

Warren Wood Primary Academy and The Evergreen Centre Early Years Policy

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Contents

Mission Statement	3
Values	3
Statement of Equality.....	3
Purpose.....	3
Aims	3
Legislation.....	4
Structure of the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
The 3 Prime areas of learning.....	4
The 4 Specific Areas of learning	4
Planning	5
Teaching Early Years.....	5
SEN in the Early Years	6
Assessment	6
Working with parents.....	6
Safeguarding and welfare procedures.....	6

Document Change History

Date:	Version:	Description of Changes:
November 2023	1.2	Added to Trust template and updated

Mission Statement

“To nurture and develop all people in our Trust so that they reach their full potential academically, vocationally, and personally, including being positive role models for future generations in the community. We will achieve this by providing high quality values-based education that cultivates employability and life skills making our schools the first choice for young people, parents, carers, staff and employers.”

Values

The values of Respect, Excellence, Collaboration, Independence, Perseverance, Enjoyment, Leadership, Integrity and Care are central to everything we do at the Skills for Life Trust.

Statement of Equality

We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of this policy on equality and the possible implications for pupils with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

Purpose

The focus within our Early Years practice and provision has been to develop effective methods which support communication and language as the vehicle for teaching and learning. Practitioners will develop their reflective practice to encourage spontaneous and ‘in the moment’ planning within the continuous and enhanced provision. In Reception, classroom practitioners will strike the right balance between directed and undirected sessions. In Nursery, classroom practitioners will predominately support the children’s learning through play.

Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad 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 gets left behind
- Close partnership working between practitioners and with parents and carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the 2021 non-statutory frameworks for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). We use 'Development Matters'.

Structure of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Our Early Years provision has the capacity to accommodate 60 Reception children across two classes and 26 AM/PM preschool children in our Nursery preschool classroom. Each Reception class of 30 children are supported by a class teacher and two teaching assistants. At the end of the year, we may make changes to the classes if necessary for Year 1. The Nursery is led by a qualified teacher and supported by support staff with relevant qualifications (as set out in the EYFS Handbook) to be included in the Nursery ratios.

Our Early Years setting follows the Curriculum as outlined in the 2021 Statutory Framework of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The EYFS framework outlines the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning and the 7 areas of Development (CoETL). The CoETL are organised into three primary strands and are essential components towards children becoming self-regulated learners.

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
- Creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things
- There are 7 curriculum areas of development. These are divided into Prime and Specific areas of learning

The 3 Prime areas of learning

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development Communication and language underpins all areas of learning within our early years curriculum and continues to be developed within our provision, teaching, learning and planning methods.

The 4 Specific Areas of learning

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

The 4 specific areas of learning provide a context for development and reflect cultural knowledge and accumulated understanding. They are dependent on learning in the Prime areas. Our

continuous provision demonstrates a strong emphasis upon supporting children's understanding of the world along with enabling them to express themselves imaginatively and creatively, using art and design. New learning and topics are adapted to reflect the needs of the children and their interests.

Planning

The 3 prime areas are at the core of early years planning. Staff carefully plan activities which enable children to link personal experiences with new learning, providing a wide range of contexts to revisit, practise, apply, and develop transferable skills and understanding.

Emphasis is placed upon the importance of using sensory play in the development of language skills, alongside enhancing provision for identified groups of children. Staff consider the individual needs, interests, and stages of development of each child in their care and use this information to plan challenging and enjoyable experiences. 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. Staff are reflective in their practice and systematically observe and evaluate the effectiveness and value of planned provision within the inside and outside learning spaces. They respond to children's levels of interest and engagement, ensuring accurate pitch and pace for developing cognition and learning. Planning and interactions are supported by progressive sequences of questioning to develop thinking, understanding and language for reasoning

Teaching Early Years

Our practice demonstrates a balance between play and formal teaching. Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. 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. Staff interactions with children during planned and child-initiated play, provides rich opportunities for communicating and modelling language, showing, explaining, demonstrating, exploring ideas, encouraging, questioning, recalling, providing a narrative for what they are doing, facilitating and setting challenges. Staff understand that play is about much more than content but helps to build flexible minds and an enquiring spirit. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. They consider the equipment provided and the attention to the physical environment as well as the structure and routines of the day that establish expectations. Staff understand that teaching is in every activity provided within all of the learning environments. There are no activities that occur in the setting which adults do not consider to be opportunities for teaching. While staff do not always know where these opportunities will present themselves, it is the skill of the adults that enable them to readily recognise the 'teachable moments' when they arise and respond to them appropriately.

SEN in the Early Years

All Early Year's providers are required to have arrangements in place to identify and support children with SEN or disabilities and to promote equality of opportunity for children in their care. These requirements are set out in the EYFS Handbook. The EYFS Handbook also requires practitioners to review children's progress and share a summary with parents. (DFE SEND Code of practice 2014 5.12)

Assessment

Ongoing assessment is an integral part of teaching, learning and development processes.

Staff observe children to identify their level of achievement and interests, predominately through a system called Tapestry. These observations are used to identify developmental gaps, support differentiation, inform children's next steps in learning and monitor their progress. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers. Where there is little or no progress or improvement, it may be necessary to involve more specialist professionals such as specialist teachers, health or social services for more detailed assessments. During the course of the year EYFS teachers will input 4 sets of summative data to track children's progress. At the beginning of Reception all children who can access the materials will take part in the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) which is a statutory requirement to be completed within the first 6 weeks of starting Reception.

Working with parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between Nursery practitioners, class teachers, teaching assistants and parents and/or carers. We update Tapestry weekly and encourage parental/carer involvement every term through celebrating children's achievements. Each class has a class email to ensure parents can contact the class teacher. Where possible we will arrange an appointment to then speak to the parent/carer face to face. The EYFS long term plan can be accessed via the school website. Children will also take home a reading folder with a reading book, key words and flash cards to support their learning, from Term 2.

Safeguarding and welfare procedures

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