

Wheatfield Primary School

'High Achievement through Growing and Learning Together'

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

(Statutory Policy Document)

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Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

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CHANGE RECORDS SHEET

Issue No.	Date	Summary of Change	Amended by
1	April 2006	Original policy document.	E Brown
2	November 2016	Complete rewrite	S O'Regan

SUMMARY

This policy should be read in conjunction with all other school policies. If you require further details of this policy then please refer to the Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher.

This policy will be reviewed every three years or updated as and when changes occur. This is to be recorded in the minutes of the Staffing and Resources Committee.

ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations are used in the policy:

EYFS: Early Years Foundation Stage

DfE: Department for Education

SEN: Special Educational Needs

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MAIN DOCUMENT

1 RATIONALE

'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.' (DfE Framework for the EYFS:2014:p5)

At Wheatfield, we aim to create a wonderful learning environment where each child can develop their imagination and sense of awe and wonder. We want to capture their interests and curiosities, and provide them with a thought-provoking and safe environment where your child feels comfortable to take risks in their learning, and are inspired to seek out new experiences and challenges, and share these with others.

2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- To provide children with a high-quality, stimulating, safe and happy foundation for learning in order for all children to reach their full potential;
- To provide a broad, balanced, relevant, and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond;
- To build upon children's skills to become resilient, capable, confident and self-assured learners;
- To create positive relationships where each child feels secured and valued;
- To create an environment where every child is comfortable and confident to take risks in their learning;
- To inspire children to seek out new experiences and challenges, and to share these with others;
- To develop every child's imagination and sense of awe and wonder;
- To educate the 'whole child', recognising that social, emotional, physical, moral, intellectual, and cultural development are interrelated;
- To teach children through a range of play and first hand experiences which are meaningful to them;
- To provide equality of opportunity for every child irrespective of race, gender, ability or background;
- To develop strong partnerships with parents/carers, and to recognise and appreciate the active role they have to play in their child's learning and development.

3 GUIDELINES

3.1 The Curriculum

At Wheatfield, we follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, as outlined in the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage' document published by the DfE which sets the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five.

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The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are inter-connected.

The three prime areas are;

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

The four specific areas are;

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Art & Design

At Wheatfield we structure our EYFS curriculum and learning around three 'big questions', which link to the overall school vision, and our school values. Through these big questions, we plan purposeful play activities, linked to children's interests, to ensure that every child fulfils their potential.

These are;

- 'What makes us special?' (Autumn Term - Respect & Enjoy)
 - We feel safe, secure and settle into school well. We are confident to talk about our interests and opinions. We recognise what makes us unique, and what brings us together. We enjoy finding things out.
- 'Where are we going and how will we get there?' Spring Term - Achieve & Learn)
 - We develop an enthusiastic appetite for learning. We develop our imagination and gain a sense of awe and wonder. We are curious about the world around us, both where we live and beyond. We seek out challenge and we strive to be the best we can be.
- 'Why do things change?' (Summer Term - Inspire & Believe)
 - We can confidently express our ideas and explain our thinking. We are confident, enthusiastic and ambitious learners well-placed for the transition into Year One. We learn to make sense of the world, be aware of how the world has changed and to develop respect for the world. We are proud of what we can do and are inspired by what we could do in the future.

3.2 Characteristics of Effective Learning

Within the EYFS statutory framework, there are also three characteristics of effective learning. These are;

- Playing and Exploring (Engagement)
 - Children investigate, experience things and 'have a go'.
- Active Learning (Motivation)
 - Children concentrate, keep on trying and enjoy achievements.
- Creating and Thinking Critically (Thinking)
 - Children have and develop ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

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At Wheatfield, we teach these important attitudes towards learning through the 'Achievosaurus'. There are seven Achievosaurus altogether, each linking to an aspect of the characteristics. They enable children to become more aware of how they learn, and give them the language to explain the skills they use when learning

- Explorosaur (Playing & Exploring)
 - Use my senses to explore the world around me. I engage in open-ended activities. I have a can-do attitude and take risks in my learning.
- Askaraptor (Playing & Exploring)
 - I show curiosity about objects, events and people. I show particular interests. I learn by trial and error.
- Tryatops (Active Learning)
 - I persist when challenges occur. I bounce back after difficulties. I'm proud when I accomplish things.
- Stickasaurus (Active Learning)
 - I am not easily distracted. I can focus on my activity for a long time. I pay attention to details.
- Sharadactyl (Creating and Thinking Critically)
 - I can review how well the approach to solving a problem has worked. I can act out my experiences with others. I can share my thoughts and ideas with others.
- Thinkodocus (Creating and Thinking Critically)
 - I think of ideas. I make links and notice patterns. I can plan how I am going to approach a task. I can check how well my activity is going.
- Solvosaurus Rex (Creating and Thinking Critically)
 - I find ways to solve problems. I find new ways of doing things. I make predictions and test my ideas. I can change the way I am doing something to solve a problem.

3.3 Planning

- All seven areas of learning are included in all long-term, medium-term and weekly plans;
- Objectives are taken from Development Matters, Early Learning Goals and exceeding descriptors;
- All seven areas of learning are included in weekly plans, and all provision is linked clearly to objectives and prior assessment;
- Phonics planning follows the LCP Scheme of Work, which is based on Letters & Sounds;
- Hamilton planning is used as a starting point for Mathematics planning.
- Planning takes account of children's interests to ensure high quality engagement in learning;
- Adult-led group activities are planned each week, beginning with a minimum of one adult-led activity per week in Term 1, increasing to two a week in the Spring term;
- Adult-initiated activities and challenges are also planned for where appropriate;
- Planning is objective-led and flexible.

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3.4 Play

(If) adults are mobile during continuous provision sessions, and they are not stuck at one particular table... they are constantly moving through the space looking for opportunities to support children's learning, observe and assess them and deliver their objective... If every adult did this as a matter of course during continuous provision, not only would the environment remain more effective for teaching and learning, it would also take the children far less time to tidy up, which in turn would give you more learning time.' (Bryce-Clegg:2015:p65)

At Wheatfield we value the importance of play and 'doing' in the EYFS. Learning through play is an integral part of our Reception classrooms. We believe that children learn best if activities and learning opportunities spark children's interest and curiosity, and are stimulating and active. We strive to ensure the learning environment and activities on offer within the indoors and outdoors space are well-resourced, challenging and appropriate for children's next steps in their learning. Children are encouraged to take responsibility for their play and to develop their independence through the organisation of the Reception classrooms.

3.5 Assessment, Observations & Learning Folders

- 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;
- Observations take the form of long observations and short observations;
- Long observations are completed on the relevant proforma, and should be done termly for each child. Next steps from these observations are then explicitly referenced in planning;
- Short observations are 'snapshots' of learning and are usually written on post-it notes and stickers;
- All observations are recorded in children's learning folders, which are regularly updated and reviewed in order to ensure teaching, activities and the environment match children's level of attainment;
- Independent learning, and photos are also placed in learning folders;
- All observations and pictures should have the area of learning it references written beside it. E.G. PSED, PD, CL, L, M, UtW, EAD. Where needed, adult scribed description to give context;
- Learning Diaries should be looked through with children on a three-weekly cycle, scribing child's comments exactly as said;
- An 'I shared my learning sticker' should be completed by teacher or TA, linked to Development Matters statements, after the learning diary is shared, with each child given a challenge to complete the following week;
- All guided writing to go into Writing Portfolio section along with select pieces of independent writing that show a child has applied taught learning in independent play;
- All adult-led mathematics to go into Mathematic Portfolio section;
- Next steps from adult-led activities are recorded on the group evaluation sheets. These sheets also show children's next steps from the last recorded summative assessment. These sheets are then looked at each week by adults leading activities so that they can adapt activities to meet the children's individual needs.

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3.6 Learning Environment

- Resources should be clearly labelled with pictures and print & should be easily accessible for children;
- Adult resources should be out of reach from children and should not clutter their learning environment;
- Displays should engage children. They should be learning aids, and used as a tool to provoke self-esteem and wellbeing;
- Provision should be explicitly linked to summative assessment, and should provide differentiated challenge (e.g. a range of different-sized paintbrushes, different tweezers etc).
- Classrooms to have a Next Steps board in each classroom which is updated termly. Next Steps should be in easy-to-understand text for parents and children;
- Books and writing tools should be available in areas across the classroom for children to use in their play. E.G. Construction area, Roleplay, Creative;
- Classrooms should have a sound wall, updated with new sounds and camera words as and when they are taught;
- Include children in displays and learning walls to make them relevant, rather than wallpaper. E.G. Number tracks, include pictures of children. If a child finds 12 tricky to remember, make them part of the number 12 on the display;
- Children should be actively engaged in choosing the focus and developing role-play areas. These should be changed as and when the children's interests change.

3.7 Partnership with parents and carers

We really value the importance of strong partnerships between school and home at Wheatfield, and parents have an active role to play within learning. We recognise that parents are children's first educators, and aim to work together with them to promote children's learning and development. We keep parents informed in many ways, including those listed below;

- Year group noticeboard;
- Termly letters;
- Termly 'Celebrating our Learning' events;
- The use of 'Wow Vouchers';
- 'Lunar Leaps' mathematics scheme;
- School/Home communication books;
- Reading records;
- Curriculum meetings;
- Through our 'open-door' policy.

3.8 Induction

At Wheatfield we aim to make the transition into school as smooth as possible for both parents and children;

- We provide opportunities for children to spend time in school during the summer term to help them become familiar with their new environment and teachers;
- Members of the EYFS team visit pre-school settings, where possible, in the summer term;
- Class teachers attend the Bradley Stoke transition meeting in the summer term;

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- There is a phased induction period in September;
- We offer a home visit for all children, as they begin school in September. We feel that the early establishment of a home/school link helps the children to settle at school and allows parents the opportunity to discuss any issues about beginning school.

3.9 EYFS/Key Stage 1 Transition

The transition between the end of the EYFS and the beginning of Key Stage One is an important one. We aim to establish strong, quality transitions by;

- Providing time for EYFS teachers and Year One teachers to moderate end of year judgements, including exceeding judgements;
- Providing time for Year One teachers to observe their new classes within the EYFS environment in the summer term;
- Providing time for EYFS teachers to observe practice in Year One within the Autumn term;
- EYFS teachers complete a transition book which details next steps and other importance notice to ensure a smooth transition into Year One;
- Children have opportunities to experience the Year One environment in the Summer term through planned Golden Time sessions;
- Transition picture books sent home with each child in the summer term.

3.10 Safeguarding & Welfare

We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance (2014). More information on this can be found in our school Safeguarding policy.

4 SPECIAL NEEDS

At Wheatfield we have regard for the SEN Code of Practice. More information can be found on this within our Inclusion policy. We also liaise with pre-schools to help to identify those children coming to school with additional needs.