



Guiding us
step by step
into the future

Early Years Policy

Member of staff responsible	Lin Mayo
Governor responsible	
Sub-Committee responsible	Curriculum
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1.0	June '97	Original Issue
1.1	Jan '01	Review
1.2	March '11	Review in line with the EYFS

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy.

Vision

"All at Warden Hill are working to create and maintain a safe and secure environment for children, with an atmosphere that fosters happiness and growing self-confidence." (School vision statement)

"Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. When parents choose to use early years services they want to know that provision will keep their children safe and help them to thrive"
(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. May 2008.)

Introduction

This policy was written after discussion with the Foundation Stage Team, Head of Department (Key Stage 1) and the Head Teacher.

The Early Years experiences we offer our children are based on the following principles:

- Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

Our Aims and Principles

The overarching aim of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is to help young children achieve the five Every Child Matters outcomes:

- Be Healthy
- Stay Safe
- Enjoy and Achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well-being.

At Warden Hill Primary School we aim to achieve these outcomes by:

- setting the standards for learning, development and care of young children
- providing for equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice
- creating the framework for partnership by working with parents
- ensuring that there are opportunities for children to engage in activities planned by adult and those which they plan or initiate themselves
- ensuring opportunities for practitioners to observe and respond appropriately to the children, informed by a knowledge of how children develop and learn
- providing planned, purposeful activities to engage children in their learning process
- providing rich, stimulating experiences to enable the children's learning
- providing high quality care by practitioners to create an atmosphere for effective learning and development.

Admission

- In November we hold an Open morning, when possible prospective parents are invited to attend. Parents are invited to visit classrooms throughout the school and are then welcome to join with the Infant Department for our 'Celebration of Success' assembly.
- Children who attend the local playgroup, use one of the classrooms one session each week, visit the Reception classes and use the outdoor play area and equipment in the classroom during the year.
- At Christmas, children are personally invited to the Infant Nativity play.
- Reception Staff visit children who will be attending the school in the summer term in one of their pre-school settings. This acts as an introduction and is helpful for observing the children in their familiar pre-school setting.
- In the summer term children are invited into the Reception classes to become more familiar with their teacher and classroom.
- See Admissions Policy for further information.

Entitlement

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We 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.

In our Reception classes children are given opportunities to develop through the six areas as required in the Foundation Stage Framework:

- Personal, social and emotional.
- Communication, language and literacy.
- Mathematical.
- Knowledge and Understanding of the world.
- Creative.
- Physical.

Play will constitute a large part of the children's learning, both indoors and outdoors.

It is through play that children develop intellectually, creatively, physically, socially and emotionally. By providing well planned experiences based on children's spontaneous play, we support our children to learn with enjoyment and challenge both indoors and outside. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside and with other children and adults as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

"We do not stop playing because we grow old: We grow old because we stop playing."

(Benjamin Franklin.)

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children at

Warden Hill Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school. In our school we believe that all our children matter. 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.

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Implementation

From the QCA/DfEE Foundation Framework

The six areas of learning and experience and the Statutory EYFS, now provide a national framework for settings in planning, teaching and assessing in the early years. They also provide an essential link between the Foundation Stage Curriculum and the Key Stage 1 programme of study. These areas of learning have been adopted as the basis for our planning as they provide a framework which enables us to achieve our aims.

The six areas are:

1. *Personal, Social and Emotional Development.* - Children are enabled to participate as effective members of a group and the whole class, as well as individuals. They are made aware of behaviour which is acceptable to others and are encouraged to share resources, ideas, thoughts and adult time. Children are helped to consider the needs of others. A positive self-image is reinforced. Children are led increasingly to independence by being encouraged to develop a sense of responsibility and to take increasing control

of their own feelings by expressing them in acceptable ways
.Situations are provided where a range of emotions can be experienced and explored.

2. *Communication, language and literacy* - Children's learning and competence in communicating, speaking and listening being read to and beginning to read and write is supported and extended. Children are provided with opportunities and encouragement to use their skills in a range of purposes, and are supported to develop the confidence and disposition to do so.
3. *Mathematical* - Mathematical understanding should be developed through stories, songs, games and imaginative play both indoors and outdoors. Children should be encouraged to use and experiment with numbers larger than 10. This area of learning includes counting, sorting, matching, seeking patterns, repeating patterns, making connections, recognising relationships and working with numbers, shape, space and measures with the focus on practical mathematics.
4. *Knowledge and Understanding of the World* - Children are encouraged to find out about the world around them, other people and features of the natural and man made world, developing skills and concepts which form the foundation of later work in Science, Design and Technology, History, Geography and Information and Communication Technology.
5. *Creative* - Children's creativity is extended with practitioner support, to develop their curiosity, exploration and play. Children are provided with opportunities to explore and share their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of art, music, movement, dance, imaginative and role-play experiences, mathematics and design and technology.
6. *Physical* - Through the use of large and small apparatus, indoors and outdoors, children develop their physical control, mobility, an awareness of space, manipulative skills, confidence and competence. Safety is taught and the idea of a safe environment is promoted.

The curriculum balances experiences across the six areas of development. Structured play forms the basis of this development. Activities are based around topics or themes for each term, which introduce skills and concepts from the Foundation Stage.

Children are grouped in mixed ability classes each with a class teacher and an assistant.

Activities within the classroom and the outdoor areas are planned to encourage full and active participation of all children whatever their ability, ensuring that individual potential is met.

Boys and girls are given equal access to, and encouraged to take part in, all activities. All children are given opportunities to explore and enjoy stories, poetry, music, art and play materials from a wide range of cultures.

Outdoor Areas -

The outdoor role play / imaginative play area is securely fenced off and provides a safe area in which the children can develop their physical skills, learning to share and take turns with others in structures and informal play. The barked area provides a quieter area with seating, where children can read, use builders trays etc.

The Infant playground is used for the development of gross motor skills with equipment such as scooters, tricycles, aeroplane, car and other large equipment.

Role of Parents

Parents are partners in their children's learning. We value their opinions and the information they can give us, and involve them whenever possible. Parents are encouraged to help in school on a regular basis and to become involved in their child's education.

The Infant department holds a meeting with parents of pre-school children in the term before admission. Pre-school children will be invited to attend two one hour afternoon sessions in the summer term prior to admission, in addition to any visits they have made with playgroup or nursery.

Parents play a vital role in their child's development and we ask that they support their child with any work they are asked to undertake at home (i.e. learning sounds, blending sounds, and later, reading, spelling etc.)

We hold an informal coffee morning in July for new parents to meet each other, class teachers and teaching assistants, to provide a further opportunity to clarify any points or queries they may have.

Assessment

In the Foundation Stage, a base line assessment will be completed with children within the first few weeks of entry. Throughout the year we use observational assessments, photographs and post it notes, in order to provide evidence for the completion of the Foundation Stage Profile. Teachers and assistants make planned, regular observational assessments throughout the various topics covered, in order to inform further planning and to complete the Profile. Parents will have the opportunity to discuss their children's progress in the autumn and spring terms. They will also receive a short curriculum monitoring sheet for these terms. A full annual report will be provided in the summer term.

Teachers will discuss each child in detail with the next class teacher and will provide copies of the Foundation Stage Profile information.

Any child needing extra support will have access to the relevant bodies through the SENCO.