

Whitnash Primary School
'Learning, growing and succeeding together'

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



Introduction

At Whitnash Primary School we are fully committed to the purpose and aims of the Early years foundation stage statutory framework (EYFS). 3 March 2017:

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil 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'.

Its overarching aim 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.

The EYFS seeks to provide:

- **quality and consistency** in all early years settings, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- **a secure foundation** through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each individual child and are assessed and reviewed regularly
- **partnership working** between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- **equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported

Aims

- To provide a happy, caring, safe and secure environment.
- To encourage confident, self-motivated and independent learners.
- To respond to the individual needs and interests of every child.
- To work in partnership with parents and carers.
- To develop positive relationships, self-esteem and respect for others.
- To encourage active learning through play and first hand experiences
- To provide good foundations for later learning.

The Four EYFS Principles

A UNIQUE CHILD

At Whitnash we recognise that every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

Child Development

We recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. We place equal importance on physical, cognitive, linguistic, spiritual, social and emotional areas of development.

- We use praise and encouragement, reward stickers and stamps and celebratory merit assemblies to develop positive attitudes to learning.
- We support each child's individual development by taking account of their interests and experiences when planning for their learning.
- We acknowledge that children learn better by doing, and by doing things with other people who are more competent.

Inclusive Practice

We value and respect the diversity of individuals and communities. No child or family is discriminated against.

- We aim to treat all our children fairly– boys, girls, children with special educational needs, more able children, children with disabilities, children from all social, cultural, linguistic and ethnic backgrounds.
- We use a wide range of teaching strategies and learning experiences to address different learning needs and styles.
- We use and display resources which reflect diversity and promote self-esteem.
- We work with parents and outside agencies to identify and support children who need additional support as early as possible.
- We plan open-ended, challenging activities for more able children.

Keeping Safe

We recognise that young children are vulnerable, and that they develop resilience when their physical and psychological well-being is protected.

- We plan opportunities to talk about how to keep themselves safe, while allowing for some risk-taking.
- Working together with parents we ensure a consistent approach to help children understand boundaries, rules and limits.
- The organization of the environment and routines supports children in making choices about what they do and when they do it.

Health and Well-being

We aim to promote healthy practices as an integral part of a child's emotional, mental, social, environmental and spiritual well-being.

- We provide a safe and secure environment, indoors and out, that promotes active learning, as well as quiet spaces to relax.
- We encourage children to choose healthy snacks from the fruit bar, as well as providing opportunities for growing, cooking and tasting different foods.

- We encourage children to value each other and develop supportive friendships.

SCHOOL MOBILE PHONE/CAMERA POLICY

Parents & Visitors

Parents and visitors will be informed, through the School Prospectus, Website, Newsletters, etc. that for the safety of all children, mobile phones and cameras should not be used while on school premises. Notices will also be displayed around school. Exceptions will be made for Performances, Assemblies and Sports Day. Parents will be advised that under no circumstances should photos of other children or staff be posted online.

Parents will be asked yearly to give consent for photos of their children to be taken.

Staff

Staff will be expected to keep their phones in a secure location during contact time with children. In exceptional circumstances they may ask their line manager if they may keep their phone with them.

School cameras will be used to record evidence of a child's progress and achievement. Care should be taken that consent has been given for photos to be used in journals, school website, etc.

POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

At Whintash we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships.

Respecting Each Other

We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with children and their families.

- Parents are encouraged to come in to the setting at the beginning or end of each session to talk about any concerns they may have.
- We ensure support is provided for children who find it difficult to get on with others, through modelling how to play and be friendly.
- Through information sharing and valuing each other's strengths, we aim to work together to meet the needs of each child as effectively as possible.

Parents as Partners

We recognise parents as children's first educators. When parents and practitioners work together, this has a positive impact on children's development and learning.

- We ensure parents are supported in the transition process by holding meetings before Reception, and by providing detailed information about the process.
- All children are offered a home visit in July before they start.

- We welcome parents and carers into the classroom, whilst adhering to safeguarding procedures, to support and enrich the learning opportunities, as well as inviting their collaboration on themed activity/fund raising days.
- We offer parents regular opportunities to see their child's Learning Journals. They are encouraged to contribute to these with information about interests and achievements.
- We ensure parents are kept regularly informed about the curriculum, homework and school life with Reception through Newsletters, our website and direct correspondence from Reception.
- Parent consultation evenings are offered termly, and a written report covering progress in the seven areas of learning is given to parents at the end of the year.

Supporting Learning

We understand that warm, trusting relationships with knowledgeable adults support children's learning more effectively than any amount of resources.

- We aim to make time to listen to children and to act on their views and suggestions
- We aim to extend learning and curiosity by making adults available to intervene at appropriate moments.
- Through systematic observations, we can get to know each child and pitch activities and experiences appropriately.

Key Person

We support an approach where a key person has special responsibility for working with a small number of children, giving them the reassurance to feel safe and cared for.

- We aim to promote close relationships by providing daily opportunities for quality interactions in key groups.
- The key person shares information about a child's progress with parents and colleagues.
- We ensure that both the Teaching Assistant and the Class Teacher get to know all the children in the class so that there is continuity and security.

ENABLING ENVIRONMENTS

We recognise that children learn well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to individual needs, and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents/carers.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

We recognise that children are individuals and that schedules and routines should flow with the child's needs. All planning starts with observing children in order to understand and consider their current interests, development and learning.

- We make regular, informal observations of all children's interests, abilities and learning styles, as well as more focused observations when needed.
- We match these observations to the expectations of the Early Learning Goals.

- We hold assessment/planning meetings to analyse this information, identify learning priorities and plan relevant and motivating learning experiences for each child.
- We plan flexibly, reviewing the environment and resources daily, and taking account of children's needs and interests.
- We update termly summative assessments by completing Target Tracker which shows progress against the Age Related Expectations.
- At the end of the EYFS children are assessed against the 17 Early Learning Goals. Judgements against the goals are made predominantly from children's self-initiated activities.
- The judgements are moderated both within school and by the authority, and are then reported to the LA.
- Parents will be informed of their child's progress against the goals in the end of year reports.
- Transition meetings are held with Year 1 staff to pass on and explain Profile judgements, which will be emerging, expected or exceeding.

Supporting Every Child

We aim to provide an environment that supports every child's learning through planned experiences and activities that are challenging but achievable.

- Through a carefully planned curriculum we aim to build on and extend children's knowledge, experiences, interests and skills.
- We aim to offer a range of first-hand experiences that allow open-ended learning opportunities for children to access at their own level and pace, taking account of the 'Bold Beginnings' guidance.
- We regularly use experiences children bring from home as a starting point for their learning.
- We recognise the importance of timetabled adults to provide sensitive support or challenge when needed.

The Learning Environment

We recognise that a rich and varied environment supports learning and development, and gives children the confidence to explore and learn in secure and safe, yet challenging, indoor and outdoor spaces.

- The learning environment is organised so that children can make choices about being active, exuberant or quiet.
- Indoors, children can locate and access resources which are set up in discrete, yet flexible, learning areas.
- Children have daily access to the outdoor area. This offers opportunities to do things on a different scale and to learn in different ways.
- Children are taught how to use and look after the areas, and to develop a sense of ownership.
- Our provision will vary according to needs identified by assessment.

The Wider Context

We recognise that working in partnership with other settings, professionals and individuals in the community supports children's development and progress towards the outcomes of Every Child Matters.

- We ensure that any relevant information about a child's progress is shared between and within settings, as well as with Year 1.
- We encourage involvement with the community through inviting theatre groups, emergency services, parents etc. in to talk to, or work with, the children.
- We are committed to working closely with other agencies e.g. speech and language, occupational therapists, social services etc. to improve outcomes for children.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

We recognise that children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates, covering the education and care of all children in early years, including children with SEN and disabilities.

Characteristics of Effective Learning are apparent in all areas of learning.

Playing and Exploring- engagement

- Finding out and exploring
- Playing with what they know
- Being willing to 'have a go'

Active Learning- motivation

- Being involved and concentrating
- Keeping trying
- Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

Creativity and Thinking Critically- thinking

- Having their own ideas
- Making Links
- Choosing ways to do things

Areas of Learning and Development

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of Learning and Development, which are all inter-connected and of equal importance. Each area of learning must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-led activity.

The Prime Areas

These are particularly important for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

Communication and Language

The children will be given opportunities to experience a language rich environment; to develop confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

Physical Development

The children will be provided with opportunities to be active and interactive; to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. They will also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

The children will be provided with experiences and support which will help them to develop a positive sense of themselves and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

The specific areas

These include essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society.

Literacy

The children will be encouraged to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. They will be given access to a wide range of reading materials to ignite their interest. At Whitnash we follow the Read Write Inc. programme.

Mathematics

The children will be provided with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; to describe shapes, spaces and measures.

Understanding of the World

The children will be guided to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

Expressive Arts and Design

The children will be enabled to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as being encouraged to share their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play and design technology.

THE SAFEGUARDING AND WELFARE REQUIREMENTS

See separate school policy

Date of Policy: Summer 2017

Policy Review date: Summer 2018