

William Hildyard Church of England Primary and Nursery School **Early Years Teaching and Learning in the Foundation Stage Policy**

Early Years Foundation Stage

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At William Hildyard School we greatly value the important role that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. We believe that the EYFS is a preparation for life and not purely preparation for the next stage of education.

The EYFS is for children from birth to five years of age. At William Hildyard this provision is for children from three to five years. All children begin school with a variety of experiences and learning. It is the role of the practitioners to take on the task of building upon that prior learning and experience. This is achieved by ensuring that parents/guardians, support staff and the Foundation Stage teachers work positively together to support children's learning and development.

Aims

The overarching aim of the EYFS is to enable every child the best possible start in life, and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential by;

- setting the standards for the learning, development and care young children should experience when they are attending a setting outside their family home, ensuring that every child makes progress and that no child gets left behind;
- providing for equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice and ensuring that every child is included and not disadvantaged because of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties or disabilities, gender or ability;
- creating the framework for partnership working between parents and professionals, and between all the settings the child attends;
- improving quality and consistency in the early years sector through a universal set of standards which apply to all settings, ending the distinction between care and learning in the existing frameworks, and providing the basis for the inspection and regulation regime;
- laying a secure foundation for future learning through learning and development that is planned around the individual needs and interests of the child, and informed by the use of on-going observational assessment.

At William Hildyard the provision is based around the EYFS Themes and Commitments:

A Unique Child – every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

Positive Relationships – children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and / or a key person.

Enabling Environments – the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children’s development and learning.

Learning and Development – children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of Learning and Development are equally important and inter-connected.

Learning and Development

The Early Learning Goals and the Development Matters guidance are set out in the EYFS framework. This is set out under seven areas of learning. There are three prime areas which focus on the earliest experiences which are foundations for learning: personal, social and emotional development, Communication and language and Physical development. There are four specific areas in which the prime skills are applied: Literacy, Mathematics, Expressive arts and design, and Understanding of the world.

Prime areas

Personal, social and emotional development (PSED)

This involves helping the children 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.

- Self-confidence and self-awareness
- Managing feelings and behaviour
- Making relationships

Communication, language and literacy development (CL)

This involves children having the opportunities to speak and listen in a range of situations and to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves.

- Listening and attention
- Understanding
- Speaking

Physical development (PD)

This involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive, and to develop their co-ordination, control and movement. They are also supported to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

- Moving and handling
- Health and self-care

Specific areas

Literacy (L)

This involves encouraging children to read and write, both through listening to others reading, and being encouraged to begin to read and write themselves. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials, for example books, poems, and other materials to ignite their interest.

- Reading
- Writing

Mathematics (M)

This involves providing children opportunities to practise and improve their skills in counting numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems, and to describe shape, space and measures.

- Number
- Shape, space and measures

Understanding of the world (UW)

This involves guiding children 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.

- People and communities
- The world
- Technology

Expressive arts and design (EAD)

This involves supporting children to explore and play with a wide range of materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role play, and design and technology.

- Exploring and using media and materials
- Being imaginative

At William Hildyard School we also plan for the provision of Religious Education.

We believe that all of the areas are equally important and depend on each other to support a broad, balanced approach to child development. They are delivered through planned, purposeful play with a range of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

The Characteristics of Learning

Planning to foster and record the Characteristics of Learning is integral to all that the child does through the Prime and Specific areas of learning. The Characteristics of Learning demonstrate the child's capacity to be an active, persistent and creative independent learner across all areas. These characteristics of learning are categorised under three areas;

Playing and exploring

Finding out and exploring, using what they know in their play and being willing to have a go.

Active learning

Being involved, keeping on trying and enjoying achieving what they set out to do.

Creating and thinking critically

Having their own ideas, using what they already know to learn new things and choosing new ways to do things and finding new ways.

At William Hildyard School we actively encourage and foster these qualities through the careful planning of our learning opportunities.

Planning

Planning is undertaken by the practitioners in Foundation Stage to ensure progression through Nursery and to the end of Reception. Our planning shows how the principles of the EYFS are put into practice and is informed through observations that we have made of the children considering their current interests, development and learning.

Long Term Planning

This is based around twelve themes that rotate on a two year cycle, but which are flexible and adaptable depending on current interests and experiences.

Medium Term Planning

Objectives are taken from the EYFS and are planned together by practitioners in the Foundation Stage to ensure continuity and progression. Assessment opportunities and activities are also identified for each area of learning, including opportunities for technology.

Short Term

The objectives are broken down to include activities, differentiation, deployment of adults, assessment opportunities and key questions/vocabulary. Observations are on-going.

Outdoor Play

Outdoor play is a very important part of a child's development. Children are given the opportunity to learn outdoors each day. The outdoor play space is securely fenced and provides a safe play space where children can develop in all areas of learning. Children in the Foundation Stage have the opportunity to play in the playground alongside other Key Stage One classes at playtimes.

Assessment, recording and monitoring

Assessment and monitoring is undertaken through regular observations, discussion, photographs and planned assessments. These assessments are enhanced by observations and information provided from children's home settings. By the end of Reception these observations and assessments have provided the evidence for the individual child's EYFS Profile.

The Learning Environment

We aim to create an attractive, welcoming and stimulating learning environment which will encourage children to explore, investigate and learn through first hand experience. This is a place where children will feel safe, secure and confident, and are challenged to develop their independence. Children are encouraged to become independent learners and take responsibility for initiating activities.

The inside and outside environments are demarked by specific learning areas as set out by the EYFS. A plan of the inside and outside learning environments is displayed and regularly updated according to themes and interests of the time. At William Hildyard we recognise the significance and importance of a stimulating outdoor environment that mirrors that of the indoor. Children have the freedom to move between the indoor and outdoor areas throughout the school day.

Home/School Links

We understand that parents/guardians and carers are the child's first and most enduring educators and work to maintain and build upon these influences. Each child has a Home/School book that informs parents of what is happening in school and also enables them to inform school of relevant information. Practitioners are readily available to speak with parents concerning their child's development.

Parent/Teacher meetings are held twice a year for parents to discuss children's progress and a written report summarising the achievements from the EYFS curriculum is sent to parents at the end of each year. As well as on-going daily dialogue with parents at the beginning and end of the school day, at William Hildyard School we operate an 'open door' policy where parents and carers can arrange to meet with their child's class teacher at any point throughout the year.

Reception to Year 1 Transition

Reception and Year 1 teachers work together to make the transition from Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 as happy and secure as possible. Towards the end of the Reception year children are given many opportunities to meet and work with the Year 1 teacher and support staff. The profile data is discussed with the Year 1 teacher so that they can continue to help the children to achieve the Early Learning Goals if they have not done so before they can access the Key Stage 1 curriculum.

Equal Opportunities

At William Hildyard School we aim to provide all pupils, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability, equal access to all aspects of school life and work to ensure that every child is valued fully as an individual.

For further information see Equal Opportunities Policy.

Inclusion

Children with special educational needs will be given support as appropriate to enable them to benefit from the curriculum. This includes children that are more able, and those with specific learning requirements.

For further information see Special Educational Needs Policy

This information will be reviewed annually and given to the Governing body for their approval.