



**Wodensfield**  
Primary School

# EARLY YEARS POLICY

AIM TO BE THE BEST YOU CAN



Adopted by: Wodensfield Primary School

To Be Approved at Standards and Safeguarding Committee: 18<sup>th</sup> November 2024

Signed by Chair of Governors: 

Review date: November 2026

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## Amendments

November 2024 – no amendments

## 1. 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
- That children are provided with a secure, structures, caring and well resourced learning environment which meets all the individual needs of “young learners” to enable them to become confident, motivated and happy learners developing the skills and attitudes necessary for their own successful future learning.

## 2. 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](#).

This document also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

## 3. Structure of the EYFS

Our EYFS is made up of an eighty place Nursery that currently offers children 15 hours a week (5 X 3 hour sessions) There are also a total of sixteen 30 hour places available. Which children can access between Monday and Thursday. Additional sessions can be purchased on Friday afternoons.

In Nursery each child is assigned a key person who will work alongside the Nursery Teacher to help to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person and Teacher supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child’s development at home. Staff also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

We are a two-form entry school and have sixty Reception places split between two Reception classes, with each class containing up to thirty children. Each class has a teacher and support from a Nursery Nurse. The classrooms have a bathroom adjacent to them and a private garden that is used to deliver outdoor learning.

## 4. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2021.

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

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:

We have developed the curriculum giving communication and language skills a high priority. This is in line with Development Matters 2020: *"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."*

A high priority is also given to the teaching of reading. We aim to teach children to read and develop a love of books as soon as they arrive at Wodensfield Primary School, and books are used to teach topics and to enhance our whole curriculum.

We follow a systematic approach to phonics teaching based on the Read Write Inc. scheme.

We underpin our curriculum with the Personal Social and Emotional Development of all our children. We strive to enable children to be safe, happy, confident individuals who are ready to learn and strive to be the best they can at everything they do. We also encourage self-regulation as much as possible and introduce rules and boundaries through modelling good behaviour and reflection time.

#### 4.1 Planning

We believe in the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning that are set out in Development Matters 2021. These 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 achieving.

Creating and thinking critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Our curriculum is ambitious and aims to teach all children the skills and knowledge in order that they reach the seventeen Early Learning Goals described in the Early Years Foundation Stage. We plan our learning from key texts and teach through a range of teaching methods including child-initiated learning, whole class teaching, group teaching, investigations and problem solving together, and independently.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding children's activities, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

## 4.2 Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities both inside and outside. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1.

## 5. Assessment

At Wodensfield, 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 take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers and any previous settings that the child has attended.

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 and through planned activities. Assessment is completed regularly and involves both the teacher, teaching assistants, parents and children as appropriate.

Staff review children's progress and provide parents and/or carers with two written reports each year providing a summary of the child's development and areas where they can further support their learning at home.

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

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 profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters [guidance](#))

## 6. Working with parents

We recognise that parents are first and most enduring educators and we greatly value the contribution they make to their children's education. We recognise the role that parents have played and their future role in educating the children. We do this through:

- Talking to parents/carers about their child before they start school and completing home visits when children start Nursery.
- We provide parents with regular updates on classroom activities and special achievements through our Marvellous Me app
- Supporting children through the transition from preschool/nursery to Reception; members of the team visit or communicate with other nurseries and preschool, to meet the children and discuss progress with their keyworkers.
- Inviting parents to induction meetings during the term before their child starts school and to workshops during the year in order to share how we aim to work with their child, particularly in relation to reading and phonic skills.

- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal parents evening twice a year when parents and teachers come together to discuss their progress.
- Parents receive a report on their children's attainment and progress at the end of each school year and a midterm report halfway through the year.
- Arranging a range of activity sessions throughout the year that encourages collaboration between children, school and parents.
- Uploading a regular home learning menu to the school website which includes activities to embed learning at home building on and celebrating events and achievements with the class.

## 7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

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. We help children to self-regulate and manage their emotions appropriately and Personal Social and Emotional Education is at the heart of everything we do.

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. We know that children learn best when they are healthy and safe, when their individual needs are met and when they have the chance to build positive relationships with the adults around them and their peers.

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by promoting a healthy diet including raising awareness of:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our suite of safeguarding policies which have been written in accordance with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021' and the local Cheshire East Safeguarding Board.

## 8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the EYFS Lead Teacher every two years.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

## Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy
Administering medicines policy	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See health and safety policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy