



THE WINCHCOMBE SCHOOL - POLICY DOCUMENT

TITLE: EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE	STATUS: Mandatory
<p>PURPOSE:</p> <p>“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.” (Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021)</p> <p>Early childhood is the foundation upon which children build the rest of their lives. At The Winchcombe School, we value the important role that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. We also believe that early childhood is valid in itself, as part of life. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply as preparation for the next stage of education.</p> <p>The purpose of our Early Years Foundation Stage policy is to ensure that every child is given the highest quality care and education and is supported in developing curiosity and a love of learning. We encourage children to ask questions, to be confident in taking risks and to understand that misconceptions and challenge are an integral part of their journey towards improvement and understanding.</p> <p>“When we succeed in giving every child the best start in their early years, we give them what they need today. We also set them up with every chance of success tomorrow.” (Development Matters Sept 2020)</p>	
<p>GUIDELINES:</p> <p>The EYFS principles, which guide the work of all practitioners, are grouped into four distinct, but complimentary themes, as listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, and self-assured• Positive Relationships which encourage children to feel safe and secure and give them the confidence to explore new experiences and develop independence.• Enabling Environments where children flourish with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual needs and interests, helping them to build upon their knowledge and skills over time• Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. The framework incorporates the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). All areas of learning and development are equally important and inter-connected <p>Our EYFS practitioners understand the need to meet the individual needs of all children and to plan learning experiences which are developmentally appropriate and challenging and which build upon children’s prior knowledge and interests. We understand that children need time and space to retain and apply learning and therefore, children are given opportunities to repeat, revisit and reflect on previous experiences.</p>	



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We follow the curriculum as outlined in the EYFS document. The EYFS is based on Seven Features of Effective Practice as outlined in 'Development Matters' (2020)

1. The best for every child
2. High-quality care
3. The curriculum: what we want children to learn
4. Pedagogy: helping children to learn
5. Assessment: checking what children have learnt
6. Self-regulation and executive function
7. Partnership with parents

We aim to:

- Provide a safe, challenging, stimulating and caring environment which is sensitive to the needs of every child and allows the children to free-flow between inside and outside spaces
- Provide a sequential, ambitious and flexible curriculum, based on the EYFS framework, using play as a vehicle for consolidating and deepening learning
- Celebrate what each child can do, observing and assessing individual needs and helping each child to progress and improve
- Provide early intervention for those who need additional support
- Promote problem-solving and decision-making, fostering independence and self-confidence
- Work in partnership with parents/carers, valuing and implementing ideas and contributions
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that all children can learn and develop

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

We plan an exciting, ambitious and sequential curriculum to ensure progress towards the end of Reception Early Learning Goals. We incorporate a balance of child-initiated activity with guided or adult-led activity. Our delivery is underpinned by play and our plans are flexible, allowing us to respond to individual needs or interests.

All seven areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning and for increasing their capacity to learn, to form positive relationships and to thrive in EYFS and into Key Stage 1.

These areas are the **Prime Areas**

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Children are also supported through the four **Specific Areas**, through which the three prime areas are applied and deepened.



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The Specific Areas

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners must reflect on the different rates and ways that children learn and reflect this in their practice.

Interwoven through the fabric of our curriculum are the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning:

1. **Playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.
2. **Active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties
3. **Creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things

These underpin the way in which we as practitioners reflect on each child's development and adjust our planning and practice accordingly. Observing the context of children's play as well as individual learning behaviours is essential to effective practice.

LEARNING THROUGH PLAY

"Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults."

At The Winchcombe School, we support children's learning through planned, purposeful play activities, and decide when child-initiated or adult-led activities would provide the most effective learning opportunities. We believe that it is important for adults to support, extend and deepen children's learning by co-playing. Through play, our children explore and begin to make sense of the world around them. They share, practise and build on ideas, learn how to self and co-regulate and begin to understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children, as well as independently. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They can express fears or rehearse experiences in controlled and safe situations.

OBSERVATION AND ASSESSMENT

All assessments are made in line with the revised Early Years framework 2021. Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts Reception, practitioners will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). At the end of the EYFS, we complete the EYFS Profile for each child. Children are assessed against the 17 Early Learning Goals, indicating whether they are meeting expected levels of development or are not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents/carers. The results of the profile are then shared with parents/carers. The profile is moderated internally, referring to the Development Matters guidance and our own in school curriculum documents and if possible, with other local schools. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.



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As part of our daily practice, all Foundation Stage staff observe and assess children's development and learning, using both formative and summative means to inform our planning. Formal and informal discussions are held about the progress of learners.

Observations of each child's 'wow moments' - significant steps in development or improvement - are recorded in their own personal, online 'Tapestry' Learning Journal. Parents/carers receive a notification when an observation has been added to their child's Learning Journal and they can view this observation and any related photographs or videos. They are encouraged to add comments and to upload their own observations to show us what their children are able to do at home.

This holistic approach towards observation and celebrating what children 'can' do, facilitates us in developing a progress model curriculum. Observations are used, in conjunction with 'Development Matters', to inform our understanding of each child's progress and next steps and contribute towards final judgements of whether children have reached expected levels against the Early Learning Goals for each Area of Learning.

TRANSITION

During Summer Term 2, children who will be starting school in September are invited to visit the Foundation Stage setting. Parents/carers have the opportunity to meet the Class Teachers and Head Teacher. They are invited to an information meeting which outlines the curriculum and school routines and are given a document pack and children's transition booklet to be completed and returned to school. Further information is sent to parents/carers as necessary. The Foundation Stage Class Teachers liaise with pre-school settings to gather information about children and make visits where possible.

During the induction period in September, children will start by attending morning and lunch sessions and in the second week begin whole days. This allows children to settle and feel secure in their new environment and gradually build up to full-time education.

The Foundation and the Year 1 Teachers work together from as early as the Summer Term 1, to make the transition from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 as smooth as possible. Activities such as a class teddy going 'on holiday' to Year One and exchanging question and answer postcards with Year One children, help to make this transition exciting rather than intimidating. Foundation Stage children will meet with their Year 1 teachers for story and play sessions in the last few weeks of the Summer Term. Individual EYFS Profiles and Learning Journeys are shared between teachers, alongside reports based on the Characteristics of Effective Learning.

HOME/SCHOOL LINKS

We recognise that parents/carers are the child's first and most enduring educators. When parents/carers and practitioners work together in Early Years settings, the results have a positive impact on a child's development. A successful partnership needs to be a two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise.

We aim to promote and develop this by:

- Outlining the Foundation Curriculum and pedagogy to parents/carers during the new parents meeting in September, enabling them to understand the value of supporting their child's



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learning at home

- Providing a range of parent workshops throughout the year, according to need
- Hosting events and activities throughout the year which bring together children, parents and the school
- Encouraging parents to share observations of children from home using Tapestry online Learning Journals
- Organising transition meetings
- Operating an “open door” policy, whereby parents/carers can come and discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner at either end of the school day
- Inviting parents/carers to help in the Foundation Stage classes or elsewhere in the school and to accompany children on school visits, subject to Safeguarding procedures
- Encouraging parents/carers to listen to their child read each night
- Discussing progress and areas for development parents/carers at parents’ evenings
- Providing a written report to parents/carers during the Summer term summarising the child’s progress against the Early Learning Goals and the characteristics of Effective Learning

HEALTH AND SAFETY

It is vitally important to us that all children at The Winchcombe 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 these important life skills. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards, both within the school and in the wider environment. We encourage a healthy lifestyle, including taking part in regular exercise and eating healthy food. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children in our care.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

At The Winchcombe School, we aim to provide all pupils, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, or gender equal access to all aspects of school life. We work to ensure that every child is valued fully as a unique individual. Practitioners, as role models, are aware of the influence of adults in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical ideas or misconceptions.

INCLUSION

Children with special educational needs will be given support as appropriate to enable them to make progress and improve. This includes children that are more able, and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities. School Action Plans identify targets in specific areas of learning for those children who require additional support, in line with the school’s Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy. The EYFS teacher will discuss these targets with the child and his/her parents/carers. Progress is monitored and reviewed every term. The school’s Inclusion Manager is responsible for providing additional information and advice to practitioners and parents, and for arranging external intervention and support where necessary.



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POLICY UP-DATED BY R. Alston	
LINKED POLICIES: HEALTH AND SAFETY, CHILD PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING, INTIMATE CARE	
DATE: March 2025	REVIEW DATE: March 2028 or as required
SIGNED: R Blofeld	
Chair of Governors 03.03.2025	