



## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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Approved: December 2023	Next Approval due: December 2024
Initial Review by: EYFS Lead Governor, EYFS Lead Teacher, Head Teacher	Formal Review by: Teaching Learning & Care Committee
Linked Policies: Curriculum Policy, Teaching & Learning Policy, Home Learning Policy	

### **Our Christian vision:**

*Built on the rock of Christian faith, we work as a community to create an environment which enables all to flourish. Jesus welcomed all and we embrace diversity, celebrating our different gifts and successes. Like St Peter, we are motivated by our values, learn from our mistakes and strive for the best outcome for everyone.*

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Foundation year. Children join the Foundation and Year 1 class in the September following their fourth birthday. Children enter our school with a variety of pre-school experiences and we value highly our partnership with parents and pre-school settings to enable us to build on children's previous learning.

### **Aims**

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- A close partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice
- That the children learn to apply the school's core Christian values (ROCK – Respect, Optimism, Compassion, Koinonia).

### **Legislation**

This policy is based on requirements set out in the statutory framework for the Early years Foundation Stage (EYFS) that applies from September 2023.

### **Structure of EYFS**

We have a mixed Reception and Year 1 class.

### **Curriculum**

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based upon four themes:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

This policy explains how our practice is underpinned by these four themes.

### **A Unique Child**

At Woolhampton CE Primary School 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. 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.

### **Inclusion**

We value the diversity of individuals within the school. All children at Woolhampton CE Primary School are treated fairly whatever their race, gender, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school. In our school we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds as well as those children in receipt of Pupil Premium funding.

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 wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- 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. At Woolhampton CE 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. 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.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

### **Starting School**

At Woolhampton CE Primary School we have a flexible approach to starting school according to the needs of the children. We offer a staggered start whereby the children spend a morning at school for the first week before coming to school full time. This allows the EYFS team to carry out home visits, but we understand that each family's circumstances are different and they may need a more flexible arrangement.

### **Positive Relationships**

At Woolhampton CE Primary School we recognise that children learn to be strong, confident and independent from being in secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

### **Parents as Partners**

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value being partners with them in their child's education through:

- A home visit will be offered to the family of each Foundation Stage child. This visit is optional, and is in addition to our settling-in provision. The purpose of the visit is to help the child, the family and the staff get to know each other in the home environment where the child usually feels most relaxed. The class teacher will contact the parent and arrange a time that is mutually convenient (*See appendix 1 for Home Visit Procedures*)
- Offering both parents and children the opportunity to spend time in the Foundation Stage before starting school.
- Operating an open door policy for parents with any queries.
- Sharing the children's online learning journal 'Tapestry' and valuing the on-going contributions from parents.

- Offering two parent/teacher consultation evenings per year.
- Sending a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of the school year.

### **Staff**

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At Woolhampton CE Primary School the staff's approach is aimed at enabling and supporting close attachments between children and practitioners. Attachment provides a sense of security so that children can become confident, independent and capable young learners. The role of the staff is to meet the needs of each child and respond sensitively to their feelings, talking to the parents when appropriate, and working in partnership with them.

The Foundation Stage staff meet with pre-school providers when possible to discuss each individual child and their transition process into school.

### **Enabling Environments**

At Woolhampton CE Primary School, we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Through observation we assess the children's interests, stages of development and learning needs, before planning challenging, achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

### **Observation, Assessment and Planning**

The planning within the EYFS is based on the statutory curriculum requirements as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2021. These plans are flexible so that teachers can respond to the needs, achievements and interests of the children. This fostering of the children's interests develops a high level of motivation for the children's learning. We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal observations. These observations are recorded onto the Tapestry online journal and contribute to the child's individual 'Learning Journey' profile. Practitioners also take into account observations shared by parents/and or carers. At the end of the Foundation year in school, the child's progress is recorded on to the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. Each child's level of development is recorded against the 17 Early Learning Goals.

### **The Learning Environment**

The Foundation Stage classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, quiet, creative etc. Each classroom has defined learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The Foundation Stage has an enclosed outdoor area, and children are able to free-flow between the indoor and outdoor spaces. Being outdoors offers the children opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. They are able 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. In addition to the outdoor area, Forest School takes place weekly, in a nearby woodland.

## **Learning and Development**

At Woolhampton CE Primary School, we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and have their own learning styles. There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in Early Years settings. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are often interconnected.

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.

### **Prime Areas:**

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

Staff will also support children 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

## **Teaching and Learning Style**

We recognise that features of effective teaching and learning in the EYFS are:

- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;
- the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS;
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence;
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations;
- the 'buddying' of the older children in the school with the new children, offering friendship and support in the playground.

## **Independent, Play-Based Learning**

Through independent play-based learning our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They have the opportunity to express their experiences of diverse aspects of life in a safe environment. We deliver opportunities across all of the learning areas through purposeful play and learning experiences, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

## **Active Learning**

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. We encourage the 'plan-do-review' approach during independent learning to enable all children to focus on their play within the learning environment. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

## **Creativity and Critical Thinking**

Children should be given an opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

## **Planning and Organisation**

In the Early Years, planning is an on-going process to ensure children's current interests, needs and abilities are considered and planned for. All children begin the school year with a 'settling-in' topic which focuses on introducing the children to the class and the learning areas. Children are supported as they become familiar with their new learning environment and the daily routines. During this period the adults are continually observing the children to get to know them and support their play in order to plan for next steps in learning.

Weekly planning includes opportunities for independent, child-initiated learning and adult-led activities. These plans are shared with all staff to enable them to become familiar with the tasks available to the children and to provide the necessary support to extend their learning. Observations are considered during planning sessions to ensure activities and objectives are relevant and interesting to the children.

## **Home Learning**

Appropriate home learning will be set by the class teacher to enhance and develop children's learning following guidelines from the school's Home Learning Policy.

## **Equal Opportunities and Special Needs**

Every pupil will be given equal opportunity to follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum (EYFS) irrespective of their ethnic or linguistic background, gender, disability or religious beliefs. Children with Special Educational Needs will have full access to the Foundation Stage curriculum. Those identified as Able, Gifted and Talented will be given opportunities to develop their skills. This may be through differentiated activities,

opportunities for problem solving, research activities, higher order questioning or more open-ended tasks.

### **Assessment, Record Keeping and Marking**

Assessment, record keeping and marking will be carried out according to our school's policies. In alignment with the EYFS, observations will be made of the children during both adult-led and child-initiated activities and used as evidence to monitor the progress and learning needs of each individual child. Observations made of the children at home along with examples of work and photos will also be included. All observations and a selection of significant work will be collected in each child's folder on Tapestry. A detailed annual report is shared with parents towards the end of the Summer term.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts at Woolhampton, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment. Each child's progress is recorded and monitored throughout the year using the EYFS Development Matters 2020 Statements (Children in Reception) and then Early Learning Goals.

At the end of the EYFS, staff collaboratively complete the EYFS profile for each child. All members of staff in our Foundation Stage are involved in making observations of all the children. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting levels of development, or
- Not yet reaching expected levels (emerging)

The EYFS profile reflects the ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters guidance) and in partnership with other local schools to assure consistent assessment judgements. The final results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers.

### **Safeguarding and welfare procedures**

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our Safeguarding Policy.

### **Monitoring and review**

The Head teacher and link Governor carry out monitoring of the EYFS and Year 1 class through observation and discussion as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

## Appendix 1

### Home Visit Procedure

A home visit is offered to the family of the foundation stage children. This visit is optional and is in addition to the settling-in provision. **The home visit will be offered during the transition meetings in the summer term and parents can choose a day and time that suits them.** The purpose of the visit is to help the child, the family and the staff get to know each other in the home environment where the child usually feels most relaxed. The Foundation Stage teacher will contact the parent and arrange a time that is mutually convenient.

#### **Procedure**

- A home visit will always be attended by two members of staff, one of the Foundation Stage teachers and another member of staff;
- A member of staff remaining at the school will always be made aware of the address of the family being visited;
- The staff will make their own way to and back from the families' homes and the visits will always take place in normal school hours wherever possible;
- The Foundation Stage teacher will carry a mobile phone, the number of which must be left at the school office;
- The staff will stay together during the home visit and would not expect to be left alone with the child during a visit;
- A home visit should last around 30 minutes;
- Staff are to be conscious that they are guests in the families' homes and will treat all families with a high level of respect and regard during their visit;
- Staff should avoid commenting on a child's home or provision so that parents do not feel that any judgement is being made on their home or lifestyle;
- Staff should demonstrate an awareness and respect for differing cultures and comply with appropriate customs such as removing shoes and wearing modest clothing;
- Staff should make an excuse and leave if they feel uneasy or worried at any time;
- Staff should return to the school or phone in when they have completed the visits.