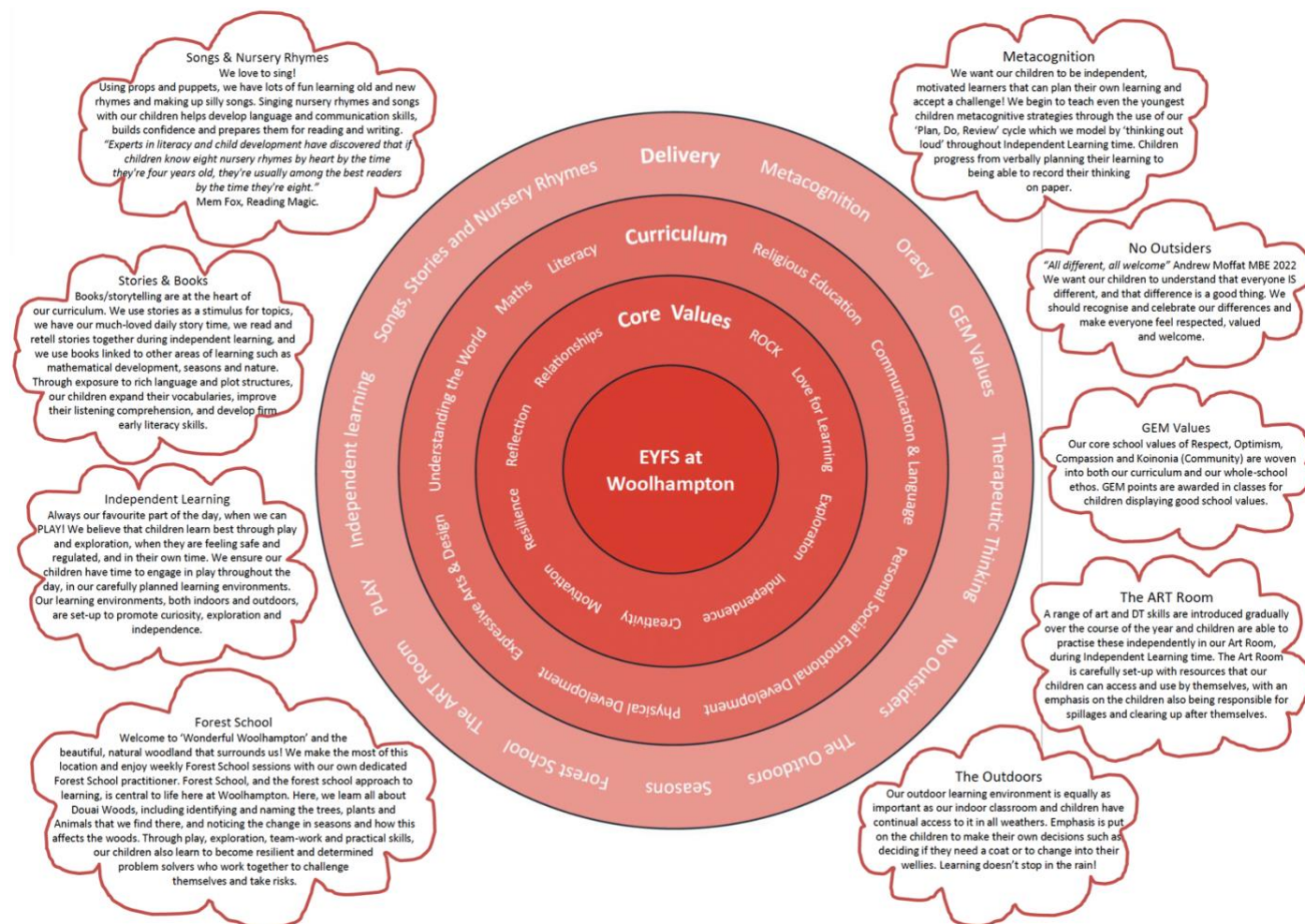
Children are taught **maths** through whole-class teaching, songs and games. We follow the **White Rose Scheme** of work for directed teaching and use a range of practical resources including Numicon and Base 10 to help support. We add maths enhancement activities in different learning areas including the outdoors, where appropriate. We teach children to subitise numbers to ten automatically as soon as possible. We want to ensure children have a secure understanding of one-digit numbers before they move on to place value and calculation. Those children who need extra support with mathematics are targeted through additional intervention where necessary and when possible. This year, we will also start following a daily number facts fluency programme called Number Sense.

Our outdoor environment with partial cover, and our wonderful nearby woodland enables us to make the most of the outdoors and help develop children's gross motor skills. We encourage children to play outside as much as possible, in all weathers. We have a weekly **forest school** session with an experienced forest school leader. Children are encouraged to take measured risks when using large construction equipment in our outdoor area and climbing and jumping from trees at Forest School. We also follow a well-established and comprehensive PE curriculum called **Real PE** which includes dance & movement, stretching & flexibility, and fundamental PE skills.

We encourage all children to explore, investigate and talk about themselves and the world. To help children **understand the wider world**, we introduce themes such as 'Me and My World', 'Come Outside', 'Toy Stories' and 'Journeys' to provoke discussion about the past and present, people and communities and the natural world. We aim to make at least one trip each term to give children real-life experiences, such as visiting a local farm or museum. We are fortunate to be able to explore the natural environment and to make observations of animals and plants within our forest school grounds and weekly forest school sessions. Through Forest school we continually observe the changing seasons and are able to investigate topics such as weather, life cycles and animal habitats.

At Woolhampton we pride ourselves on encouraging our children to be imaginative and to express themselves in different ways. Our learning environment has many areas where children can explore, experiment and be creative. We especially love our dedicated **Art Room**, where children are able to draw with a range of tools, experiment with paint and brushes, make-models from various materials such as junk-modelling, playdough or clay. We have a stage area with instruments and dress-up clothes, a home corner and role-play, and we often perform the stories we have been learning as a class in our little puppet theatre. In art and design teaching sessions we explore different artists and their techniques, and learn about colour, design, texture, form and function.

We introduce rules and boundaries early on, setting high expectations from the start and continuously model good behaviour. We encourage self-regulation and use **restorative justice** to talk through feelings and behaviours. Children take turns for class responsibilities such as being register monitor. All children participate fully in tidy-up times and general care and pride of class resources and learning areas. We have regular circle time sessions to focus on Personal and Social Development, following the **KAPOW** Scheme of Work.



## **IMPACT**

We strive to ensure that our children's progress across all areas of the EYFS curriculum is **good** from their varied starting points, or for each child to reach their **potential**. Progress is evident in learning journeys (books/folders), on Tapestry and through pupil interactions. Progressive assessment milestones from Baseline to End of Year are used to monitor children's development and learning, and quickly highlights any children who are not on track. Termly meetings between teachers ensures that plans are put in place to help close any gaps.

### **Baseline:**

Prior to children starting school, staff spend time speaking to the child's parents, previous settings and read previous learning journeys to gain an understanding of the whole child and where they are at. During the first few weeks, all staff use ongoing assessment, observations, and conversations with the child to develop a baseline assessment. This identifies each individual's starting points in all areas so we can plan experiences to ensure progress. We also carry out the RBA Statutory Baseline Assessment which focusses on 'Language, Communication and Literacy' and 'Mathematics'. The purpose of this is to show the progress the children make from Reception until the end of KS2.

### **Ongoing Observation:**

Practitioners make ongoing observations which are used to inform weekly planning and identify children's next steps. This formative assessment does not involve prolonged periods of time away from the children or excessive paperwork. Practitioners draw on their knowledge of the child, their own professional judgements and discussions with other practitioners, photographs and physical examples such as a child's drawing/making. Some observations are uploaded to Tapestry and shared with parents/carers and sometimes examples kept in books/folders. Conversations, engagement and feedback from parents support teachers in assessing and monitoring children's learning.

### **Assessment:**

Summative assessments are completed at 3 points in the year. We measure the percentage of pupils we believe to be achieving age related expectations/on track for GLD at the end of Autumn 2 and Spring 2 and put supportive interventions in place if and when needed. We then complete the EYFSP in Summer 2, where we judge whether the child has met each of the 17 ELGs and achieved GLD or not. Our assessment judgements will be moderated both in school and externally with at least one other local school. We will also partake in any further local authority moderation which will validate our school judgements.

*The impact of our curriculum is also measured by having happy children who enjoy learning!* We see our children develop into well-rounded individuals who embody our school values and carry with them the knowledge, skills and attitudes which will help them to be ready for and be able to continue their learning journey in Year 1 and beyond.