



***Weston Mill Community Primary School***

# EARLY YEARS POLICY

Approved and signed by Governors: .....

Dated: .....

March 2016

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## **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Weston Mill Community Primary School, children join the Nursery class from the age of three and the Reception class in the year that they turn five

In partnership with Parents and Carers, we enable the children to begin the process of becoming active learners for life.

In the EYFS, we endeavour to ensure that children *“learn and develop well and kept healthy and safe.”* We aim to support children in their learning through *“teaching and experiences that gives children the broad range of skills that provide the right foundation for good progress through school and in life.”* (Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2013)

### **The EYFS is based upon four principles:**

- **A Unique Child** – developing resilient, capable, confident and self-assured individuals.
- **Positive Relationships** – supporting the children in becoming strong and independent.
- **Enabling Environments** – where opportunities and experiences respond to the individual needs of the child by developing a strong partnership between practitioners, parents/carers and the child.
- **Learning and Developing** – an acknowledgement that children learn in different ways and at different rates.

### **A Unique Child**

At Weston Mill Community Primary School, we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children’s attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration assemblies, star learner certificates and rewards (earning pennies for being on good choices or the superstar on the reward cake, head and deputy stickers), to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

### **Inclusion/Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**

All children and their families are valued at Weston Mill Community Primary School. Children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all provisions available. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. Assessments take into account contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential SEND is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of SEND is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with Parents/Carers and the INCO at an early stage.

If SEND information is provided to us on a child prior to their transition from an Early Years setting to Weston Mill Community Primary School, the Foundation Stage Leader and INCO will arrange a visit to the child’s existing Early Years setting. This will enable them to meet the child, the key worker and/or SENCO and if possible the parents/carers of the child. An extended transition will be put in place to meet the child’s needs.

Please see our SEND Policy for further information.

### **We meet the needs of all our children through:**

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children’s knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence
- Target children within the learning environment through previous assessments and evaluating their characteristics of effective learning from pupil profile and team meeting discussions;
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children’s learning needs;
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued, this is taken from Possible Lines of Development (PLODs) and discussions with children where they are encouraged to discuss what they would like to learn next;

- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

### **Welfare**

It is important to us that all children in our school are 'safe'. In the EYFS, 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. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all our children.

*"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."*

**At Weston Mill Community Primary School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2013. We understand that we are required to:**

- promote the welfare and safeguarding of children.
- promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
- ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

### **Positive Relationships**

At Weston Mill Community Primary School we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

### **Parents/Carers as Partners**

We recognise that Parents/Carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that Parents/Carers have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- An information evening for parents in June where they receive the Reception Information booklet which highlights school start and finish times, uniform and informs the Parents/Carers of the schools vision and aims.
- Asking Parents/Carers to complete admission forms, medical form, etc. (please see induction pack).
- Asking Parents/Carers to sign permission slips for visits out of school, photographs of their child for assessment purposes and using the internet at school, prior to their children starting in Reception.
- Ask Parents/Carers to share the 'child booklet' (which they receive at the information meeting) to their child over the Summer, to help prepare them for school.
- Invite children and parents/carers to a group induction to school. Providing an opportunity for parents/carers to speak to teachers further.
- Ask Parents/Carers to complete an 'All about me' sheet for their learning together in September, where they will write information about their child including their likes and dislikes. This will be shared during a circle time.
- Encouraging Parents/Carers to talk to their child's teacher if there are concerns during the parent information talk, home visits or group inductions.
- Inviting parents to attend informal meetings providing information about other areas of the curriculum in September, e.g. Early Reading, Maths and Phonics.

- Talking to Parents/Carers about their child before their child starts in our school, through home visits. This also ensures that children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school.
- Parents Evening in the Autumn term to meet with Parents/Carers to discuss child's baseline assessment, how the child has settled in school etc.
- Parents/Carers receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of Spring term and an Early Learning Goal report at the end of the school year.
- Parents/Carers are given an account so they can view and comment upon their child's online Learning Journey whenever they would like to. As well as add their own observations from the home environment to include WOW moments.
- Organising a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and Parents/Carers: Exit days for topics, class assembly, Christmas Performances, Sports Day etc.
- Written contact through Home Reading Records as well as the acknowledgement that Parents/Carers can ring school to contact staff or the Head of Early Years.
- Allowing free access to the classroom displays.
- Parents/Carers are made aware of the curriculum and ongoing activities through the 'Learning Together' weekly which explains what the children have done that week and also provides guidance on a task to complete with their families at home to consolidate their learning.
- Parents/Carers are also given any other relevant messages/information through a half-termly curriculum guidance letter relating to the topic.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At our school, the EYFS teachers act as 'Key Workers' to all children in EYFS and we do not have a separate system, however our TAs and Nursery Nurse do also contribute to this information.

### **Enabling Environments**

We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident and secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision. Play based learning is paramount and children direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities provided by staff. Staff will enhance play and extend as needed to further individual learning.

### **The Learning Environment**

The EYFS classrooms and learning spaces are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active or take things more quietly. The classrooms cover all learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The EYFS classes have their own large enclosed outdoor area. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children the ability to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all areas of learning. Children are encouraged to learn independently during free flow times but are also guided by adult led activities which ensure focus and engagement.

### **Effective Learning**

Effective learning builds and extends upon prior learning and following children's interests. Effective planning is informed by observations of the children to ensure we follow their current interests and experiences. These observations are recorded in the children's individual Learning Journeys.

### **Learning and Development**

Teachers and Early Years Practitioners provide the curriculum in the Reception classes of up to a combined class size of 60 children. The Nursery class is a maximum size of 18 children per session.

## Areas of Learning

There are seven areas of learning and development of which three are “prime areas,” and four “specific areas.”

The **prime areas** are:

- ☐ Communication and Language (CL)
- ☐ Physical Development (PD)
- ☐ Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)

The **specific areas** are:

- ☐ Literacy (L)
- ☐ Mathematics (M)
- ☐ Understanding of the world (UW)
- ☐ Expressive arts and design (EAD)

Through careful assessments and observations, including information provided by Parents/Carers and other settings, children’s development levels are assessed. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas. However, if a child’s progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child’s Parents/Carers and agree how to support the child.

At Weston Mill Community Primary School *“Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Play is used as an essential part children’s development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. There is an on-going judgement to be made by practitioners about the balance between activities led by children, and activities led or guided by adults. Practitioners must respond to each child’s emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. As children grow older, and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1.”* (Statutory Framework for EYFS 2012)

Planning and guided children’s activities will reflect the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. At Weston Mill Community Primary School, we support children in using the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning. These are;

- **Playing and Exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’;
- **Active Learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements; and
- **Creating and Thinking Critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

## Equal Opportunities

All members of the school are treated as individuals. We aim to meet the needs of all, taking account of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, special educational needs, disability, and social circumstances. All staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect cultural diversity and the need to prepare pupils for life in a diverse and multi-faith society.

## Health and Safety

At Weston Mill Community Primary School there are clear procedures for assessing risk which includes procedures for keeping children safe during outings and for any aspects of the environment or provision that may require a further risk assessment.

In line with the EYFS statutory framework 2013, at Weston Mill Community Primary School we undertake; a whole school medicines policy ensuring that there are systems in place to ensure that medicines and the systems for obtaining information about a child’s needs for medication are kept up to date. Medicines will not be administered unless they have been prescribed by a doctor. Training is provided for staff where the administration of medicine requires medical or technical

knowledge. Medicines (both prescription and non-prescription) are only administered to a child where written permission for that particular medicine has been obtained from the child's parent and/or carer. At Weston Mill Community Primary School a written record is kept each time a medicine is administered to a child. (Statutory framework for EYFS 2013)

- Fresh drinking water is available at all times.
- Children's' dietary needs are recorded and acted upon when required.
- Milk and fruit are available during the morning session.
- A first aider is accessible at all times and a record of accidents and injuries is kept.
- A fire and emergency evacuation procedure and policy
- A safeguarding policy stating how mobile phones and cameras are to be used and stored securely whilst children are in the setting. Cameras that are used in school must not be used for staff own personal use.

### **Transition from the EYFS to Key Stage 1**

During the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides Parents/Carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1.

The Profile includes on-going observations, all relevant records held by the setting, discussions with Parents/Carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, Parents/Carers judge can offer a useful contribution.

Each child's level of development is assessed against the Early Learning Goals. The EYFS Profile indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are exceeding expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). These are also recorded using the school's tracking system, School Pupil Tracker.

Year 1 teachers are given access to the EYFS Profile report on School Pupil Tracker. The Reception teacher meets with the Year 1 teacher to provide a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This informs the dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1.

The children have a class induction with their new class teacher as part of a whole school class swap afternoon. As well as several story times with their new class teacher following this.

Chair of Governors signature\_\_\_\_\_

Date approved \_\_\_\_\_