

# Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy



West Earlham  
Infant &  
Nursery  
School

**Approved by:** Sarah Mardell

**Last reviewed on:** May 2021

**Next review due by:** May 2024

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*“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.” (‘The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.’ DfE March 2014).*

### 1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the foundation of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- Close partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

### 2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [2021 Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#).

### 3. Structure of the EYFS

Within West Earlham Infant and Nursery school we have three nursery classes and three reception classes. These comprise of:

- Conkers class, which is our funded two-year-old room. Eligibility can be checked through Norfolk County Council website. If a parent is not eligible for funding we do offer the option of paying for sessions within all of our nursery classes and this is currently charged at £15.60 per threehour session.

- Seedlings class and Saplings are our nursery classes for 3 and 4 year old children.
- Our nursery classes operate on a sessional basis, which offers children 3 hour sessions. These are either morning (8:40am – 11:40am) or afternoon sessions (12:30 – 3:30pm). All children are eligible through universal funding for 15 hours per week the term after they turn three years old; however there are some exceptions to eligibility.
- Within Reception we have three classes of 20 children, Silver Birch, Willow and Hazel class.

## 4. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2021 statutory framework of the EYFS.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**;
- children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers;
- **children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.**

At West Earham Infant and Nursery school we adopt a range of approaches to support specific learning. We use the Word Aware approach to develop the children's range of vocabulary and then embed these words within the environment. We may have a theme to words we are learning e.g. emotions or it may be related to what is happening within the environment e.g. 'frosty'. We use Concept cat to develop children's understanding of concepts such as 'behind' or 'first'. This is a multi-sensory approach which includes puppets, actively working through the concept and reinforcing regularly.

At West Earham Infant and Nursery school we know children are happiest when they are active and engaged with their environment. To this end we operate a free flow provision allowing children free access to the indoor and outdoor environment throughout the whole day.

We believe a child's emotional wellbeing is critical to their involvement in their learning. Therefore, we plan regular activities based around emotional and social skills to explicitly teach children the vocabulary and skills they need to be a strong, resilient and independent learner and friend.

### 4.1 Planning

Staff plan activities and experiences that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, practitioners working with the youngest children focus strongly on the 3 prime areas –

physical development, communication and interaction and personal, social and emotional development.

Staff also consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a stimulating, challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

At West Earlham Infant and nursery school our curriculum is child centered. Our curriculum is nurturing, progressive, fun and both proactive and reactive. We plan activities based on what we know about the children, their interests and areas for development. This allows our staff the freedom to be creative in their planning ensuring the children's needs are met and their learning is always moving forward. Within our planning we believe children learn best when they are active and engaged with their environment therefore the use of outdoors is a permanent feature of our children's daily experiences. The planning in the moment approach allows staff to make spontaneous decisions following the child's lead and responding to their immediate needs. This ensures our planning is engaging and relevant to our children to enable them to have a strong disposition and healthy attitude towards learning.

We understand that not all learning can be planned. We plan an enabling environment where children's play is regarded as the most effective and enjoyable method for children to engage with their learning. Children's play gives us an insight into everything they know about the world, their wonderings and their interests. In their play children can be creative, thoughtful, problem solvers and experimenters and will learn at their full potential.

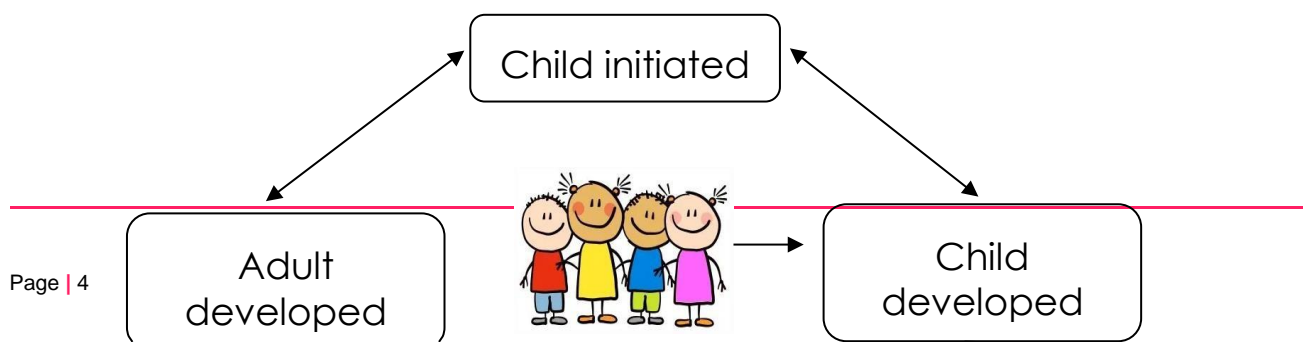
Through their play children will make sense of what they know about the world and make links in their thinking to further develop their understanding. The role of the adult within play is crucial. Adults within our early years' classrooms understand how best to support the children's learning by working alongside them rather than always leading them. All interactions are seen as an opportunity to support the child's learning and our staff are sensitive in responding to and meeting the child's needs in that moment.

*"Teaching should not be taken to imply a top-down or formal way of working. It is a broad term, which covers the many different ways in which adults help children learn. It includes their interactions with children during planned and child-initiated play and activities: communicating and modelling language, showing, explaining, demonstrating, exploring ideas, encouraging, questioning, recalling, providing a narrative for what they are doing, facilitating and setting challenges."* Teaching and Play in the Early Years: A balancing act. Ofsted August 2015

## 4.2 Teaching

At West Earlham Infant and Nursery school we take a holistic approach to supporting each child. Please see our Teaching and learning policy for the principles that underpin all teaching and learning in school. We have adopted the Early Excellence pedagogical model of effective learning, capturing the relationship between the children, the environment, the adult and the process required for effective learning and teaching to take place; play, planning, interaction.

Within our early years classrooms, each area of learning and development is implemented through both planned and spontaneous, purposeful play, and through a balance of adult-developed and child-initiated activities. Practitioners respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through secure, positive interactions whilst encouraging autonomy in the way children operate within the environment.



We plan with this model in mind within our environment:



Throughout the year we have a rolling programme of 'Focus Children'. Each week four children are our 'Focus children', which allows us to gain an in-depth look at their learning styles, their interests, strengths, areas for development and next steps. This is always shared with parents and their input is sought to ensure we gather a full picture of the child

Within school we place a firm emphasis on communication and language. At West Earlham Infant and Nursery school we aim to promote and support the communication of all our children and adults. We integrate sign language (signalong) into our daily learning and our speech and language team provide specific intervention where needed, through 1:1 and group therapy sessions. In class, children play games to help improve their attention, memory and listening.

We are a Read, Write Inc school and use this approach to teach phonics. This is a systematic and thorough programme which delivers a consistent approach to learning phonics and reading skills.

## 5. Assessment

At West Earlham Infant and Nursery school, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of development, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Practitioners also consider observations shared by parents and/or carers.

Within all of our early years classroom staff use the Early Excellence tracker to ensure children are making progress in all areas and to record observations of children's learning. This will be shared with parents each term. This allows staff to ensure children are making good progress. If we observe a child to not be making good progress, the teacher will share this with parents and plan accordingly to meet their needs. This may be done in conjunction with the SENDCO, Speech and language therapist or specialist advice sought from an outside agency.

All children are assessed using the WELLCOMM assessment tool twice per year. Where it is felt necessary children are assessed termly using the WELLCOMM assessment. This allows us to take a snapshot of the children's expressive (what they use) and receptive (what they understand) skills. We can then use this information to further support children in different areas.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they have achieved a good level of development.

This is defined as:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers.

Within Conkers, our two-year-old room, information is shared with health visitors regarding a child's growth and development. A shared review with a health visitor, room leader, SENDCO and parents will take place to ensure a child is meeting their milestones and targets set for areas for development.

## **6. Working with parents**

We know that parents know their child best and are the experts on their child. We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. The twoyear-old review and EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

## **7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures**

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

## **8. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Headteacher and EYFS lead every 3 years.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

## Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy
Administering medicines policy	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See health and safety policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy