

West Haddon Endowed School

Policy Document

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

1. Introduction

West Haddon Primary School is a Voluntary Controlled Church of England school which has Christian values at the heart of its ethos. Our values are incorporated into all curriculum areas and are embedded fully in all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

School Mission Statement

We are proud of the Christian love and care which we extend to all our children, staff, parents and the local community. Standards of teaching and learning reflect or high expectations of achievement. Christian values are at the core of our school family.

Aims of the school

1. We aim to equip all children with attitudes, skills and knowledge to enable them to enjoy their childhood and serve as a foundation for further development.
2. We place Christian values at the heart of everything we do.
3. We will provide a happy environment that is caring, nurturing and supportive for everyone involved in our school.
4. We shall treat the children as individuals and encourage them to reach their potential.
5. We will maintain and strengthen our links with the wider community.

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. Entry into our primary school is at the beginning of the school year in which the children are five. (Compulsory schooling begins at the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday.)

The Foundation Stage is important in its own right and underpins future learning in Key Stage One. The Early Learning Goals set out what is expected of children by the end of the Foundation Stage. We are aware that during their early years, children grow and develop rapidly and are very receptive learners. Rapid development at this stage means there are wide variations in any group of young learners.

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| Page 1 of 4 | | Next review due: | July 2016 |

Children joining our school have already learned a great deal. Many have been to the local pre-school setting. The Early Years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- It builds on what our children already know.
- It recognises that each child is different and ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged.
- It offers a structure of learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors.
- It provides a rich and stimulating environment.

Aims of the Foundation Stage

We believe that all children are entitled to the best possible start in life both emotionally and intellectually which enables them to achieve their potential.

We support our children in the following ways in accordance with the guidelines contained in “development matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage”.

- Understand that children develop in different ways and at different rates.
- Nurturing each child’s individuality and responding to their needs, interests and feelings.
- Assessing and identifying children’s learning and development across the seven areas of learning specified below and planning next steps to learning including identifying any need for additional support.
- Fostering and supporting children’s self-esteem and confidence and helping to develop their awareness of their own identity and their place within the community.
- Providing a safe, secure and caring environment where children feel valued and feel a sense of belonging.
- Supporting children to develop care respect and appreciation for others, including those that have beliefs, cultures and opinions which are different to their own.
- Encouraging children to develop their independence and perseverance when faced with challenges.
- Setting clear boundaries and high expectations for the children to aspire to.
- Providing experiences which build on existing knowledge and understanding seeking to challenge, stimulate and extend their learning and development.
- Encouraging children to be sensitive to others needs and feelings and to form positive relationships with adults and other children.
- Providing a stimulating environment with diverse resources to encourage the children to take risks and explore further.
- The partnership between home and school, so that the children feel secure and develop a sense of well-being and achievement.

The Early Years Foundation Stage framework

Teaching is delivered in accordance with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. (March 2012) The key principles established in the document bring together children’s welfare, learning and development requirements through the four themes.

- **A unique child**
- **Positive relationships**
- **Enabling environments**
- **Children learn in different ways and at different rates**

There are seven areas of learning and development which shape the educational programme for the Early Years. All areas are of equal importance and are interconnected.

The three prime areas are :-

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

There are four specific areas throughout which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied :-

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

We encourage and apply the following characteristics of teaching and learning when planning and guiding children's activities:-

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically.

We believe that Early Years education is important in its own right and should not be viewed simply as preparation for the next stage of children's education. We believe that the EYFS framework allows a natural progression into the National Curriculum at the beginning of Year 1 (*please also see Transition policy*).

Active Learning through Play in the Foundation Stage

We recognise the importance of children's play. It is an essential and rich part of their learning process, supporting them in all areas of their development. Play is a powerful motivator, encouraging children to reach their potential. We ensure that play is flexible and tailored to individual children's needs and learning styles. Play is structured and unstructured, and takes place both inside and outside.

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas and learn how to control themselves and understand rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or relive anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Planning

The EYFS framework provides a long term plan to follow by ensuring not only that all the early learning goals are covered throughout the academic year, but also by broadening and embellishing on those areas and including additional material where appropriate.

Medium term planning is created with all Early Years practitioners' involvement and takes into account the individual children's learning and developmental needs. This is often through the use of topic work.

The learning opportunities provided include a range of adult focussed, and child initiated activities both indoors and outdoors. Educational visits within the local community and further afield are also planned to support children's learning. In particular our church school status is embedded through regular community worship and other trips to our local church and by inviting community members and representatives from other cultures and faiths to visit us and share their experiences with the children.

Assessment

We recognise the importance of ongoing assessment as an essential aspect for the effective running of the EYFS. Regular, planned and focussed assessments as well as ad hoc and impromptu assessments are made of the children's learning and needs as well as to identify any misconceptions, lack of understanding or gaps in their knowledge. We use this information from assessments to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes form of observation and this involves both teacher and other adults as appropriate.

As each child enters the Foundation Stage we use our professional judgement to determine the age band the children are working within across the EYFS 17 areas of learning. Children are given a "baseline assessment" within the first 3 weeks of the academic year.

The Expected Standards for Foundation Stage are :-

40-60 months = In Line with age related expectations

30-50 months = Below age related expectations

Any other lower age band below = significantly below age related expectations

A review of progress of Developmental Matters for each child is carried out three times per year.

At the end of the year we will assess the Reception children against the EYFS Profile Early Learning Goals stating whether they are Emerging, Expecting or Exceeding.

Parents receive an Annual Report that offers brief comments on each child's progress in each area of learning. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs, and gives detail of the child's general progress.

Inclusion in the Foundation Stage

In our school we believe that all children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. Some children progress beyond this point. We help to do this by planning to meet the needs of both boys and girls, of children with Special Educational Needs, of children who are more able, of children with disabilities, of children from all social and cultural backgrounds, of children from different ethnic groups and of those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

All children, irrespective of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture or religious belief, or social circumstances, have the opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development within the EYFS setting.

(Please also see Equal Opportunities and Special Educational Needs policies).

Parents as Partners

We believe that all parents have an important role to play in the education of their child. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- Talking to parents about their child during home visits at this start of the academic year (this is optional).
- Providing opportunities for the children to spend time with their teacher before starting school.
- Inviting all parents to an Induction meeting during the term before their child starts school.
- Giving Welcome booklets out to parents.
- Inviting parents to join the PTA.
- Sending newsletters to parents on a regular basis.
- Offering an "open door" policy to reception parents.
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any immediate or urgent concerns or issues at the beginning or end of the school day.
- Having flexible admission arrangements and allowing time to discuss each child's circumstances.
- Encouraging parents to say if there are any problems with their child's learning or rate of progress.
- Offering a range of activities, throughout the year, that encourages collaboration between child, school and parents.
- Providing various activities that support the involvement of parents. There is regular communication with home through the child's red home school book.

Parents' Welcome packs supplied prior to admission confirms that they should supply the following for their child :-

- Packed lunch (if not having school dinners) in a named lunchbox. Fizzy drinks and glass bottles are not permitted.
- A healthy snack for play time.
- A clearly named water bottle.
- Information about any medication or medical conditions including allergies for their child. Medicine /inhalers cannot be kept in the child's bookbag. Staff are not permitted to administer medication other than prescribed inhalers/epipens. Parents are encouraged to attend at the school administer any necessary medication for their child as required during the school day. Emergency first aid and treatment will be provided by trained staff as appropriate.
- A uniform list including PE kit. Reception children should also always have a spare set of clothing in school.
- Suitable outdoor clothing such as coat and shoes so that their child can access the outdoor area.

There is a formal meeting for parents in the Autumn and Spring terms at which the parents discuss the child's progress with the class teacher in private. Parents receive a report on their child's progress at the end of the year and there is an opportunity to discuss this in the Summer term with the class teacher.

Admissions and Induction

In order to promote a smooth transition into school the children are invited to visit the Reception class to familiarise themselves with the environment and staff on several occasions during the Summer term prior to their admission.

Staff also visit children in their pre-reception settings to aid the transition process. During the Summer term prior to admission, parents are invited into school for a Welcome meeting. At this meeting information about the induction process and details of the school routine are shared. There is also time for informal chat and parents' questions. School information packs are given to parents at this meeting. Parents are also provided with questionnaires to obtain as much individual information about their children as possible.

From September, the children attend reception class for half days for the first 3 weeks, thereafter full time. We have a flexible approach to admissions for reception children, tailored to each child's needs.

(please see Admissions policy).

Photographs/videos

At the beginning of each year parents/carers are asked to give permission for their child to be photographed/videoed during their time at school. We use these images in the classroom, in displays, in children's individual record books, and on the school website (children who are "looked after" will not have their image put on the website or any public flyers etc).

Toileting

By the time children enter the reception year at our school we expect all children to be able to use the toilet and wipe their own bottoms. From time to time we realise that children will have accidents and we try our best to help children to clean themselves and put on clean clothes. During this process we support and encourage children during this tricky time. Usually we try to ensure that two adults are present during this process. Please note that we are not permitted to wipe and clean children in intimate parts of their body. We try to guide the children, there are rare occasions when children are unable to clean themselves completely. In these circumstances we will call parents so that they can collect their child or help their child.

Safeguarding

The school takes its safeguarding responsibilities very seriously. Any concerns which the school has will be noted and if deemed necessary will be reported to the relevant agencies. The safety of the child is always of paramount importance.

(Please see Safeguarding policy).

Monitoring and Evaluating

This policy will be monitored by the teacher, senior management team and Early Years Governor every three years.