

Primary Schools

EYFS Policy 2020

Purpose

This policy has been written to outline the philosophy and principles of early years teaching and learning. This document is to be used as a guide and framework to support the individual settings.

Aims

The early years secures the foundation for learning, development and care of each individual child to ensure their future personal and academic success.

The aim at West Norfolk Academies Trust is to enable every child to fulfil their potential.

Early Years at West Norfolk Academies Trust:

- We teach the children learning behaviours
- Give the children security and confidence within an atmosphere of respect for others
- Support and extend knowledge, skills and understanding of the children helping them to overcome any barriers to learning
- Develop a strong sense of self and high levels of confidence for each child
- Ensure that all children feel included, secure and valued
- Work in partnership with parents/carers to support the children's rapid development, physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially
- Build upon what the children already know and can do and extend their interests to encourage a positive attitude towards learning
- Deliver the curriculum using varied approaches and teaching methods with relevant and appropriate content that matches the different needs of young children
- Encourage the children to learn for themselves by providing opportunities for them to engage in activities planned by the teacher alongside those that they plan or initiate themselves
- Allow time for the children to become engrossed, work in depth and complete activities
- Develop basic skills through well-structured activities.

Organisation:

West Norfolk Academies Trust primary schools follow the curriculum as detailed in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (April 2017).

Admission:

All children are offered full-time learning in Reception from the start of the Autumn term. Home visits are an essential part of the transition period so that staff can fully understand the relationship between the child and the parent/carer and build on this aspect of the child's learning, as well as visiting any pre-school settings the child has attended.

Where possible home and pre-school visits will be completed in the Summer term prior to the child starting Reception.

To ensure the best possible transition we:

- Value the parent as the first educator of their child
- Make contact with the feeder pre-schools to discuss essential information on every child
- Share important information about our school during new-parents meeting
- Use written information sent by pre-schools to inform early planning
- Hold a series of 'welcome/taster' sessions for parents and children in June and July
- Share information in a transition meeting(s) with key adults for children with additional needs
- Meet with every parent and child before beginning school to share important information from home and school (wherever this is possible)

Partnership with Parents and Carers:

The school recognises the huge importance of establishing effective relationships with parents/carers in ensuring the children achieve their full potential. Parental involvement is actively encouraged. Parents are very welcome to chat to staff prior to the start of the school day or at the end of the school day giving them opportunities to discuss any concerns with staff. Staff ensure that parents are well informed about the curriculum their child is experiencing through Learning Journeys, mini reports, parent evenings, notes and newsletters.

Staff take the opportunity at the end of the day to talk to parents about significant achievements or any concerns.

Throughout the year, parents are invited to attend workshops that help support their child's development at home.

Inclusion/Equal Opportunities (including SEN):

Children will be taught to respect the cultural differences and abilities of all the children and their families and to recognise how other people feel.

When appropriate, advice and guidance will be sought from outside agencies and professionals to support individual children.

No child will be excluded or disadvantaged because of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, special educational needs, disability, gender or ability.

(see SEN policy)

Baseline and on-going assessment:

The baseline assessment will be completed using the current framework by the end of the third full week in September.

A moderation meeting will be held to cross moderate the baseline at the end of the third week.

The progression and development of all the children will be monitored every term.

Observations of learning, summative assessment, regular moderations of children's work will be recorded then analysed to reflect on the progress made and follow up needs identified. Children's work will be assessed against the Early Years Foundation Stage and stickers with the banding the work achieves next to the work.

We ensure our end of EYFS assessments are reliable through:

- Our knowledge of the child gained through observation and interaction
- Our environment enables the child to flourish to their full capacity
- Our assessments ensure a range of contributors e.g. parents, the school nurse, Speech and Language Therapy, outreach teachers and other relevant adults
- In-house moderation across the Trust EYFS team
- Moderation with the Local Authority

Learning in the Early Years:

The Early Years phase must provide the potential for learning in every activity and situation that arises, whilst providing a secure and stimulating environment in which children flourish and learn to make sense of the real world.

Activities will provide first hand experiences through learning and discussion where children are encouraged to interact with their peers, move with purpose and explore a wide variety of learning situations.

There are clearly defined areas of provision and a wide range of activities, resources and materials available, supported by adults modelling the learning. These areas are well planned.

Opportunities are provided for sustained activity, as well as spontaneous, self-chosen activities.

Learning environments are language rich in order to stimulate the children in developing good speech and language and communication skills.

All children receive valuable adult time which up levels their quality of learning.

'Characteristics of effective learning' are central to ensuring that quality teaching and learning is taking place. These underpin learning and development across all of the prime and specific areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner.

- Playing and exploring – engagement
- Children investigate and experience things and events around them and 'have a go'.
- Active learning – motivation
- Children concentrate and keep trying if they experience difficulties, as well as enjoying what they achieve.
- Creating and thinking critically – thinking

Direct whole class and group teaching

At specific times in the day the children will take part in an activity that is teacher led. Such sessions include daily phonics lessons, daily English, daily maths/counting experiences, Knowledge curriculum, as well as teaching new skills to support their learning within the classroom environment and also in the extended outdoor classroom. All direct taught sessions are carefully planned and tailored for each group using previous assessments of the children's knowledge, skills and ability. Planning is changed and tailored regularly and, in response to the result of taught sessions, ensuring all teaching and learning is relevant and challenging for each child.

Phonics lessons commence from Day 1. West Norfolk Academies Trust follows the RWI scheme for Phonics. Children are exposed to reading books as appropriate.

Rhymes, stories and poems are used as part of daily teaching in order to develop vocabulary and language comprehension.

Writing is taught through Talk4Writing, linking to the Knowledge Curriculum where appropriate.

Early Mathematic skills are taught through a variety of independent and directed tasks including early reasoning and problem solving.

The Knowledge Curriculum has been carefully sequenced to support initial language development and prepare the children for future learning.

Learning Through Play:

Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. Children learn best from activities and experiences that they have initiated and play with peers is important for children's development. We carefully plan our environment and provide opportunities to reflect these interests to inspire them further, whilst also making sure that children also have the opportunity to extend and practise the skills they have learned through direct teaching. Constant opportunities are provided for children to be able to make their own decisions and choices in order that they can become independent, confident and happy learners as soon as is possible for each individual child. Some children will need gentle encouragement in this step as they become for comfortable in their new setting.

Through play children explore and develop learning experiences, helping them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for 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 re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations. Giving children the opportunity to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, allows them to discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. With adult support this process enhances children's ability to think critically and ask questions. Adults can support them in making connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions.

Learning Behaviours:

These are intentionally taught and modelled. Learning behaviours focus on the ability to actively listen, take turns, learn appropriate behaviour for all contexts, take risks, understand failure, adopt a growth mindset, follow direct instructions, show respect to self, others and the environment.

We teach learning behaviours through:

High expectations for learning

Clear routines and procedures that help build self-assurance for children

Purposeful and challenging experiences

An enabling environment

Inspiring teaching that will enable the children to display a thirst for knowledge and understanding and a love of learning

The formation of a strong partnership with parents/carers

An individualised approach to the pastoral care and needs of every child is unique

Learning Environment:

- Children's work will be recorded in Maths, English and Learning Journey books in line with the rest of the school. This ensures that progress from baseline is clearly visible for all children.

- Questions related to the learning expectation, will be used in all learning environments, enabling the development of language.
- There will be opportunities for children to write in all areas of the learning environment.
- The environment will provide stimulating resources, which are accessible and open-ended so that they can be used, moved and combined in a variety of ways.

Areas:

There will be a variety of areas in the classroom:

Teacher input area
Fine motor skills
Block/construction
Maths
Writing
Reading
Creative
Imaginative
Investigation
Snack
ICT
Music/Sound
Water
Sand
Physical development

In each area it will be clear to the children how they can independently access the tasks and tidy away. It will also be clear if there is a limit of how many children can participate at one time.

Outside Learning:

Opportunities to learn outside are essential for the development of all children. All strands of learning can be developed through both planned and child-initiated play. All schools offer a sustained time outdoors to play and develop their learning. This is imperative for the vital development of the ‘Characteristics of Effective Learning’. Children have the opportunity for purposeful physical learning for 25% of the day.

All schools provide appropriate clothing such as; waterproofs and wellington boots to ensure that learning takes place all year round.

The outdoor areas:

- Provide the children with freedom to explore, use their senses and be physically active.
- Provide opportunities for large mark making and writing including writing resources such as paintbrushes with water, pencils and clipboards.
- Provide reading opportunities in the form of signs, labels and simple stories and sequences.

- Provide opportunities for mathematical development such as opportunities for counting natural objects, comparing of length and weight with real life objects such as sticks and stones. Be able to solve problems using mathematical knowledge and understanding.
- Provide a quiet area for activities such as reading and observation.
- Provide opportunities for large scale construction and gross-motor development through sports equipment and other open-ended resources.
- Provide a sensory ‘mud kitchen’ with free access to water
- Provide water and sand opportunities

Safeguarding and Children’s Welfare

Children learn best when they are happy, safe and feel secure. We aim to ensure that all children feel happy, safe and secure through the continuous development of positive relationships between children and staff as well as relationships with their peers. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Guidance. See the Schools Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection Procedures available on the school’s website.

It is important to us that all children in the school are ‘safe’. We aim to teach children that, in society as in a classroom, there is a need for boundaries, rules and limits to which we all need to adhere to, to help us stay safe. We aim to teach children to be consciously aware of their feelings and the feelings of others and how to manage their own behaviour by identifying behavioural issues and using them as a teaching moment. We also aim to teach our children to take risks whilst learning how to recognise and avoid hazards. Should accidents occur an emergency contact form is completed for all children on entry into school, which includes medical, personal and social details. Other than minor cuts and bruises, all accidents on school premises are recorded in the School Accident Book and parents are informed.

Health and Safety:

Priority will be given to every child’s safety at all times.

One member of staff with a current paediatric first aid certificate will be on site at all times and will accompany the children on outings.

Training is provided for staff where the administration of medicine requires medical or technical knowledge. Prescription medicines will only be administered where they have been prescribed by a medical professional.

At least one member of staff in the setting will hold a Food Hygiene certificate.

Teachers will complete a check list each morning checking the areas of the classroom and outdoor environment for any risks.

Where a risk arises, it will be reported immediately and the area cordoned off where necessary.

Training/Professional Development:

The Early Year’s staff are supported and encouraged to continue their professional development.

All Early Year’s staff through their training and experience will be able to observe and respond appropriately to the children.

New staff will have a thorough induction in line with the rest of the school.

Pandemic:

Due to the current pandemic it is not possible to carry out home visits or pre school visits. A meet the teacher session will take place on the training day prior to schools opening. This is to help the children know their environment and recognise the teacher before starting on the first day. Conversations with parents will take place via the telephone and zoom. Meetings in school will only take place when absolutely necessary.

Activities that can be cleaned following the Government guidelines will be used with a limited amount of children at an activity at any one time.

Learning and homework will be shared via Dojo including pictures of children's individual successes where appropriate due to these not being able to be sent home.

Questions to ask EYFS children

- What do you think about?
- What could you do about it?
- How could we fix it?
- Just suppose that.. then what?
- What would happen if....?
- What else can we use this for?
- What is this like?
- What will happen if we add this?
- What will happen if we take this away?
- Why do you think this happened?
- How do you think this works?
- How did you.....?
- How could you?
- How else could you do that?
- What is similar about these?
- In what ways are these different?
- What could you tell me about?
- What did you notice about...?
- How do you think we could?
- Tell me about

Daily Safety Checklist – example – this is adapted for each setting

Item	Details	Tick or Comment
Outdoor Environment		
1	Walk around the whole area checking for any rubbish/broken fencing/boundaries and clear	
2	Check the surfaces and consider the outside temperature with regard to safety of all areas	
3	Check the climbing frames, free standing frames for damage and bird mess – remove, clean or make secure (if unsafe to use)	
4	Check the sand pit and water area for animal mess and rubbish and clear	
5	Check the mud kitchen , drain any containers that could be dangerous, small containers could be left for play.	
6	Unlock any areas that are securely locked over night	
7	Ensure all areas are set up and ready for learning	
8	Check the gates are secure	

Daily Safety Checklist – example – this is adapted for each setting

Item	Details	Tick or Comment
Indoor Environment		
1	Check the classroom areas and toilets have been cleaned. Check there is paper towels in the toilets.	
2	Ensure the snack table has been wiped and laid out with the healthy snacks for the day, clean cups.	
3	Place chairs out around tables and check for damage	
4	Unlock the door to the outside area and check around under the cover for any blown in rubbish/damage, clean	
5	Check around the childrens hooks to ensure they are safe for use	
6	Ensure all areas are set up ready for learning and the tools being used are not broken or damaged	