



WILKINSON PRIMARY SCHOOL Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Our Vision

We greatly value the importance of the early stages of the children's learning and we aim to provide a safe, caring and secure environment that aids the transition from home to school and encourages the growth of independence, confidence, cooperation and learning. We deliver a balance of child initiated play (Busy Time) and adult directed activities.

Our *intent* is... to provide the children with a range of opportunities and use teaching strategies which allow the children time to explore and learn through play; these experiences will develop their communication, social and physical skills to prepare them for later learning. The children's listening skills and understanding will develop during more focused adult-led sessions.

The Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of their Reception Year. The EYFS principles which guide the work of all practitioners are grouped into four distinct, but complimentary themes:

- **A Unique Child** – Every child is a competent learner from birth, who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. The commitments are focused around development, inclusion, safety and health and well-being.
- **Positive Relationships** – How children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships, with a parent and/or key person. The commitments are focused around respect, partnership with parents, supporting learning and the role of the key person.
- **Enabling Environments** – States that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning. The commitments are focused around observation, assessment and planning, support for every child, the learning environment and the wider context – transitions, continuity and multi-agency working.
- **Learning and Development** – Recognises that children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and that all areas of learning and development are equally important and inter-connected.

These four themes then link into the '**Characteristics of Effective Learning**'. We understand that all children learn and develop in different ways. Stimulating activities are planned specifically to support the children's individual learning styles.

The curriculum for the Foundation Stage forms the basis for all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children through the Seven Areas of Learning.

**There are three Prime Areas; these underpin the Specific Areas of Learning;
Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

- Self-Regulation
- Managing Self
- Building Relationships

Physical Development

- Gross Motor Skills
- Fine Motor Skills

Communication and Language

- Listening, Attention and Understanding
- Speaking

There are four Specific Areas of Learning;

Literacy

- Comprehension
- Word Reading
- Writing

Mathematics

- Number
- Numerical Patterns

Understanding the World

- Past and Present
- People, Culture and Communities
- The Natural World

Expressive Arts and Design

- Creating with Materials
- Being Imaginative and Expressive

Planning and Teaching the EYFS

Teaching and learning styles vary according to the activity and objective. Throughout the Foundation Stage there is an emphasis on learning through play, exploration and active involvement. A variety of different learning experiences and styles are planned into each day in order to provide children with a variety of learning experiences and opportunities. Carpet activities and story time are group/whole class activities where children are given the opportunity to learn and co-operate.

Adult directed activities are used to provide differentiation according to ability and may refer to one child or a small group of children.

Partner work helps to develop communication and cooperation skills.

Child initiated activities allow the children time to explore independently, find out things for themselves and practise new skills they have learnt.

Each term, staff plan for a new topic which provides the children with a range of exciting, innovative, real-life experiences. The children work towards a final 'Learning Outcome' which is presented at the end of each term.

Language and Communication Skills

*“Reading and Writing float on a sea of talk.”
James Britton, educationalist*

We recognise that speaking and listening are necessary basic skills in everyday communication and vital for the development of reading and writing. We continuously model speaking and listening and aim to develop these skills as much as possible, encouraging children to speak in full sentences.

When children enter Foundation Stage, quality interactions between children and staff allow us to identify children who may require additional targeted support through the WellComm speech and language toolkit. Play based communication activities will be planned and delivered in small groups to meet the needs of all children.

In addition to WellComm, staff are trained in delivering a story and song-based programme called Talk Boost.

Children are encouraged to speak with confidence and clarity for a wide range of purposes and to show interest and learn from what others say. They will be taught to express themselves correctly and appropriately and to read accurately with understanding. As Standard English, spoken and written, is the predominant language here at Wilkinson, children will be taught to recognise and use this.

We encourage positive values and attitudes so that all children develop the abilities to work with others, listen to each other’s ideas, and treat them with respect. We aim to provide opportunities for children to consider their own attitudes and values, and those of other people.

Fine Motor Development and Writing

We introduce a wide range of fine motor activities to develop the coordination of small muscles to help the children do things like eating, manipulating objects, getting dressed and writing.

Children in Terrific for Twos and Nursery enjoy ‘Dough Disco’, this is a high energy session where children manipulate play dough in a variety of ways.

In Reception, we run a programme called ‘Write Dance’ which enables the children to work on their coordinated mark-making skills in a fun and imaginative way to make shapes they will need to eventually write.

Other fine motor activities include threading, using tweezers, building with small construction materials and completing jigsaw puzzles.

Induction and Transition

During the Summer Term, an induction meeting is held by the Early Years Coordinator to introduce parents/carers to the school, procedures and curriculum. Parents/carers are given a school prospectus which outlines the curriculum and school routines, along with a document pack to be completed and returned to school.

The children who already attend our setting will have transition sessions when they meet their teacher and spend time in their new classroom prior to returning to school in September. Children new to starting our Nursery or Reception will have the opportunity to spend some time in their new classroom and meet the Early Years staff in the Summer Term.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Assessment is used to inform planning and to evaluate teaching strategies to provide information about children's progress and needs to identify children with specific special needs. At the beginning of the Foundation Stage, when the children start Terrific for Twos, Nursery and Reception, an initial assessment is completed and this is repeated each term in order to review and monitor progress.

On-going assessments are made throughout the year to monitor the children's progress and support the planning of future teaching. We collect a range of evidence of the children's learning and progress including photographs, videos and the children's own work.

Through quality engagement and interactions staff are able to support the children to make progress towards the Early Learning Goals. This enables us to plan for next steps to support their development and learning needs. All practitioners who interact with the child contribute to the assessment process. On-going assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process.

Formative Assessment

Formative assessment informs everyday planning. Observations and assessments of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles are on-going. This may take the form of sound/number, annotated examples of work, photographs and information from parents. Staff are then able to plan for the children's next steps based upon their knowledge of the children.

Summative Assessment

A statutory baseline assessment is undertaken during the first six weeks of Reception. The EYFS Profile (at the end of Reception) summarises all of the formative assessment undertaken. In order to track progress, scores are updated and analysed each term and required data is reported to the LA at this time who also moderate assessment procedures. Final profile scores are submitted in the Summer term when the children are in Reception. A member of the Early Years team attends cluster group moderation where work and judgements are considered. This process also takes place within the Foundation Stage itself. The Foundation Coordinator monitors teaching and learning across the phase and analyses the EYFS Profile data along with the Headteacher.

Computing and E-safety in Early Years

There are many opportunities for the use of ICT within the Foundation Stage. We have iPads to support adult directed activities and they are also available during 'Busy Time'. Listening stations are available with stories, poems and songs. Digital cameras and technological toys are available for the children to use. We also encourage the children to use technology to record their achievements and successes either by recording a video or taking a picture. Interactive boards are also used regularly to enhance learning. The children also enjoy using our recording booth to record stories and songs. Children are always supervised when using technology and accessing internet in EYFS. We only use devices that belong to school and never use personal devices. Programmes and APPS are all age-appropriate and privacy settings are at the highest level. Staff also deliver e-safety sessions which are age appropriate and teach the children the importance of staying safe when using technology and internet. Information around internet safety is also shared with parents.

The Learning Environment

“A rich and varied environment supports children’s learning and development. It gives them the confidence to explore and learn in secure and safe, yet challenging, indoor and outdoor spaces.”

(DCSF)

We plan for learning opportunities across all areas of our environment, indoors, and outdoors every day. We aim to create an attractive, welcoming and stimulating learning environment which will encourage the children to explore, investigate and learn through first-hand experiences. We also aim to make it a place where children feel secure and confident and are challenged to develop their independence.

The learning environment is divided into a variety of different areas: role play, reading area, computer space (including interactive white board), creative area, sand, water, construction, small world and table top activities. The learning environment enables the children to become independent learners and to take some responsibility for initiating their own lines of enquiry and investigation.

Outdoor Learning

We have large outdoor spaces for the children to explore. We have a wide range of outdoor resources and equipment to enable the children to explore and learn about the world around them. The children at Wilkinson also enjoy going to visit our school pond and forest area, listening to stories in our outdoor story seating area and planting and harvesting in our garden. We provide all children with suitable outdoor puddle suits which can be worn over as many layers of clothing as necessary for the temperature, these are brilliant at keeping the rain, wind and cold at bay, so that children can play and explore.

Outdoor Learning Wednesday

Every Wednesday across the EYFS, the children enjoy Outdoor Learning activities. These activities enable the children to explore the natural world around them and draw on their experiences and what is being taught and read in class. We are able to provide opportunities to support the children to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, coordination and agility when climbing and using the outdoor areas and equipment.

In some weather conditions (heavy rain, snow/ice, high temperatures) we will use sheltered outdoor areas for short periods of time, if safe to do so. If parents would prefer their child to stay inside due to ill health, staff must be notified on drop off. We encourage the children to recognise and tell us if they are feeling too hot/too cold.

Behaviour and Celebration of Success

We acknowledge and reward the children’s achievements and successes across The Foundation Stage. We have a behaviour management system in place across Early Years. Please refer to the school’s Behaviour Policy.

Equal Opportunities

The requirements of the Every Child Matters agenda ensure that every child has equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum in a safe and secure environment.

All staff throughout school work closely with our school SENCO and outside agencies and professionals. This enables us to ensure we are meeting the needs for each child as an individual.

In the Foundation Stage it is important that staff plan work that offers equal opportunity in respect of gender, race, the needs of the most able and those children with Special Educational Needs. Foundation staff must consider:

- How material should be adapted to meet the needs of the children in their class, particularly if they are not attaining levels broadly appropriate for their age or stage of development;
- Whether the Learning Objective meets the learning needs of individual children and to adapt these to provide appropriate opportunities for all children to succeed.
- Which teaching activities need to be adapted to ensure children with special educational needs of all kinds may participate fully and demonstrate their achievements.

Multi-cultural themes are often encountered in the Foundation Stage. There are many opportunities across all areas of learning to promote understanding and children are encouraged to develop;

- An interest in people and places beyond their immediate experience.
- An awareness of cultural and ethnic diversity within our society, while recognising the similarity of activities, interests and aspirations of different people.
- Tolerance toward people who hold different values and beliefs.

Health and Safety

Please refer to the school's Health and Safety policy.

We follow the regulations on the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) staff:child ratios. This is to ensure we are able to meet the needs of all children at different stages of development and ensure their safety.

Local Visits/Fieldwork

Prior to any school visit a member of the Foundation team will complete a preliminary visit in order to assess the suitability of the venue. A risk assessment will be completed prior to the visit. Ratios of adults to children are organised in line with LA requirements.

Work in the Classroom

When planning for the delivery of the Foundation Curriculum staff have to consider the equipment to be used and any related safety measures. Group sizes will need to be appropriate to the activity and children will be given clear instructions and be made aware/reminded of rules and expected behaviour.

Work at Home

There are many opportunities for staff to set worthwhile tasks that can be completed outside formal teaching time, often with parental involvement. Suitable tasks to set include:

- Finding out more about the topic, using a variety of sources.
- Asking children to apply the new ideas they encounter to their own life experience.
- Collecting information.
- Opportunities to practise some of the skills of investigative work, e.g. thinking about questions to ask about a topic and ways of finding out the answers.

These tasks, along with messages and updates, will be sent via our 'Marvellous Me' app.

Parental Involvement

Good relationships and interaction between staff, children and parents are positively encouraged. We recognise that parents are children's first educators and when parents and practitioners work together, the results have a positive impact on learning and development. At Wilkinson we show respect and understanding for the role of parents in their child's learning. The part they play is recognised and they are encouraged to communicate closely with us.

We send home busy bags and reading books (from Nursery onwards) with the children alongside a reading record for parents to make comments to communicate with staff. Parents are made to feel welcome and valued through a range of different opportunities for collaboration between children, parents and practitioners. Parents are invited to attend information sessions prior to starting with us and workshops are held throughout the school year. The Foundation team report progress to parents at termly parent meetings and complete an academic report at the end of each school year. A report for the Terrific for Twos' children is shared with parents when a child is 2 ½.

Role of the Coordinator

The role of the Early Years Coordinator is to:

- Coordinate the teaching of the Foundation Curriculum across the phase.
- Monitor the use of the policy and scheme of work.
- Ensure continuity and progression of teaching and learning throughout the phase.
- To meet with SMT to discuss teaching and new ideas.
- Arrange in-service support, advice and assistance to staff.
- To order and maintain resources for use across the phase.
- To provide information for the SDP annually and review twice each year.
- To support staff and inform them of developments in the Foundation Stage.
- Liaise with other Co-ordinators, when necessary.

Review Date: January 2024

Review annually

(As required)