



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Next review: September 2024

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfill 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.”

(DFES P5 EYFS Statutory Framework 2021)

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At St Wilfrid’s Primary School, children join the Reception class in the year they turn five. In partnership with parents and carers we enable the children to begin the process of becoming active learners for life.

The EYFS is based upon four guiding principles:

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

A Unique Child

At St Wilfrid’s 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/sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

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.

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and 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 intend to protect the physical and psychological well being of all children.

Inclusion/Special Educational Needs (SEN)

All children and their families are valued at St Wilfrid's Primary School. Children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all provisions available. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. Assessments take into account contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential special educational needs is identified at the earliest possible opportunity.

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children at St Wilfrid's Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities.

Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage and the SEN Coordinator is called upon for further information and advice. Appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the school's Inclusion policy for SEN.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- ensuring that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe is suitable for purpose.
- ensuring that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- maintaining records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

Safeguarding and Welfare

"Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them."

(DFES P21 EYFS Statutory Framework 2021)

At St Wilfrid's 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 2021. We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare and safeguarding 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 will ensure all these requirements are met.

Positive Relationships

At St Wilfrid's Primary School we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We at St Wilfrid's Primary School believe in Parents as Partners. Parents are the first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. When parents and school work together the results have a positive impact on children's development and learning.

We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- talking to parents about their child before they start school.
- inviting all parents to an induction evening in the summer term in which we give information about the curriculum, the structure of the school day, observation and feedback and practical information.
- the teacher offering to visit all children in their current setting prior to their starting school.
- the children having the opportunity to spend time with their teacher in their new setting before starting school during a 'Come and Join in' afternoon sessions.
- parents to receive an 'All About Me' form. This allows parents and children to discuss together the child's likes and dislikes and future aspirations. The form is returned to school and used to highlight child's interests, raise possible concerns and inform future planning.
- focused meeting during first half term of the child's Reception year in order to detail how we aim to work with their child particularly in relation to reading and phonics.
- parents talking to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. We are available to speak to parents and so create two way communication and flow of information for the good of the child.
- providing parents an opportunity to celebrate their child's learning and development by completing 'WOW' moments which inform assessment, planning and provision.
- Busy Bee report later in the year is received to share progress in reading, writing and maths. Learning targets are set for parents to work on at home which will support their child's learning in school.
- Busy Bee feedback form for the child to assess on how they feel about their learning. Also a section for parents to complete.
- there is a formal meeting for parents twice a year at which the teacher and parent discuss the child's progress with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.
- ensuring all parents know that their child's teacher is their key worker.
- providing a quiet and confidential area where the parents are able to discuss any concerns.
- written contact through home school diary as well as the acknowledgement that parents can ring school.
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: Special assembly days, Christmas productions, Autumn and Summer Fairs and Sports Day etc.

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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 our school the EYFS teacher acts as a 'Key Person' to all children in EYFS, supported by the Teaching Assistant.

Enabling Environments

At St Wilfrid's Primary School we aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident and secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision.

Effective learning builds and extends upon prior learning and following children's interests. Effective planning is informed by observations of the children to ensure we follow their current interests and experiences.

Play based learning is paramount and children direct their learning from carefully planned opportunities provided by staff. Staff will enhance play and extend as needed to further individual learning.

The Learning Environment

The EYFS classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The classroom is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

The EYFS class has an enclosed outdoor area. This area has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It allows the children to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all areas of learning.

Learning and Development

At St Wilfrid's Primary School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are important and interconnected.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in the early years setting. Three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving.

These are the **prime areas**:

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

In the early years we must also support children in the four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

These are the **specific areas**:

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

Planning and guiding children's activities will reflect on the different ways children learn and reflect their practice. At St Wilfrid's we support children in using the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning. These are:

1. Play and Exploring

"Children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.

Through play 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 express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

2. Active Learning

"Children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements".

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. 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.

3. Creating and Critical Thinking

"Children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things".

Children should be given opportunities to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can 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.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

Through careful assessments and observations, including information provided by parents and other settings, children's development levels are assessed. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas. However, if a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents/or carers and agree how to support the child. This may also include a discussion with the SENCo in order to access Special Educational Needs supports.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. These observations are recorded in children's individual 'Learning Journey' folders.

We match observations and assessments to the expectation of the age and stage of learning and early learning goals and periodically, when evidence demonstrates that the achievement is secure, the class teacher will record in each child's profile.

The Foundation Stage profile is the statutory document that is to be completed by the end of Reception year by the Reception teacher. It will inform parents and Yr1 staff and provide a starting point for children as they begin the National Curriculum.

The Foundation Stage Curriculum is planned mainly through topic work with phonics, handwriting and maths being taught discretely. The specific areas of learning provide children with a broad curriculum and with opportunities to strengthen and apply the prime areas of learning. Weekly plans are drawn up by the Early Years teacher and objectives are more focused. Plans will be differentiated where necessary in line with observations taken from within the class. Language will be specified along with the role of the adult.

Teaching and Learning Style

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in the EYFS just as much as they do to the teaching in Key Stage 1 and 2. Features that relate to the EYFS are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement.
- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching.
- 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 and self-management.
- 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, which are shared with parents.
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school.

Transition

We take pride in our induction procedures. Close links have been made with the local private and state run nurseries where regular visits are undertaken by the EYFS teacher. The EYFS teacher meets with staff to discuss new intake children. Where children continue to attend pre-school while only attending school part time, and where additional early years provision such as breakfast and after school services are used, we aim to ensure continuity and coherence by sharing information about the children's achievements.

During the summer term prior to a child's entry into the Reception year, the following procedures have been put into place to ensure successful transition.

- Reception teacher to make visits to children at their pre-school settings.
- Parents/ carers are invited to a meeting to ensure they know about school procedures.
- All families receive a welcome pack with information for parents/ carers and children.
- During the summer term parents are asked to complete an 'All About Me' form. This is used to support transition, discover child's interests and to inform planning.
- The children are invited to two separate visits to the reception class: a stay and play session with parents/ carers after school hours and an afternoon visit in small groups alongside the current reception class.

From Reception to Year 1

During the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected level, and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile reflects teachers own knowledge and professional judgment of the child. All relevant records held by the setting, observations, discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer can offer a useful contribution.

Each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals. The Profile indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development or if they are not yet reaching expected (emerging). This is the EYFS Profile.

The Year 1 teacher is given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This informs the dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teacher about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1.

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teacher to follow the principles stated in this policy. There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. This governor will discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners regularly and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion.

The Head teacher and subject coordinator will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

September 2022