

Whittington C.E. Primary School

Early Years' Foundation Stage Policy



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Introduction.

This Early Years Policy is concerned with the welfare and education of those children within the Reception Class at Whittington C.E. Primary School, their induction into school and subsequent transfer to the next class. As a school we feel that we should provide a warm, welcoming environment where children feel safe and their ideas are valued. As part of this ethos it is essential that suitable provision is made for the youngest children who are starting formal education for the first time.

The contents of this document include:

- Induction procedures
- Partnerships with others
- Curriculum
- Assessment
- Resources

Aims

- To provide an environment in which children will have the opportunity to learn.
- To encourage children to become independent.
- To encourage children to develop socially and spiritually.

The ten common principles of Early Childhood Education given by Tina Bruce in her book 'Early Childhood Education' (1987) provide the foundation of our aims for Early Years provision.

- 1. Childhood is seen as valid in itself, as a part of life and not simply as preparation for adulthood. Thus education is seen similarly as something for the present and not just preparation and training for later.*
- 2. The whole child is considered important. Health, physical and mental, is emphasised, as well as the importance of feelings and spiritual aspects.*
- 3. Learning is not compartmentalised, for everything links.*
- 4. Intrinsic motivation, resulting in child initiated, self directed activity, is valued.*
- 5. Self-discipline is emphasised.*
- 6. There are especially receptive periods of learning at different stages of development.*
- 7. What children can do (rather than what they cannot do) is the starting point in the child's education.*
- 8. There is an inner life in the child which emerges especially under favourable conditions.*
- 9. The people (both adults and children) with whom the child interacts are of central importance.*
- 10. The child's education is seen as interaction between the child and the environment, including other people and knowledge itself.*

Induction Procedures.

Prior to seeking admission to school, interested parents are able to visit the school. During this visit they are able to talk to the head and are shown around the school where they can meet staff.

Once an application is made to the LA and a place is allocated at the school the following admission procedures take place.

The children begin school in the year in which they have their fifth birthday. Children are offered full-time and part-time places according to the table below.

	Autumn Birthdays 1st Sept. - 31st Dec.	Spring Birthdays 1st Jan. - 30th April	Summer Birthdays 1st May - 31st Aug.
Autumn Term	Full-time	Parents are offered the choice of full-time or mornings only	Parents are offered the choice of full-time or mornings only
Spring Term	Full-time	Full-time	Parents are offered the choice of full-time or mornings only
Summer Term	Full-time	Full-time	Full-time

During the summer term prior to the children starting school in September, there are a series of meetings during which the children and parents are 'introduced' to the school.

There is an evening meeting for parents during which school procedures are explained.

The Reception Class Teacher visits other settings within the Early Years Partnership group to meet children within their settings.

Groups of children come to school, with their parents to meet staff and to look around school. [\(See Appendix A\)](#)

There is a social event, at school, during which all the children, parents and other members of the Early Years Partnership are invited to meet each other. [\(See Appendix B\)](#)

During the first two weeks of the Autumn Term the children attend school on alternate days, either part-time or full-time. This allows the children to settle into school within a smaller group and for initial assessments to be made.

Partnerships with others.

We recognise the importance to establish partnerships with other people and settings so that we can have a better understanding of the whole child.

Partnerships with Parents.

Parents are encouraged to take an active part in the education of their children. The importance of this partnership is established at the Parents' introductory meeting during the summer term. Parents are given a term guide, which provides information on curriculum, reading, etc. During the year there are three Parents' evenings, one each term. Also Parents are welcome to talk to staff and ask questions whenever they feel it is necessary rather than specifically at Parents' evenings. There are regular newsletters and parents are encouraged to help in school whenever they can.

Partnerships with other agencies.

The school is a member of an Early Years Partnership group. This partnership includes Little Lodge Nursery, Little Treasures Nursery and Whittington Pre-School Playgroup, all of whom cater for children prior to them starting school. Many of the children who attend these settings transfer to Whittington C.E. Primary School; therefore it is important that there is liaison between our school and these pre-school providers. We share information about the provision for children within the various settings. There is also the opportunity to talk about children who are transferring to school. Records of the children's pre-school experiences are also transferred to school. There are termly meetings, pre-school providers visit school and the Reception Teacher visits the pre-school settings.

The Reception Teachers of schools within the local cluster, meet together each term to share ideas and reflect on developments within Early Years education. These meetings take place in the different schools so we have the opportunity to visit other schools.

Any information provided by other agencies, e.g. Social Services, Health visitors, is noted but remains confidential.

Partnerships with other Staff.

The Reception staff and other staff plan some activities together. These provide opportunities for the children and Staff from these classes to meet and work together. Prior to transfer to the next class, staff meet to pass on information about children, especially those with SEN.

Curriculum.

We believe that all children should be valued. That all children, regardless of their gender, cultural background, or SEN should have the opportunity of equal access to the curriculum.

The curriculum is based on the Early Years Foundation Stage guidance. It is planned in accordance with the school's Teaching and Learning Policy.

These are the seven areas of learning and development, in two areas:

Prime Areas

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- Making relationships
- Self-confidence and self-awareness
- Managing feelings and behaviour

Physical Development

- Moving and handling
- Health and self-care

Communication and Language

- Listening and attention
- Understanding
- Speaking

Specific areas

Literacy

- Reading
- Writing

Mathematics

- Numbers
- Shape, space and measure

Understanding the World

- People and communities
- The world
- Technology

Expressive Arts and Design

- Exploring and using media and materials
- Being imaginative

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

All children are valued and are encouraged to have regard for others. They are encouraged to share and take turns during a variety of activities, working independently or with a group. With help when necessary they are shown that they can take 'risks' and that this is part of their learning.

Through circle times, assemblies, RE, and play, children develop an awareness of others, showing respect for people and their beliefs and culture. They are also given the opportunity to express their own thoughts during group and class discussions.

Communication and Language and Literacy

The children are encouraged at all times to share ideas. Each week the children talk about their experiences during 'news' time. The rules for speaking in turn are established and the children are encouraged to ask and respond to questions.

Children are given the opportunity to look at and share books. Understanding of how books and texts are arranged is developed during focussed sessions. There are poems to learn as part of the project and children are encouraged to recite poems and rhymes they know. The children listen to and respond to stories on a regular basis either as a class or as part of a smaller group.

The children learn the letters of the alphabet through a variety of planned activities and use this knowledge in other activities too. Children have a name card, which can be used to aid them when writing their name. They are asked to name all work and are expected to do so with increasing independence. Paper is available for the children to use at any time. They are encouraged to write, and these 'notes' are valued by all. Children also have the opportunity to develop handwriting skills through a variety of activities, which may include copying and tracing. Often children will read their 'writing' to an adult scribe; this may then serve as an interpretation to others of the work done, or be copied underneath.

The children are given individual books for reading at home and school. They are encouraged to use their knowledge of phonics to blend sounds to read unknown words and to develop a range of words which they recognise by sight, e.g. the.

Mathematics

The Maths curriculum is planned in line with the Foundation Stage Guidance. Children are encouraged at all times to talk about their work and to use mathematical language during play activities.

Understanding The World

Children have a natural curiosity and this is encouraged and developed throughout all that they do. Children's own experiences are valued and they are asked to contribute these to discussions.

Three projects are planned, one for each term.

The projects are:

- Nursery Rhymes
- Ourselves
- Jobs People Do

Throughout the year, the children take part in a weekly Forest School session.

Physical Development

Gross motor skills are developed through PE in line with the school's PE policy. At all times children are made aware of the need for care and awareness of others. There is also the opportunity for exploration through outdoor play and activities.

Children develop fine motor skills during project work and specifically during a weekly session, when they are encouraged to try a variety of activities.

Expressive Arts and Design

The children's creativity is valued and they are encouraged to express themselves through movement, music and art. Opportunity is provided to develop imaginative play in a variety of settings.

Continuous Provision

'Children reveal themselves most transparently in their play life. They play not from outer compulsion but from inner necessity'

Arnold Gessell

We feel that play is an important part of the child's development and learning. Many activities are planned with a sense of 'play' in mind. Opportunities are given throughout the week for the children to take part in both self-initiated and adult led activities. They are able to use the inside and outside environment, and a variety of experiences are provided.

'Role Play' area.

All children have the opportunity to use the 'role play' area. There are a variety of resources within the area and the children are able to develop the area as they wish, e.g. as a home, shop, cafe, etc. Additionally the area may be set up with a specific role, e.g. post office, restaurant, health centre, etc.

Sand and Water.

The children are able to use the sand and water as a self-initiated activity. It is located in an area that is away from walkways and provision is made for spillages. There is also a large outdoor sand pit. Rules for safety are established as a class, but should include the number of children who may use the equipment, how long for, safety, and what they need to wear.

More structured activities are planned to integrate with projects, maths and language and all children have the chance to take part in these activities. Observations are made and these form part of the continuous assessment.

Outdoor activities.

There is an area outside the classroom, which provides a safe area for outdoor activities and play. Parts of this area can be covered to provide shade during the summer months. Focused sessions are planned which look at a variety of skills outdoors e.g. gardening, water painting, caring for the environment etc. The children are also encouraged to develop gross-motor skills through activities e.g. walking on stilts, along imaginary and made pathways, using a scooter and sco-gym, ball skills etc. At all times the children are encouraged to be the decision maker.

Forest School

The children take part in a weekly Forest School session which is held on site.

Special Educational Needs.

If a concern is raised with regard to a child the SENCO should be informed and the procedures outlined in the School's Special Educational Needs Policy should be followed.

Assessment.

Initial Assessment

During the first two weeks of the Autumn term, the initial assessment of the children takes place. Information provided by pre-school providers, parents and from the 'Going to School' booklet is noted, and through observations and a variety of tasks a profile of the child is formed. *(See Appendix C)* This assessment gives us an indication of what the child is able to do, and therefore informs future planning which reflects the needs of the children.

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile

The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile is completed in line with guidance from the DFES. It is updated at least each term, based on continuous assessments and observations. Parents are invited to contribute towards the profile through discussion during the first half term, and again later in the year.

Continuous Assessment

Assessment of the children is carried out in accordance with the school's monitoring and assessment procedures. Records are kept of the children's progress and this informs future planning.

Information is shared with parents through Parents' evenings, annual reports and through discussion on an informal basis.

Information is also passed on to subsequent staff during the annual transfer of records.

Learning Journals

The school uses 'Tapestry' and online Learning Journal, which can be accessed by home and school. Parents are encouraged to add comments and photographs to the journal.

Resources.

Human.

There is a full-time Reception Teacher who is supported by a full-time equivalent Teaching Assistant. The curriculum is planned and evaluated by all adults who are involved with the children. Information is shared on a daily basis, and there are meetings during which the work for the following week is shared. This work is based on the medium term plans, with modification as appropriate to cater for individual children's needs.

At different times the teacher and teaching assistant work with different groups of children. This is planned on the timetable and adapted each week. Both are involved with assessment of the children either through observation or directed tasks and this information is always shared.

Physical.

The children have the opportunity to 'work' in a variety of environments. There is access to a practical area, within the classroom, which is covered with lino for wet/messy activities. There are toilets directly off the classroom. There is direct access to an outside area that may be used for a variety of activities.

Resources and equipment are stored in cupboards and on shelves, which are easily accessible to the children. Children are encouraged at all times to be responsible for the things they use. They are expected to tidy away and to keep the classroom/work areas tidy.

Appendix A

Group visits

On a day following the Parents' meeting, the parents and children are allocated a time to visit the school. They are then shown around and told about the different areas of the school. It is also a chance for the children to meet the Reception teacher and other staff, before they start school. The visits last for approximately 30 minutes and there are between 4 and 6 children per visit.

At the end of this visit the children are given a copy of the activity/discussion book 'Going to School' and an invitation to the Teddy Bears' Picnic.

Appendix B

Teddy Bears' Picnic

On one afternoon close to the end of the summer term, the following term's intake of children come to school for a Teddy Bears' Picnic. They are escorted by a partner from the current Reception class, who acts as their guide around the various activities. Year 6 children supervise the activities and give help where needed. Parents are also invited and may remain in the hall, where the PTA provides tea, coffee and biscuits, or they may follow their children.

Appendix C

Initial Assessment

During the first two weeks of the Autumn term the children are observed and the following assessment is completed, using the guidelines indicating method of assessment.

A class summary is then made of these assessments for future reference.