



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

At Weare Academy Church of England First School, we provide equality of opportunity. Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. We believe that quality learning takes place both inside and outside the classroom, and at the heart of our thinking is the commitment that all children are actively included and fully engaged. We respect diversity in all its forms, valuing differences in belief and opinion, customs, appearance, ideas and ability, and we always endeavour to be an inclusive school family.

Introduction

This document is a description of our current practice and procedures in the teaching of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The characteristics of effective learning are the ways in which a child engages with other people and their environment – playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically – underpin learning and development across all areas and support a child to remain an effective and motivated learner.

The prime areas begin to develop quickly in response to relationships and experiences, and run through and support learning in all other areas. Throughout the EYFS, Prime areas are fundamental, work together, and move through to support development in all other areas.

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

The specific areas include essential skills and knowledge. They grow out of the prime areas, and provide important contexts for learning. Specific areas include essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society.

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

We practise cross curricular teaching and learning which encourages children to make links and develop skills in a relevant and interesting way.

Our belief is that all individual learning styles should be recognised and honoured in a creative learning environment. The way in which we learn is as important to progress and success as *what* we learn.

The following policy reflects the consensus of opinion of the teaching staff and has the support of the governing body.

Subject philosophy

Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. The overarching aim of the EYFS is to help young children achieve the five *Every Child Matters* outcomes of staying safe, being healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution, and achieving economic well-being by:

- setting the standards for the learning, development and care young children should experience when they are attending a setting outside their family home, ensuring that every child makes progress and that no child gets left behind
- providing for equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice and ensuring that every child is included and not disadvantaged because of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties or disabilities, gender or ability
- creating the framework for partnership working between parents and professionals, and between all the settings that the child attends
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued
- laying a secure foundation for future learning through learning and development that is planned around the individual needs and interests of the child, and informed by the use of on-going observational assessment.

The EYFS principles which guide the work of all practitioners are grouped into four distinct but complementary themes:

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

Entitlement

Teaching and learning in all subject areas begins in the Foundation Stage and has its basis in play and discovery.

Every child, regardless of ability, experience and background will be supported to be successful within any area of learning. Those children identified as requiring extra assistance are afforded opportunities through time spent with staff members as well as the support entitlement of their Individual Education Programmes.

Curricular delivery

The learning and teaching of the different curriculum areas within the EYFS within the timetable varies according to the interests and needs of the children. In the Foundation Stage, much of the learning takes place through child initiated play which is important for children's all round physical, emotional, intellectual and social development. Links are made to the seven areas of learning in the EYFS framework.

Learning and teaching

Foundation Stage teachers follow their specific curriculum, with subjects being taught as part of themed work. Each week, there is a specific Literacy and Maths focus and in Reception phonics is three times a week. Priorities for the EYFS are identified as children being happy, safe and secure within their learning environment, which will promote a lifelong love of learning throughout the rest of the school. We want children to achieve their full potential and become confident individuals through the relationships they make. In Rainbow Woods Pre-School, this is facilitated through Key

Persons who develop a strong relationship with a small, specific group of children. The classrooms are set up so that children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up with planned continuous provision for different areas of learning. Activities are differentiated for ability or outcome, based on the needs and skills of the children in the class. Play based learning is paramount and children direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities provided by staff. Staff will enhance play and extend as needed to further individual learning.

Resources

The quality of resources offered to our children, as a vehicle for their learning, is seen as crucial to the overall success of learning and teaching within the school. These are chosen in order to provide a context for learning which will motivate, inform and enrich the lives of our children.

Health and safety

Class teachers will carry out individual risk assessment based on activities, substances or equipment used. These will take into account age of children and level of supervision and will identify measures to reduce risk.

Assessment, recording and reporting

We make regular assessments of children's learning and use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment takes the form of observation and this involves the teachers and Key Persons as appropriate. In Rainbow Woods Pre-School these observations are recorded electronically on Tapestry, which parents have access to online and via an app. In Reception Class, the teacher completes 'long observations' every term for each child and uses a number of progress tracking and assessment forms to monitor progress and track assessment. This is shared with parents during Parents' Consultation meetings twice a year and at particular events during the year e.g. Mothers' Day tea.

We value and encourage comments from parents on their child's interests and learning. Parents have the option to upload notes and photographs to their child's Tapestry or Class Dojo account, which contributes to their assessment. In addition, evidence of learning from school or home, which the child and/or teacher is pleased with, is stored in Learning Journal folders. Parents are also regularly invited to comment on specific areas of learning, where evidence is more challenging to gather in a school environment e.g. 'technology'.

Parents are invited to a consultation evening in the Autumn Term and Spring Term. The final Foundation Stage assessments are made in the Summer Term of the Reception year against the Early Learning Goals, moderated internally and with other local schools, as well as with support from the LA. A written summary is given to parents.

A partnership between home and school

We recognise that learning begins at home and therefore we value the contributions of parents in teaching and learning. Parents are informed on a half-termly basis of the topics covered and encouraged to support their child with activities sent home. Parents are always welcome in school, have regular opportunities to discuss their child's progress and join us for special events or on outings. The Pre-School Manager and class teacher also communicates to parents via the school app, newsletters, the school website and Class Dojo or Tapestry.

Equal opportunities

We monitor both the delivery and coverage of the curriculum to ensure that all children have equal

access. We attend to, and acknowledge differences positively. Our belief in individualised, differentiated teaching pays regard to gender, culture, ethnicity, children who speak additional languages and those who are differently able. Where possible, resources are chosen and monitored in relation not only to quality, but also to the positive representation of gender and cultural differences.

Inclusion / Special Educational Needs (SEND)

Assessments take into account contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential SEND is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage. The Inclusion Manager and SENCO works closely with the Manager of Rainbow Woods Pre-School (also SEND SENCO) and the Reception Class Teacher to ensure that strategies and necessary support are put into place to meet the needs of each child, in accordance with the school's policy for SEND.

Welfare

It is important to us that all children in the school are safe. There are clear procedures for assessing risk, which includes procedures for keeping children safe during outings and for any aspects of the environment, or provision that may require a further risk assessment. 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 manage hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children (see WFSA Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy). We understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for EYFS 2012.

Positive Relationships

At our school we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent by developing secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Monitoring

It is the responsibility of the EYFS staff to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Headteacher and Early Years Leader will carry out monitoring and evaluation of our Foundation Stage provision. Outcomes are reported to the EYFS Governor.

Policy Review

This policy is monitored by the appropriate Committee of the Governing Body and will be reviewed every three years, or before if necessary.

Date: November 2020

Owner: Sara Packer

Signed by Chair of Governors:

Signed by Pre-School Manager:

Date of Review: November 2023