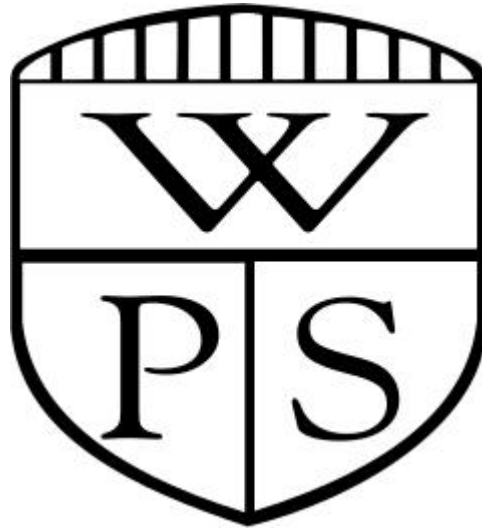




Western Primary School
Early Years Policy

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Statement of Intent

At Western Primary School we recognise and value the importance of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in providing a secure foundation for future learning and development and we understand our responsibilities in ensuring that children learn and develop well in a happy, caring and secure environment.

We aim to develop children to have an enquiring mind, an interest in learning and an enthusiasm for the next stage of school life. This is promoted through open-ended challenges and allowing the children to practise skills they have been taught in a safe and nurturing setting. Our whole school learning powers are rooted in the characteristics of effective learning and underpin our vision for children within our setting, acknowledging the key skills they need for engagement, motivation and thinking. Language and literacy are the cornerstones of learning and the spoken word is prioritised to enable our children to become confident communicators.

Our policy ensures we provide:

- Quality and consistency in our EYFS, so that every child makes good progress, and no child gets left behind.
- A secure foundation through planning for the learning and development of each individual child and assessing and reviewing what they have learned regularly.
- Partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers.
- Equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers (2025).

Structure of the EYFS

At Western Primary School, we provide education for children aged 3 and above in a mixed EYFS class. Our Nursery is open during term time only and operates between 8.45am and 11.45am for the morning session, and 12.15pm to 3.15pm for the afternoon session. Children are able to access the Nursery for either 15 hours (universal offer, mornings or afternoons) or 30 hours (from 8.45am to 3.15pm with lunch between 11.45am and 12.15pm. Our Nursery is non-chargeable as long as the child is eligible for funding from the Local Authority. We do not charge for lunchtime provision for the full-time children; however, meals need to be purchased via ParentPay or a packed lunch must be provided.

For our Reception children, the school day begins at 8.45am and ends at 3.15pm. Children are able to attend breakfast club which starts at 8.30 am prompt.

Roles and Responsibilities

The governing board will be responsible for:

- Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the effective and efficient performance management of staff.

The headteacher will be responsible for:

- Creating a culture where children experience a positive and enriching school life.
- Upholding ambitious educational standards which prepare children from all backgrounds for their next phase of education and life.
- Ensuring valid, reliable and proportionate approaches are used when assessing children's knowledge and understanding of the curriculum, and ensuring effective use is made of formative assessment.
- Understanding and acting within the statutory assessment frameworks which set out the duties, responsibilities and reporting arrangements to be followed.
- Ensuring that staff have received the appropriate training to deliver and report EYFS assessments.
- Ensuring parents are informed about their child's progress, development and targets, and are aware of relevant early years policies, practices and procedures.

The EYFS lead will be responsible for:

- Ensuring all staff members read and implement this policy.
- Ensuring that all staff are up-to-date with current statutory and Ofsted expectations, including the early years team and the senior leadership team (SLT).
- Supporting the policies, ethos and vision of the school and actively promoting high levels of achievement in the EYFS.
- Leading the early years team in the planning and delivery of a creative and stimulating curriculum, based on the educational programmes of the EYFS statutory framework.
- Ensuring the educational provision and practice is based on the EYFS characteristics of effective teaching and learning, supports a range of learning needs and develops children's independence.
- Taking responsibility for high-quality teaching provision throughout the EYFS.
- Ensuring the requirements for the EYFS, including the arrangement of assessment, are met in line with the relevant statutory requirements.
- Monitoring the progress of children and reporting evaluated data to the headteacher and assessment lead.
- Developing and maintaining effective relationships with parents, colleagues, the governing board and the local community.
- Ensuring parents are informed about their child's progress, development and targets, and are aware of relevant early years policies, practices and procedures.
- Supporting staff development by identifying and/or providing regular training and CPD opportunities, including regular EYFS meetings.
- Providing regular supervision meetings with staff to support professional development.
- Assigning a key person to support the needs of each child and family.

The key person will be responsible for:

- Ensuring that the children they support receive learning tailored to their individual needs.
- Helping children become familiar with the setting.
- Building a relationship with parents.
- Helping families with more specialist support, where required.
- Helping children become familiar with the school and acting as a point of contact for children and their parents.

All teaching staff will be responsible for:

- Acting in accordance with this policy at all times.
- Understanding and acting within the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.
- Ensuring they have a thorough working knowledge of:
 - The DfE's current EYFS statutory framework and the requirements therein.
 - The DfE's current '[Early years foundation stage profile handbook](#)'
- Using formative and summative assessments to assess, monitor and report on children's progress, plan next steps and shape learning opportunities.
- Identifying any areas of concern relating to children and their learning, development and emotional needs.

Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2021 EYFS statutory framework. The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected sections. The prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The 3 prime areas are:

- Communication and language - Listening, attention and understanding - Speaking
- Physical development - Gross motor skills - Fine motor skills
- Personal, social and emotional development - Self-regulation - Managing self - Building relationships

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

- Literacy - Comprehension - Word reading - Writing
- Mathematics - Numbers - Numerical patterns
- Understanding the world - Past and present - People, culture and communities - The natural world
- Expressive arts and design - Creating with materials - Being imaginative and expressive

Planning

The four overarching principles shape our practice in early years. These are:

- A unique child
- Positive relationships
- Enabling environments
- Learning and development

The EYFS at Western Primary school follows a topic-based approach. These have been selected to enable strong foundations and progression closely linked to the topics covered from Year 1 onwards. Each topic is broken down into weekly enquiry based questions, with a clear focus which enables us to plan our activities so children can develop and learn effectively. Staff consider the individual needs, interests and stage of development of each child in our care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable activity. In planning and guiding children's activities, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice. Staff also enhance planning/activities through children's own interests. Cultural capital experiences are planned into each term, such as Transport and Community – building something using recycled materials, or Superheroes – a visit from the emergency services.

Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through high quality interactions. All staff have been trained on the ShREC approach to high quality interactions: Sh – share attention; R – respond; E – expand; C – conversation. Staff employ these strategies to foster children's language and communication skills. During child-initiated activities children have access to a large, inviting and well-resourced learning area.

Children develop their gross motor and fine motor skills in our daily motor skills sessions. These include a carousel of activities that develop their gross and fine motor skills, through programmes such as Squiggle Whilst you Wiggle and Dough Disco. We also have a focus group dedicated to developing handwriting and letter formation, including focusing on pencil grip. These adult led sessions are also supported in the continuous provision with a readily accessible "funky fingers" station with a range of threading, scissor skills and other fine motor opportunities.

The Little Wandle phonics scheme is introduced in Nursery with a key focus on environmental sounds. This is continued in Reception with daily whole class phonics lessons and daily intervention.

Both Nursery and Reception follow the Greg Boterill approach to writing, starting with Scribble Club in Nursery and moving onto Drawing Club in Reception. This develops a wide range of skills across the whole curriculum, particularly focusing on making conversations, mark making and vocabulary. There is a different focus each week with a blend of books, tales and animations with new vocabulary introduced in an active and engaging way.

Nursery and Reception follow the White Rose Maths scheme which develops a deep understanding of number and mathematical concepts and is used throughout the school. This is further supported by maths opportunities being readily available in the continuous provision.

Assessment

At Western Primary school, ongoing assessment is an integral part of learning and development processes. All practitioners are expected to show an understanding of what pupils know and can do and what their next steps in learning are. SONAR assessments are used on a weekly basis as part of the formative assessment process and enable staff to identify areas for improvement so they can adapt timetables, the environment and planning to ensure we continue to be ambitious and supportive for all pupils.

Observations of learning are evidenced through floor books, working walls and whole class posts on ClassDojo. These all include photographs of the learning, pupil voice and some pupil work.

Summative assessment

Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts Reception, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

Each full-term Reception staff assess children against all 17 areas – below, emerging or expected. These assessments are placed into SONAR and used to identify next steps for learning.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

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

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority upon request.

At Western Primary School, we also conduct our own reception assessments linked to maths and writing. These summative assessments are completed in September, December, March and June.

Inclusion

At Western Primary School we ensure that every child, regardless of their background, ability or needs, is given equal opportunities to learn, develop and thrive. We promote a respectful, welcoming environment where diversity is celebrated, and all pupils feel valued and supported. Class stories and activities are selected to ensure all children are represented within the classroom environment. Staff are trained to identify and remove barriers to learning, adapt provision to meet individual needs, and work closely with other families and other professionals.

When identifying children who may need additional support, staff use the SEND assessment tools provided on the DFE Early Years website. This will be used to monitor the progress of the child in specific areas of learning and is a collaborative process with the SENDCo and parents.

Working with parents and carers

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there's a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers. Before children start in the EYFS, teachers meet with parents/carers. Home visits are undertaken to gather information on the children. Reception staff invite parents/carers into school to learn about the children. Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development via ClassDojo, parent's evenings and parent events. In the EYFS, members of staff are always available at the beginning and end of the school day/ session to speak to parents when needed.

In Reception, children take home a reading activity/book linked to their phonic ability and a sharing book. A half-termly newsletter is sent home and added to the school website. This shares with parents/carers what the children will be learning about each half term. Details of learning and celebrations are updated on ClassDojo and parents are invited in to participate in their child's learning once per half term. Across the year, parents are invited into school to take part in workshops such as phonics and maths.

Each year a progress report is shared with parents and carers, which provides information on the child's progress and achievements. Parents/carers have the opportunity to discuss any aspect of the report with the class teacher.

Safeguarding and welfare

This policy should be read alongside the School's Safeguarding Policy, Attendance Policy and Intimate Care Policy. In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 all staff receive regular safeguarding training.

At Western Primary School, we follow safeguarding and welfare requirements to provide a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence. We make sure that the appropriate statutory staff to child ratios are maintained in our setting to meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety:

- For children aged 3 and over: we ensure there is a qualified teacher or someone with an approved level 6 qualification for every 13 children.
- For classes where the majority of children will reach the age of 5 or older within the school year, we have at least 1 qualified teacher for every 30 children.
- In line with Safer Eating Guidance for the EYFS, all staff are Paediatric First Aid Trained, aware of allergies and intolerances and record details of choking incidents. We ensure that there is a qualified PFA trained professional in the dining hall and during all snack times. The PFA certificate is renewed every 3 years as required and other training is renewed as required.

When providing Intimate Care, staff will always ensure that children's privacy is considered and balanced with safeguarding and support needs when changing nappies and toileting.

We promote good health in the early years by talking to children about:

- The importance of brushing your teeth
- Healthy eating and a balanced diet
- The importance of regular exercise/physical activity
- The importance of drinking plenty of water
- Sun safety in Summer
- Fire safety – Autumn (Bonfire night)
- Water safety

Whistleblowing

Western has a whistleblowing policy in place which has been shared with all staff.

Safer Recruitment

In line with Safer Recruitment practices, references for all staff (including students and volunteers) will be obtained before they begin working at the school.

Attendance

All absence of EYFS children will be followed up in line with the school's attendance policy. Parents and carers will be contacted promptly when a child is absent. All children will have at least one up to date emergency contact.

Safety and suitability of premises, environment and equipment

We understand that ensuring the safety and suitability of our premises is paramount to allowing children to access a high-quality education. Children must be cared for in environments that are not only clean, secure and well-maintained, but also thoughtfully designed to support their development, wellbeing and learning. All areas in our EYFS unit are risk-assessed regularly, with appropriate measures in place to minimize hazards.

Accident or injury

Staff in the EYFS will ensure that:

- There is a first aid box containing appropriate items for use with children which is always accessible. This will be kept in the kitchen.
- Keep a written record of any accidents, injuries and first aid treatment. An accident book will be located in the kitchen. This will also be logged on CPOMs.
- Inform parents of any accident or injury involving a child and inform parents on the same day, or as soon as is reasonably practicable after, including details of any first aid treatment given. This might be through ClassDojo for minor incidents. All head injuries will require a phone call to inform parents.

Safety of premises and equipment

The school will:

- Ensure that premises, both indoor and outdoor, are fit for purpose and suitable for the age of children cared for and the activities provided.
- Provide access to an outdoor play area or, if that is not possible, ensure that outdoor activities are planned and taken daily.
- Ensure there are an adequate number of toilets and hand basins available. There are 8 toilet facilities available to the EYFS, with separate toilet facilities for adults.
- Ensure there are suitable hygienic changing facilities available for changing any children who are in nappies. These will be located in the EYFS toilet area.
- Ensure there is an area where staff may talk to parents confidentially.
- Only release children into the care of individuals who have been notified to the school by the parent and ensure that children do not leave the premises unsupervised.

Risk assessment

The school will:

- Complete daily checklists of the EYFS unit, including both inside and outside, to ensure the area is safe before children enter.
- Update and amend current risk assessments, in line with cohorts' needs and activities available.

Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Headteacher and EYFS Lead, annually. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

Statutory policy or procedure for EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See safeguarding and child protection policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy
Administering medicines	See medical policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See health and safety policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See safeguarding and child protection policy
Procedures for parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See safeguarding and child protection policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy
Intimate care	See intimate care policy
SEND procedure	SEND policy
Transitions	EYFS transition policy