Wootton Bassett Infants' School

EYFS Policy

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Vision

Our school values and mission statement – "Where Learning is Fun" – is at the heart of this policy.

"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."

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage - Sept 2021

At Wootton Bassett Infants' School we believe that children should learn in a safe, secure and happy environment with the optimum opportunities to promote social, emotional, cognitive, creative and physical development. We recognise that children are individuals who develop at different rates and we ensure that every child is included and supported. The children arrive with a range of previous experiences and cultural/religious backgrounds. We respect and celebrate our differences and similarities to broaden our education. We develop partnerships between early years settings and with parents/carers. Most of all we believe that learning should be fun for everyone.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

We follow the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (effective: 1st September 2021) and the non-statutory guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage - Development Matters (revised July 2021 and 2025).

Development Matters is used as part of daily observations, on-going assessments and planning. It emphasises that language is the foundation of children's thinking and learning.

The EYFS is based upon four overarching principles:

A unique Child

Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. They are treated as individuals and given the same opportunities to achieve their full potential whatever their gender, ability or social or cultural background.

Positive Relationships

Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships. We develop relationships that set clear boundaries and are supportive of children's own efforts and independence.

Enabling Environments with teaching and support from adults.

Children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers. Our classrooms and outdoor learning areas are bright and welcoming and celebrate the children's achievements and learning.

Learning and Development

Children develop and learn at different rates. Three characteristics of effective teaching and

learning are central to this: Playing and exploring, active learning and creating and thinking critically. These cover the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
Play and active learning are central to how children learn. We offer a creative curriculum that motivates and makes learning fun and follows the children's interests.

There are seven key features of effective practice which are

1) The best for every child
2) High quality care
3) The curriculum: what we want children to learn
4) Pedagogy: helping children to learn
5) Assessment: checking what children have learnt
6) Self-regulation and executive function
7) Partnership with parents.

(See the non-statutory guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage - Development Matters - revised July 2021).

The Seven Areas of Learning.

Prime areas – **Communication and Language**, **Personal, Social and Emotional development, Physical Development**. – These areas are the most important as the children need to be secure in these areas in order to access the curriculum in the specific areas. These areas are woven throughout all of our activities and provision.
Specific areas – **Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World, Expressive Arts and Design**.
While these areas provide a framework for the early years curriculum, young children's learning does not divide up into distinct areas. A particular experience may develop learning over several areas at any one time. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led, structured play activities and continuous provision. In each area the Early Learning Goals define the expectations for children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

These characteristics move through all areas of learning. The three areas 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 achievements
- **creating and thinking critically** – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

Busy time

We call our continuous provision 'busy time' this is to emphasis that the children are 'busy'. We talk to them about being busy and learning through being busy. As a school we have agreed that busy time includes;

- Thinking; problem-solving, challenging, improving
- Talking; communicating, collaborating, questioning
- Pretending; imagining, story-telling, role-playing
- Making; planning, tinkering, exploring
- Never giving up; persevering, practising, concentrating

We share these with the children so over the year they know that they are not 'just playing' but instead demonstrating all of these key skills.

Planning

We plan for each area of the EYFS through termly and weekly plans. Each term is based on a different topic which enables us to provide a balanced and creative curriculum. A blend of both teacher led and enhanced continuous provision are linked to the areas of learning. Continuous provision includes messy play which allows both skills development and also subject specific enhancements. Both the outdoor and indoor areas are used in our teaching. This all reflects our school motto "Where learning is fun".

Termly plans outline the chosen topic and activities are planned for all seven areas of learning. Weekly plans consist of a Communication and Language Plan, a phonics plan using Understanding Letters and Sounds documentation, a mathematics plan, and a general weekly plan which covers the other areas of learning. Both teacher directed and continuous provision is included on these plans. Continuous provision enhancements plan allow for teachers to follow the children's own interests and to link enhanced areas with learning topics. Guided reading is also planned for from Term 3 onwards. These plans provide detail of planned activities and also learning objectives, areas to focus on in terms of observation and assessment, and next steps for learning. Learning objectives are taken from the EYFS Development Matters (2021) 3 to 4 year old band and Children in Reception, and the Early Learning Goals. Some children with SEND needs may need to work from earlier objectives (Birth -3yrs). Assessments such as the RBA, on-going assessments (e.g. phonics) and adult observations are used to inform future learning and/or further observation.

Assessment

During the first six weeks in school the children are assessed against the RBA (Reception Baseline Assessment). We also 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 mostly takes the form of conversations with the children, observations and the teachers' knowledge of the child, although assessments such as phonics, reading and maths are also completed.

During the children's first half term in school, we complete our schools baseline assessment. This assesses and records the child's development in key areas such as communication and language, listening, early reading and number. The information gained informs the teacher's planning for the advancement of all children and also helps identify children with additional needs.
They are then assessed at the end of term 2, 4 and 6. The children are judged against the statements for age 3-4 bands and Children in Reception against the statements in Development Matters. They are assessed as either emerging, developing and secure within these bands. The children are then assessed in the same way again at the end of term 4. Evidence from the children's reading records, phonics records, learning books and activities are used to form this judgement alongside observations and the teacher's knowledge of the child. During term 6 they are assessed against the Early Learning Goals and are judged to be a 1 (assessed at below) or 2 (achieved the ELG) in relation to these.
Observations are made throughout the year to inform these assessments and assessment and observation opportunities are identified on planning. All members of staff working within the EYFS classrooms have a responsibility to interact, observe and then record relevant observations to inform on-going assessment. The staff use the digital system, tapestry, and record "Wow Moments" in their learning and general activities for the parents to see. More detailed observations will be made if a child is working below age-related expectations. These assessments are also used during the year to track pupil progress and inform planning. The Foundation Stage teachers have termly (x3 per year) review meetings to discuss children's attainment and moderate judgements. This includes moderating the children's writing and mathematics skills. This also ensures the children have had consistent experiences across classes to enable them to achieve or exceed each ELG. Data from these assessments are entered into our school data system – Insight. Data from the ELG assessments can be used to compare our children's attainment to LA or national data.
At the end of terms 2, 4 and 6 a piece of writing is put in the children's individual sample of learning books which form a record of achievement throughout the school. We also collate a maths assessment with the children.
Parents are informed of their child's progress by meeting in the autumn and spring terms and an end of year report in the summer term. Parents are also able to speak to teachers either formally or informally to discuss concerns at any time and they are given opportunities to comment on their child's work. The end of year report shares the children's attainment in relation to the Early Learning Goals and also includes a short commentary on their characteristics of effective learning. This is shared with parents and Year 1 teachers.
Children who are assessed as 'not on track' are planned for and interventions are put in place. These are our 'spotlight' or 'bottom 20%' children.

Parents as Partners
We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. 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 at the beginning of their time in our school and during the EYFS year and making them feel welcome in school.
- By visiting as many children as possible in their pre-school setting before they start school.
- By completing home visits at the start of term so we build strong relationships with families from the very start.
- Children having the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during induction sessions in the summer term before they start.
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns.
- Holding formal meetings for parents in the Autumn and Spring terms at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress.
- Parents have an opportunity to share work with their child and leave comments.
- Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: Harvest, Christmas, Sports Day, open day etc.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children are treated fairly, regardless of race, religion or ability. All children and their families are valued. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning. In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds. When planning we plan for children with additional needs and also for children who are eligible for Pupil Premium. We follow the children's interests when planning. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and 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 aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See Whole School Safeguarding Policy)

Equal Opportunities

Children have the right to equal opportunities and we must be aware of cultural, religious and gender differences. Discriminatory and stereotypical portrayals of gender or culture must be challenged and a positive alternative provided in order to dispel misconceptions.