



'Ambitious for all'

At Westover we are passionate that everyone can:

- Think and learn
- Thrive and achieve
- Work together as a community

to develop as responsible, compassionate people ready to challenge and care for our world

Ambition Resilience Teamwork Kindness Curiosity Creativity

Early Years Policy

Prepared By	Westover Primary School EYFS Leader
Approved By	Westover Primary School Governing Body
Approval Date	December 2020
Policy Review Date	December 2023
Signature	
Name	

Philosophy

We believe that The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) underpins all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children in all seven areas of the curriculum and through the identified characteristics of learning. Children should be given opportunities to be active learners in order to achieve their full potential, regardless of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, special educational needs, disability, gender or ability. We believe that a balance of child initiated 'learning play' and objective led adult initiated activities based on the children's next steps provide the best opportunities to extend children's thinking.

Admissions

Children are admitted into the Reception class in the year they turn 5 years old. Home visits are offered to all our families and carried out in the morning of the first week of school in September. Children are then invited to a small stay and play session in the afternoon on their home visit day. These smaller groups help children to explore their setting and begin to settle. In the following week, children are split into two smaller groups and attend a morning and an afternoon session each, across a Monday and a Tuesday. After attending the half day sessions, we invite all children to complete a morning with lunch included before children start full time.

Children start Reception on a full time basis except in cases where a more gradual transition is deemed appropriate and this is planned and co-ordinated by the school SENDCo and the EYFS leader in collaboration with the parents. Parents and children are also invited to come and have 'stay and play' sessions within Reception during the summer term before they start with us. We welcome children visiting with their key workers from their current setting too and the EYFS leader will also visit the children in their pre-school settings during the summer term especially in those instances where the preschool has identified a need for extra support for transition.

Aims

We aim to provide a curriculum and environment which:

- o Is based on "The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)" document
- o Provides practical and meaningful experiences, developing independence, confidence and initiative
- o Encourages children to become aware of the needs of others developing respect for people and property
- o Builds on what children already know and can do
- o Allows each child to build on firm learning experiences which provide a foundation for the National Curriculum
- o Is welcoming, bright and attractive to children, parents, staff and visitors
- o Gives access to a stimulating outside play area equipped to allow and encourage the children to develop in all areas of the curriculum in an open environment
- o Is well organised giving access to a wide range of materials and resources including IT
- o Fosters the characteristics of learning – playing and exploring, active learning and creating and thinking critically

Teaching and Learning

Teaching will include the following strategies:

- Working in partnership with parents, because parents continue to have a prime teaching role with their children

- Promoting children’s learning in all 7 areas of the curriculum through planned experiences and activities that are challenging but achievable
- Adults who model a range of positive behaviour
- Using language that is rich and using correct grammar
- Using conversation and carefully framed questions
- Providing a balance between teacher directed activities and child initiated
- Children teaching and encouraging each other
- Interacting with and supporting children in a way that positively affects the attitudes to learning that children develop
- Acknowledging that children learn in different ways
- By practitioners working and planning as a team

Effective learning will evolve by

- o Children feeling safe, secure and able to trust the practitioners who work with them
- o Children learning to respect themselves and others
- o Respecting children’s culture so that they can develop a positive self- image
- o Children learning about relationships
- o Children learning about the importance of friendship
- o Children developing a positive disposition to learning
- o Children having opportunities for problem solving

Assessment

Assessment will be ongoing throughout the EYFS using mainly observations of the children, many of which may be recorded using Tapestry (an online system, allowing home and school to share news and achievements of the children). Observations and individual assessments will inform the judgements made for each child’s Foundation Stage Profile at the end of the Reception year. The children will also have a ‘baseline assessment’ during their first half term in Reception. The data is used to identify next steps and inform planning. Children are assessed against the Development Matters criteria each term.

The Curriculum

The seven areas of learning that form the basis of “The Early Years Foundation Stage” document will be used when planning the curriculum. The guidance identifies “Early Years Outcomes” which will be used to identify developing knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes that children need if they are to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. These goals establish the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the foundation stage although some children will exceed the goals.

Planning

Teaching and learning will be organised through the use of long, medium and short term plans. There is a topic for each half term. Topic and related books are used as a basis for planning exciting activities linked to the EYFS curriculum and the children’s interests. The short term plans will include opportunities that build on and extend children’s current knowledge, experiences, interests and skills.

Partnership with Parents

We strongly believe that parents are children’s first and most enduring educators and when parents and practitioners work together, the results have a positive impact on children’s development and learning. A successful partnership needs a two way flow of information, knowledge and expertise.

We will work to develop an effective partnership with parents through:

- o Practitioners showing respect and understanding for the role of the parent in their child's education
- o Recognising and encouraging the past and future played by parents in the education of their children
- o Inviting all parents to pupil consultation evenings in the Autumn and Spring terms to share their progress
- o Listening to parents' accounts of their child's development and any concerns they have
- o Making sure that arrangements for settling in are flexible enough to give time for children to become secure
- o All parents being made to feel welcome, valued and necessary through a range of different opportunities for collaboration between children parents and practitioners, such as home visits, transition activities, parent contributions to Tapestry and Open Days
- o Practitioners using a variety of ways to keep parents fully informed about the curriculum, such as newsletters, sharing of Tapestry observations, weekly newsletters and parent information workshops as well as being available at the end of each day to answer any queries.
- o Relevant learning and play activities, such as reading and sharing books are continued at home. Similarly experiences at home are used to develop learning at school, for example sharing news about visits and celebrations.

No child shall be excluded or disadvantaged because of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, special educational needs, disability, gender or ability, as detailed in the equality policy.

SEND

With support from the school's SENDCo, practitioners will plan for children with special educational needs and identify other children with learning needs including the gifted and talented. The focus will be on removing barriers for children where they already exist, ensuring that children have the opportunity to develop their full potential. If a child with identified SEND enters Early Years, a transition plan will be set up before the child starts, as detailed in the SEND policy.

Evaluation and Review

Planning is monitored by the Headteacher and the EYFS Leader. The Foundation Stage Profile results are monitored by the Assessment Leader with the Headteacher and are discussed at pupil progress meetings and used to inform target setting and planning.