



Early Years Policy

Vision

At William Reynolds Primary School and Nursery, we adhere to the four overarching principles that shape our practice within our Early Years setting. These are central to us creating an Early Years that starts with the child, supports and develops the role of parents who we build good relationships with, offers a high-quality environment and provides pupils with exciting contexts for their learning. Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. Our aim is for the majority of children to gain or exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of Reception, but for all children to make good progress and reach their full potential.

Aims

In Early Years we strive to develop children with a broad range of skills linked to the Characteristics of Effective learning, identified in the Statutory Framework for Early Years (September 2021), which promotes and encourages:

- **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.

The core of our EYFS curriculum is the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021), which is supported by Read, Write, Inc, the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (2021), Development Matters (2023), Birth to 5 Matters (2021) and the Seven Features of Effective Practice (2022).

Teaching and Learning

Our curriculum maps are carefully planned to have breadth and depth and introduce quality core concepts, bodies of knowledge and key concepts which will be built on in Year 1. We cover the seven areas of learning which are equally important and inter-connected to ensure that pupils experience a curriculum that is broad and ambitious that develops their vocabulary and prepares them for their next stage of learning. 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
- Maths
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

We have heavily invested in books (fiction and non-fiction) for Understanding the World which we reread as this deepens familiarity with the text and greater emotional engagement, so children know and remember key concepts which follow through school. Children also learn about the lives of those whose experiences and perspectives differ from their own. Daily reading encourages children to develop a love of reading.

The broad, balanced and sequential curriculum enables pupils to build on previous learning and have opportunities to master new concepts whilst providing the flexibility for children to follow their own interests and ideas. Systematic well-planned lessons are taught through teacher directed and teacher led to ensure pupils make rapid progress before moving onto Year 1. This leads into play-based learning where children can access a language rich environment through all 7 areas of learning independently inside and outside.

The ambitious curriculum is a carefully devised sequential offer to ensure the children become fluent in essential foundational knowledge necessary for reading, writing and mathematics. Vocabulary is taught through the teacher directed and teacher led learning which the children use in their child-led play and beyond. This enables our pupils to build their vocabulary and understanding and broaden their language skills as well as get them ready for future learning. End points are identified across all seven areas of learning in the EYFS progression document.

The children in both Nursery and Reception are provided with ample opportunities accessible in our indoor and outdoor provision. They engage in planned, focussed activities as well as child-led activities. Structured well established routines are timetabled. Pupils investigate and experience the world around them by being willing to always have a go. Pupils need to be active and this active approach to learning supports their ability to concentrate and to keep persevering when they encounter challenge and difficulty.

We provide the children with an enabling environment. An environment that is attractive and stimulating where children feel confident, secure and challenged. The environment is organised to support the daily routine – children know where they can find materials and equipment and what they can use. This encourages development of self-direction and independence, which encourages children to initiate learning by providing them with materials, equipment and time to pursue activities they choose while simultaneously guiding them towards sequenced learning goals and encouraging children to adopt an active problem-solving approach to learning.

Teachers support children's active learning by resourcing learning, making plans and reviewing activities with children, interacting with and carefully observing individual children and leading small and large group learning activities.

During their time in Nursery and Reception we offer additional experiences that enhance learning opportunities, such as Forest School and visitors into school (police officers, fire fighters and members from the Chinese Arts and Cultural Centre).

Inclusion

We believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of the children's range of life experiences when we are planning for their learning.

Within Early Years, children are set realistic and challenging targets, matched to their needs, so that most are achieving the expected level of development within the Early Learning Goals, by the end of the key stage. Some children progress beyond this point. We help them do this by planning to meet the needs of both boys and girls, of children with special educational needs, of children who are more able, of children with disabilities, of children from all social and cultural backgrounds, of children from different ethnic groups, and of those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

It is recognised that outstanding practice can take many forms. At William Reynolds Primary School and Nursery, we adopt a flexible and graduated response to support children with SEND. This approach acknowledges that there is a continuum of need and where necessary, specialist advice and support is sought. Children are identified as early as possible, sometimes from the outset but more usually during the first two terms, when a child is experiencing continuing difficulties that mean he/she is not fully able to access the Early Years curriculum. Once a child's needs have been identified, appropriate advice will be sought, and intervention will take place.

Safeguarding and Welfare

Our setting provides an environment in which children, parents and staff are safe and happy. The wellbeing of our children in Early Years is fundamental and is done effectively through:

- Their friendships and relationships are nurtured and valued: enhancing their sense of group belonging.
- Their families are supported and valued.
- They are confident with their environment, activities and opportunities provided.

Assessment

Children's progress is carefully tracked and monitored. Data is submitted each term and different groups are analysed to identify any gaps in learning and to target interventions accordingly. At the end of the final term in Reception we have to submit EYFS Profile data to the Local Authority (LA) and Department for Education (DfE). The child's next teacher will use this information to make well-informed plans for the year ahead. We share this data at parent consultation meetings and in the end of year reports.

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