

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy



WHARTON CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Approved by:
Governing Body

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1. Aims

We believe that early childhood is the foundation upon which children build the rest of their lives, and at Wharton CE Primary we greatly value the importance the EYFS plays in creating a secure base for future learning and development. All children in EYFS at Wharton are supported to become resilient, curious, and cooperative learners. Across the foundation stage, we provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively, and intellectually, to their full potential.

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a curriculum that gives them the range 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 is left behind.
- Close partnership working between teachers 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 EYFS reforms Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2023 (EYFS) and the revised Development Matters 2023.

3. Admissions

Reception - Parents of children who require a Reception place will apply online to their Local Authority. Please see the school admissions department of your home local authority, or the school website page for information. All prospective parents are invited to visit the school.

4. Structure of the EYFS

We are a 2-form entry school and the two Reception classes are organised as one unit. However, this academic year, 2023-24, there is one class. Within the area there are two separate learning spaces, but children can move freely within these to access their learning environment. There is a Class teacher and teaching assistant in Reception, and the class teacher is responsible for their class and are the point of contact for parents/carers. Joined to the Reception classroom, is an outdoor area which allows free flow access for reception children where they can continue their learning in an outdoor environment.

5. EYFS Curriculum

Our Early Years setting will be following the new statutory framework for EYFS 2021, and the New Development Matters guidance, from September 2021.

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. Alongside these seven areas are also the Characteristics of Effective Learning. These Characteristics of Effective Learning are key in igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

Three of the seven areas of learning are referred to as the Prime Areas. This is because these three areas are known to be the core basis for all further learning. Without language, the ability to control our emotions, develop good relationships and physical movement, it is well-researched that children will struggle to continue to thrive throughout school and life. As such, learning experiences in our EYFS enable children to develop competency and skills across these areas of learning. They require a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities for children to develop effectively and to give them the best chance of obtaining a good level of development at the end of the reception year. Once children are secure in their Prime Areas, they are then taught to apply and build on that knowledge through four Specific Areas.

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 revised Development matters has also identified 7 key features of effective practice which are as follows:

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.

6. Planning

Planning is delivered through topics, which are based on children's interests and are subject to change with each cohort. Adult facilitators in the classrooms may lead activities based on skills; these activities let learning happen through creative opportunities, a supportive environment, and a sound pedagogical understanding. Appropriate resources in the reception environment are stimulating and relevant. The resources are provided to create rich learning opportunities through a range of highly structured, adult led, child led or child-initiated learning. Child-initiated activities may be instigated when the child brings something to the setting this might lead to the provision of resources, stories, and pictures to support this interest. A whole class focus is linked to activities within the EYFS setting. These are adapted continuously to meet the needs of the unique child. Attention to children's adaptation of activities is encouraged and creates extended learning opportunities. Children are encouraged to challenge themselves through self-selecting tasks and activities. Teachers 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, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1. We use 'Pathways to Write' for Literacy, follow the Little Wandle Phonics programme, and the NCETM Mastery for maths programme.

6. Assessment

At Wharton CE Primary ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Practitioners also consider observations shared by parents and/or carers. These observations may take various forms such as post-its, photographs, or teachers' knowledge.

During a child's first half term in reception a baseline will be carried out by staff to assess children's skills across the 7 areas of learning. We also carry out the RBA baseline which is administered within the first six weeks of the Autumn term. It is a task based, age-appropriate assessment of mathematics and literacy, communication and language and is completed by reception staff. The assessment takes approximately twenty minutes and is delivered in English. Throughout the year children's development is monitored and tracked to ensure that any gaps in learning are addressed and any concerns raised with the SENDCO.

In the Summer Term pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

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

The results of the profile will be shared with the parents/carers at the end of the summer term.

During each term parents and carers are invited in to see children's learning journeys, and 'Open the door' sessions where they can find out about what the children have been learning. Informally we meet with parents throughout the school year as and when necessary to discuss their child's

particular needs. There is also the opportunity in the Autumn term to attend parents evening to discuss their child's progress.

7. Working with parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between teachers and parents and/or carers. Each child is assigned a key person who is the first point of contact for parents.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. The progress check and EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities. We also hold 'Open the door' sessions where parents can come into school to share their child's learning journey with them at various points throughout the year.

We also have meetings prior to children starting in Reception, Welcome meetings in the Autumn Term and a phonics meeting in the Autumn Term.

8. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our Safeguarding Policy.