

# Woodsetton School



## Early Years Policy

This policy was reviewed and updated in September 2024

The next anticipated review date will be September 2025

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## 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 working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

## Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) that applies from September 2021.

It refers to the legislation;

- The learning and development requirements are given legal force by an Order made under section 39(1)(a) of the Childcare Act 2006
- The safeguarding and welfare requirements are given legal force by Regulations made under section 39(1)(b) of the Childcare Act 2006

## Structure of the EYFS at Woodsetton School

At Woodsetton School the EYFS is implemented for the child's year in Reception under statutory guidance to complete the Early Years Foundation Profile (EYFSP).

For the Year 2024-25, children in Caterpillars & Badgers are in a mixed Reception / Year 1 class.

Woodsetton School follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework.

The curriculum encompasses the **four overarching principles** of:

- 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** with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to

build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.

- the importance of **learning and development**.

We recognise that children develop and learn at different rates and plan appropriate provision to support this. This is to ensure a strong foundation for the children's development in the three prime areas. The specific areas of learning provide children with a broad curriculum and with opportunities to strengthen and apply the prime areas of learning. This is particularly important in developing language and extending vocabulary, supported by a total communication environment. Adults play a vital role in this with through adult modelling, storytelling, role-play activities and conversation.

The EYFS learning and development requirements comprise of:

- the **seven areas of learning and development** and the **educational programmes**
- the **early learning goals**, which summarise the knowledge, skills and understanding that all young children should have gained by the end of the reception year
- the **assessment requirements** (when and how practitioners must assess children's achievements, and when and how they should discuss children's progress with parents and/or carers)

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as 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:

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

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

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Woodsetton School is committed to working in partnership with parents/carers to ensure the curriculum is motivating and challenging for the children to transition on to the next stage of their lives and fulfill their own potential.

Each of the 7 areas is driven by an **Educational Programme** and an **Early Learning Goal**.

**Educational programmes** must involve activities and experiences for children, as set out under each of the areas of learning.

The level of development children should be expected to have attained by the end of the EYFS is defined by the **Early Learning Goals (ELGs)** as part of the EYFSP. At Woodsetton School the educational programmes have considered the level each child at and the steps they need to take to transition to the next steps of their journey.

## **Communication & Language**

### **Educational Programme**

The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, storytelling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

**Early Learning Goal** - Children at the expected level of development will...

### **Listening, Attention and Understanding**

- 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**

- 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.

## **Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)**

### **Educational Programme**

Children's personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Strong, warm and supportive relationships with adults enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. Children should be supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary. Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently. Through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceably. These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.

**Early Learning Goal** - Children at the expected level of development will...

### **Self-Regulation**

- 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**

- 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**

- 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

### **Physical Development**

#### **Educational Programme**

Physical activity is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives. Gross and fine motor experiences develop incrementally throughout early childhood, starting with sensory explorations and the development of a child's strength, co-ordination and positional awareness through tummy time, crawling and play movement with both objects and adults. By creating games and providing opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors, adults can support children to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional wellbeing. Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination which is later linked to early literacy. Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practise of using small tools, with feedback and support from adults, allow children to develop proficiency, control and confidence.

**Early Learning Goal** - Children at the expected level of development will...

#### **Gross Motor Skills**

- 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**

- 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, paint brushes and cutlery
- Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing

### **Literacy**

#### **Educational Programme**

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).

**Early Learning Goals** – Children at the expected level of development will...

### **Comprehension**

- 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**

- 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**

- 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 other

## **Mathematics**

### **Educational Programme**

Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. Children should be able to count confidently, develop a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers. By providing frequent and varied opportunities to build and apply this understanding - such as using manipulatives, including small pebbles and ten-frames for organising counting - children will develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary from which mastery of mathematics is built. In addition, it is important that

the curriculum includes rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures. It is important that children develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, 'have a go', talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.

**Early Learning Goals** - Children at the expected level of development will...

### **Number**

- 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**

- 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**

#### **Educational Programmes**

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them – from visiting parks, libraries and museums to meeting important members of society, such as police officers, nurses and fire-fighters. In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains. Enriching and widening children's vocabulary will support later reading comprehension.

**Early Learning Goals** – Children at the expected level of development will...

### **Past and Present**

- 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**

- 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**

- 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 & Design**

#### **Educational Programmes**

The development of children's artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. The quality and variety of what see, hear and participate in is crucial for developing their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate through the arts. The frequency, repetition and depth of their experiences are fundamental to their progress in interpreting and appreciating what they hear, respond and observe.

**Early Learning Goals** - Children at the expected level of development will...

#### **Creating with Materials**

- 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**

- 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.

### **Planning & Provision**

Planning and guiding what children learn, practitioners will reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and adjust their practice appropriately. School will consider the children's individual interests, personal experiences and motivators. The children will learn, develop and celebrate their achievements alongside the rest of the school in the school and local community. It is also important that children are given the time and opportunity to develop their social and emotional skills and that their personal Health and Well-being is considered at their level of understanding and development. School will work collaboratively with professionals and available services and enrich the children's lives with new and exciting experiences through a broad and balanced curriculum.

### **Play**

“Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults” (EYFS), DFE, 2012). Learning through play is an important part of the children's learning. We believe children learn best from activities and experiences which interest and inspire them. Using children's interests as a starting point, we provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning to help them make sense of the world around them. They have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children with the support from adults, as well as on their own. They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experience at their own level and pace. Getting the balance right between child initiated play, which is controlled, and adult led activities is very important to us. It is also essential that children have the correct level of support from adults (scaffolding) to provide a good role model and develop their confidence in trying new skills, alongside providing opportunities for the children to develop and apply the skills independently into the wider community.

## **Learning through Routines**

Alongside the curriculum the children are encouraged to develop skills to support their own personal care and social development. Skills such as feeding, dressing and toileting are discussed with families and individualised plans and interventions are put into place to suit the individual needs of the child.

Mealtimes are also a focused time when staff encourage the children to try new foods and textures. Staffing ratios are sustained at this time to ensure "adequate supervision" while children are eating. This is also the case when children are engaging in food therapy activities.

## **Characteristics of Effective Learning (COEL)**

COEL identifies how children learn and develop. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are;

- **playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- **active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

Through a supportive and appropriate learning environment the children will be encouraged to confidently actively explore and develop their skills to be able to apply their knowledge to everyday lifelong experiences independently.

## **Key Person**

It is a requirement that each child has a key person. We believe at Woodsetton School that it is important that the child has the opportunity to make relationships with staff, and in response to this, they will choose their own key worker. By the Autumn half term break (October 2022) the class teacher will identify the children's key worker and parents/carers will also be informed. However, the class teacher will have overall responsibility for the children in their class and work together with the key worker and alongside the rest of the class team. It is vital that the children make positive relationships with all adults in the class to support their emotional well-being and the in the case of a staff absence.

## **Assessment**

At Woodsetton School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests

and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also consider observations shared by parents and/or carers.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts Reception**, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA/NFER).

At the **end of the EYFS**, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

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

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters [guidance/Birth to Five](#)) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted.

At Woodsetton School the children's learning and achievements are recorded with copies of their own work to create a learning journal or on their own e-learning profile on the program 'Evidence for Learning'. Practitioners record regular observations of the children and this is shared with their families on request and at parent consultation meetings. Parents/carers are also actively encouraged to send special moments and their own observations to school to create a holistic profile via the class email. Consent is obtained from parents prior to the e-learning program being used and it is monitored by the class teacher and EYFS lead.

Alongside the EYFSP there are planned opportunities for the children to achieve their Education, Health Care Plan (EHCP) targets and any other targets set by other therapeutic services. Some services also visit school on a regular basis to work with individual children with support from school staff. Parents are informed of this by the service.

### **Working with parents/carers**

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers. A successful partnership needs to be a two-way flow on information, knowledge and expertise.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. Termly meetings and an EHCP review takes place throughout the school year. Parents are encouraged to visit school on a regular basis to share learning opportunities with their children and for whole school events. We also have an open-door policy. The school website

is regularly updated with specific class information and parents are invited to join 'Parent Hub' to receive school information on a personal device. Each child also has a home/school diary for school and home to inform the other party on any daily matters that have happened that will have an impact on the child.

Each child is assigned a key person alongside the class teacher, they help to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person(s) support parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support in discussion with the Senior Leadership Team.

## **Transition**

### **Pre School to Reception**

Starting school can be a difficult time for young children; therefore, we plan this time carefully to support children with the transition and to ensure it is as smooth as possible for each child and ensure that they settle in to their new class quickly and happily.

The aims of the transition are to:

- allow the children to adjust and feel secure in their new environment
- allow the practitioners to get to know the children individually and to establish good relationships with the child and their family
- allow the Reception teacher to carry out initial baseline assessments, so that the children have a starting point.
- allow the Reception teacher and Early Years practitioners to ensure that the children's well being and welfare needs are met

Parents of prospective pupils are encouraged to visit the school and to meet the Class Teacher and Headteacher/EYFS lead, supported by their child's SEYS or Early Years Key Worker from their Pre School. Once a place has been offered and accepted the school will then invite the child and their family to come to school for an induction visit. This will be done in small groups for the September intake of children and individually at other times throughout the year. During the visit the children will be able to spend time in the classroom environment, whilst the children's parents can go through the school prospectus and the school routine with the class teacher and fill in the admission paperwork, ready for the child to start school.

A photobook is given to the children and their families to help the children with the transition process to inform them of their new classroom and school surroundings and to familiarise themselves with key staff who are going to be working with them in their new class.

Following this meeting, a further home visit will be arranged for the family to discuss any personal and confidential matters that need to be discussed. Throughout the transition process into school, the Reception class teacher has regular contact with the child's SEYS or pre-school worker. Together they liaise closely to ensure that school have up to date personal and prior learning information in preparation for the child to start school. A transition meeting is also arranged with school, parents, professionals and the child's pre-school so that relevant paperwork can be discussed and handed over to school.

### **Reception to Year 1**

The Reception and Year 1 teachers work closely together to make the transition from the Early Years to Key Stage 1 as smooth as possible, which is embedded into the long-term planning. This ensures that

- children are encouraged to develop independence in all areas including dressing and undressing, and when organising their personal belongings throughout the Reception year
- the Reception class teacher plans for more structured activities to be undertaken during the summer term, encouraging less dependence on adult support. Year 1 also follow a similar approach to the Reception learning during the 1st half of the Autumn term to support transition
- Reception children meet the Year 1 teacher in a range of school activities throughout the year including break times, for praise and celebrations, whole school events and transition opportunities during the Summer term
- the end of year assessments are shared with the Year 1 teacher and the individual needs of children are discussed in July during the transition process
- The Year 1 classroom includes learning areas similar to the Reception classroom e.g. role-play area, a shared outdoor area
- During the Summer term Reception class parents have an opportunity to meet the Year 1 teacher during a 'Stay & Play' session