

Whingate Primary School



Early Years Policy

Ratified by the Governing Body on: _____

Signature _____

Next Review Date: February 2028

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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

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#) for 2023.

3. Structure of the EYFS

Nursery

78 places on a partially flexible basis. Children can attend for 15 hours: morning, afternoons or two and a half days (full days Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday morning or Wednesday afternoon, Thursday, Friday). We offer 30 hours for 10 children (this is flexible and number dependant). The children pay £9 a week to help to cover the cost of supervision of lunches.

Morning session 8:45am-11:45am. The afternoon session 12:15pm-3:15pm. Children who stay for lunch have half an hour and bring a packed lunch, unless they are a pupil premium child and they are then given a lunch.

Reception

2 classes of 30 children. Timings of the day 8:35am-11:40am, then the children break for lunch and then 12:30pm-3:10pm.

4. Curriculum

Our Early Years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework.

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

4.1 Planning

Throughout the foundation stage our long, medium and short-term plans ensure that each child has the opportunity to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in every area at the appropriate developmental level. Our long-term planning ensures coverage so that all children have opportunities to work towards and achieve the Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS. We follow a half termly theme-based approach which allows flexibility to ensure that both children's needs and interests are taken into account.

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staff working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

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

Learning through play indoors and outdoors underpins our approach to teaching and learning in the foundation stage. We believe that young children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them to learn. In doing so we can provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning and to help them make sense of the world. Children have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own. They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experiences at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests, inspire those around them and consolidate their understanding and skills. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. Our adults play an active role in child-initiated learning through observing, modelling, facilitating, teaching and extending play, skills and language.

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

During the summer term, 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

Our assessment depends on us getting to know our children very well and to this end we gather information from a range of sources; observations of the children in play, in adult led activities, through discussions with parents and carers and through talking to the children, work produced by the children and moderation. We keep written and photographic evidence to help us build up a picture of children's strengths and achievements and to help us to plan for children's next steps in learning. Every child in Nursery and Reception has a 'WOW book' in which we put samples of the children's work as well as work that the children are proud of. Photographs, celebrations and messages regarding learning are communicated through Class Dojo.

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

Every half term the practitioners take part in pupil progress meetings where the children, interventions, progress and impact are discussed, and next steps identified.

6. Working with parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.

In Nursery the children are assigned a key person who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. Before starting Nursery, the children carry out visits and parents and/or carers meet with their key person. After 6 weeks of starting Nursery parents and/or carers have a review meeting. When the child is leaving Nursery to start Reception a report is written and shared.

In Reception the children come into school for half a day during the summer term as transition before they start, they meet their teacher and their key person. Packs are given to parents and/or carers at a meeting. Parents and/or carers have 2 parents' evenings during the year and also a report at the end of Reception.

Across Foundation parents and/or carers are invited into school to 'Stay and Play' sessions, meetings regarding phonics, reading, writing and number and to assemblies to celebrate achievements.

7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance and we adhere to the school's safeguarding policy.

All our children under 5 receive free milk and all children have access to fresh water and free fruit from a government scheme. Reception children are eligible for Universal Free School meals or can choose to bring in a healthy packed lunch.

Each foundation stage classroom has access to their own toilet facilities, and we teach the children the importance of hygiene, hand washing techniques and throughout the year we plan cooking activities to give children experiences of a range of healthy food.

For children aged 3 and over:

At Whingate Nursery

- We have at least 1 member of staff for every 13 children

At Whingate in Reception

- We comply with infant class size legislation and have at least 1 teacher per 30 pupils

The majority of Early Years Staff are trained with a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate on the premises and available at all times when children are present, including on outings. This PFA certificate is renewed every 3 years as required.

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by talking to children about:

- 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 school's child protection and safeguarding policy.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by Chair of the Teaching and Learning Committee Ian Stokes every 3 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 and first aid 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

All the policies sited above can be found on the website or you can ask for a copy at the office.