

The Willows Primary School



EYFS Curriculum and Assessment Policy

Safeguarding & Welfare

“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.”

EYFS statutory framework 2021

Safeguarding and welfare requirements are designed to help providers create high quality settings which are welcoming, safe and stimulating, and where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence. The Willows Primary school understands the legal obligations to comply with the welfare requirements as set out in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2021 and take all necessary steps to keep children safe and well. Please see our Child Protection and Safeguarding policy for further information.

Author: Headteacher & EYFS Team

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Signed:

Children develop quickly in the early years, and early years practitioners aim to do all they can to help children have the best possible start in life. Children have a right, spelled out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, to provision which enables them to develop their personalities, talents and abilities irrespective of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities or gender.

EYFS Development Matters

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. At The Willows Primary School children are admitted to reception in the September following their fourth birthday. Parents can apply for a nursery place at our school when their child is 2 years old. We offer funded and un-funded nursery places for 2, 3 and 4 year olds.

The Willows Primary school values the importance that the EYFS has in establishing secure foundations for future learning and development and in children's adult life.

Aims and Objectives

The EYFS curriculum is based on the understanding that children learn through play. The broad and balanced curriculum aims to enrich the development of each child to their full potential. It encourages the child to become an independent and collaborative learner and fosters their natural curiosity through exploration and investigation.

At The Willows Primary school, we will:

- Provide the children with an interesting, creative and challenging programme of learning and development.
- Provide a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum that will provide a solid foundation to build further learning and development upon entry to KS1.
- Offer a range of learning opportunities with different starting points to match the needs of all children in our care.
- Provide a rich and stimulating environment in both the indoor and outdoor learning spaces.
- Provide children with experiences to foster their independence in all areas of their development.
- Assess children's individual needs and value what all children can do.
- Provide a supportive and inclusive learning environment for all children, including those who have additional needs.
- Establish positive relationships with parents and carers in order to build strong home-school links.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

Children engage with other people and their environment through:

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically

These characteristics support learning and development across all areas and enable the child to be a successful learner in their schooling and their later life. At the Willows we ensure our environment and implementation of the curriculum is underpinned by these characteristics of effective learning.

Playing and exploring - All children will have the opportunity to find out and explore, play with what they know and 'have a go' with learning experiences.

Active learning - Children at the Willows will be given the opportunity to develop their ability to persevere with learning activities, maintain their concentration on a task for extended periods of time, overcome

challenges they encounter, make their own decisions to take ownership over their learning and develop their sense of being proud of their own achievements.

Creating and thinking critically - We value and encourage children's ability to have and share their own ideas, make links in their learning and choose their own ways to do things. The practitioners who work with the children will create a range of opportunities to support children to continuously develop their ability to think critically.

ECAT

Every Child a Talker (ECAT) stems from a project set up to support the language and communication of children from ages of birth to 5.

The aims of ECAT are to:

- Raise children's achievement in early language
- Increase parental understanding and involvement in children's language development
- Raise practitioners' skills and knowledge.

ECAT focusses on developing children's skills within the following areas:

- Attention and listening
- Turn taking
- Eye contact
- Play

In turn these skills allow children to develop their:

- Understanding
- Combining words and extending vocabulary
- Speech sounds
- Social Communication skills

At the Willows we use the principles of ECAT to create an age appropriate, supportive and engaging environment in which children can enjoy experimenting with and learning language through everyday fun and interesting activities. ECAT forms part of our day to day practice.

ECAT Assessment

All children in the EYFS are assessed as part of our ECAT work in school three times a year – mid way through each term (Autumn, Spring and Summer). Children's development under the main ECAT areas (Attention and Listening, Understanding, Talking and Social Communication) are recorded using the following judgements

- Ahead
- As Expected
- At risk of delay

Results from these assessments are used to identify children who need additional support with their communication and language skills/development.

Planning

The Early Learning Goals provide the foundation for planning throughout the EYFS. Learning objectives are taken from the Development Matters and mapped across the 7 areas of learning in each phase of the EYFS. Planning includes a focus on the teaching of early writing, early mathematics and early reading/phonics. To engage and motivate children to learn we use topics of interest to the children to deliver the curriculum.

In the EYFS we believe that the best learning takes place when opportunities provide a balance between the children's interests and careful scaffolding of new experiences for all children.

SEND

All EYFS children are entitled to a full EYFS curriculum and their achievements and progress will be closely monitored. The Willows Primary school has a comprehensive monitoring system in line with the SEND Code of Practice ensuring individual needs are met at all times. Children who have special educational needs may need to have their smaller learning steps assessed and recorded. For details see our Local Offer, which is available to view on the school website.

EYFS Assessment

The EYFS requires that parents/carers are provided with regular updates and periodic summaries of their child's development. At the Willows, our EYFS practitioners use a balance of ongoing observation and assessment, learning stories and other summative assessments/reports to provide this assessment information to parents.

EYFS assessment is:

- Consistent in its approach and implementation having been developed across the EYFS team
- Not just a data tool but an approach to assessment which impacts planning and teaching in the classroom.
- An on-going process which supports planning and enables practitioners to draw on their children's interests when considering their next steps in learning.

In the EYFS, children are involved in the process of assessment. Throughout the EYFS, children develop an awareness of themselves as learners. In Nursery, children begin to reflect on their learning. Our skilled practitioners support them through careful commenting and questioning to develop their thoughts and ideas. As they work through the Reception year they are introduced to and encouraged to discuss and reflect on their learning using our 'Learning Friends'. This reflection supports the development of positive self-esteem and a feeling of responsibility for the standards of their own work, behaviour and relationships with others. We will encourage children to view, comment upon and value each other's work.

Feedback on learning

During adult directed activities, children will receive targeted verbal feedback and modelling to help them to achieve the intended learning intentions to the best of their ability. Within independent learning sessions, feedback is constantly provided through the process of collaborative working with children by sharing ideas to extend their ideas and learning. It is used most successfully to help children question, converse, clarify, evaluate and think aloud.

Observations

Practitioners in the EYFS use observations to inform planning. All staff are trained to identify children's achievements and next steps for learning. First and foremost staff make careful observations of what children independently know, can do and how they behave. Assessments made from observations are supported by information taken from adult directed learning activities, taught sessions (phonics, early literacy and maths) and interventions. When observing, practitioners in the EYFS also consider how children access learning using the characteristics of effective learning. Children in the EYFS have their observations shared with parents/carers on SeeSaw (our online learning platform)

Phonics Assessment

In Nursery and Reception classes, children are regularly assessed during their daily, direct phonics sessions to identify their next steps in learning. This information is used to inform planning, groupings and next steps teaching and learning. Practitioners record information on the phonics trackers each term and these are shared with the phonics lead.

Learning Stories

A learning story is a story told by an educator about a child. It's a description of the child, of something they said or did, with the added perspective of the educator. The story shows what the educator hears, sees and knows, as well as what they're able to interpret from the child's behaviour. It documents the decisions children have made and the outcomes that follow. EYFS Learning stories are shared with parents/carers via SeeSaw (our online learning platform). Parents are encouraged to share their comments as part of the learning story.

Saplings On Entry Assessment

The aims of the 2 year old check are:

- Providing parents/carers with a clear picture of their child's learning and development and how best to support their child at home.
- To ensure practitioners have a detailed understanding of children's needs and can plan appropriately for the next step in children's learning.
- Note areas of learning and development where progress is less than expected or not in line with their age or stage of development and plan actions to be taken to address any developmental concerns.

All children receive a learning story during their time in Saplings in addition to their 2 year old check and a transition report when they leave to move up to Nursery (Oak class)

Nursery Assessments

In Nursery, children receive up to 2 learning stories across the year and a transition report when they leave to move up to Reception. In addition to ongoing observations made across all areas of learning, EYFS practitioners make focussed termly assessments about all children linked to 2 specific areas of learning – Physical Development and Mathematics.

Reception baseline

The reception baseline assessment (RBA) is a new national assessment that will be administered in all primary, infant and first schools in England to children in reception classes. The reception baseline enables schools to measure the progress children make from Reception until the end of key stage 2. The baseline is completed in the first 6 weeks of a child starting their Reception year.

End of the foundation stage assessment

At the end of Reception practitioners are required to submit end of EYFS assessments for all children completing their EYFS. Children are assessed against the 17 early learning goals to determine whether they have reached a good level of development. The child's next teacher uses this assessment to plan for the child's next step in learning to support transition into Year 1.

All parents/carers receive a comprehensive written annual report at the end of their child's reception year.

EYFS data and assessments are moderated and monitored by the Leadership Team and results from these assessments are analysed and patterns or trends in data are established. Findings from data analysis are monitored by the Headteacher and feedback is given in teams or to individual teachers.

Moderation

Moderation ensures that the EYFS standards and expectations are understood and are applied consistently across the EYFS. Moderation meetings are conducted termly within the EYFS. This is to ensure continuity and shared understanding of the assessment procedure. The moderation activities involve bringing a collection of evidence from selected pupils to the meeting and discussing with colleagues the judgements that have been made and to identify possible areas for progression.

Transition

Transition between settings, whether external settings or internal, are planned carefully to ensure that children transition into their new setting quickly and happily. All parents/carers are warmly welcomed to visit our setting during a parent/carer tour.

Children transitioning into nursery are invited to attend one or more stay and play sessions with their parent/carer to become familiar with the adults who will be with them in Nursery and their learning environment. Children transitioning from within the Willows Nursery will have a number of opportunities to build relationships with the practitioners and children in their new nursery room.

Children entering into their Reception year will be invited to attend a stay and play sessions during the summer term before starting Reception in September. At this session, children will be able to get to know the other children who will be in their class, the adults who will be with them in Reception and become familiar with the learning environment. Parents/carers are offered a separate opportunity to meet their child's classteacher to discuss their children in detail and share information about their development so far both at home and as part of their previous Nursery setting if they are new to the school. Our EYFS practitioners contact previous nursery settings (if applicable) to discuss the progress of each individual child and ensure that relevant information is shared and passed on. Children will have a staggered start to their Reception year which will be them either attending a morning or afternoon session for the first week.

For all transitions, internally or externally, practitioners will meet to discuss children's individual learning and development needs.

Throughout Reception children will increase their involvement in whole school life. They will become familiar with KS1 staff, take part in whole school activities and assemblies as well as share playtime with year 1 in the summer term.

Monitoring and Review

The Headteacher, EYFS co-ordinator and other members of the leadership team conduct monitoring of the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule. The Governing Body will also be part of this process.