

Primary Schools

EYFS Policy 2021

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 through quality, consistency, working in partnership and providing equality of opportunity.

Early Years at West Norfolk Academies Trust:

We recognise at West Norfolk Academies Trust that all children learn more in the period from birth to five years old than any other time in their lives. By providing them with the best Early Years we not only give them the ability to progress in that year but also the best chance of success in future years.

- We give the children opportunities to develop their resilience and self-regulation
- Develop a strong sense of self and high levels of confidence for each child
- Give the children security and confidence within an atmosphere of respect for others, building positive relationships
- Ensure that all children feel included, secure and valued
- Support and extend knowledge, skills and understanding of the children helping them to overcome any barriers to learning
- 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.

- Ensure the children are ready for Year 1.

Organisation:

West Norfolk Academies Trust primary schools follow the curriculum as detailed in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (December 2020)

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 communicate with staff via class dojo 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 Knowledge Organisers, Learning Journeys, mini reports, parent evenings, class dojo and newsletters.

Staff take the opportunity to post achievements on class dojo. When appropriate staff will talk to parents at the end of the day about 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 tracking:

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.

Observation Assessment

"Observational assessment doesn't need prolonged breaks from interaction with children, or excessive written recording. It is likely to be interwoven with high quality interactions or conversations in words or sign language with children about their activities and current interests"

Practitioners will primarily use observational assessment to understand children's learning

Practitioners will watch, listen and interact as children engage in everyday activities, events and experiences, and demonstrate their specific knowledge, skills and understanding

Some observations will be planned but some may be a spontaneous capture of an important moment. It is likely that observations of everyday activities will provide evidence of children's development in more than one area of learning.

We add four observations of quality interactions monthly to the learning journeys on top of the knowledge activity.

We ensure our end of EYFS assessments are reliable through:

- Our knowledge of the child gained through observation and quality interaction in a range of daily activities and events that cover breadth of the curriculum
- Responsible pedagogy so our planned and continuous provision 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.

Depth in learning is a key focus with children showing that they are consistently secure in a range of different contexts.

We take action quickly where we notice that a child is falling behind and recognise that it is not helpful to wait for them to become 'ready'. Rather provide the learning elements that they need in order to make progress.

Activities will provide first hand experiences through learning and discussion where children are encouraged to interact with their peers, use self-regulation and explore a wide variety of learning situations in order to deepen their understanding

There are clearly defined rich learning environments, indoors and outdoors, which provide a balance across the areas of learning. The use of resources, materials and adults to support by modelling learning allow children to flourish. These areas are well planned in order to provide relevant and motivating learning experiences for each child.

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

Opportunities are provided for sustained play, as well as spontaneous, self-chosen play. Adults will sometimes join in this spontaneous play in order to extend children's learning.

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

We provide a balance of whole class, group, individual and continuous provision. As the children move through the year the amount of whole class and group work increases ensuring that children are ready for Year 1.

'The Characteristics of effective teaching and 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**

Children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'

- **Active learning**

Children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements

- **Creating and thinking critically**

Children have and develop their own ideas, make link between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

Direct whole class and group teaching

At specific times in the day the children will take part in whole class and group learning. These lessons include;

- Phonics
- English
- Maths
- Knowledge Curriculum
- Physical Education
- PSHE

Teachers will also teach key new skills to groups/individual children who have been identified as needing extra support. The focus will depend on the child/ren and those children may change over the course of the year. The teaching will ensure that the children can enhance their learning in both the indoor and outdoor activities.

All 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 depending on their phonic knowledge. We also encourage reading for pleasure books with adults reading stories to the children.

Rhymes, stories and poems are used as part of daily teaching in order to develop vocabulary and language comprehension. Classes participate in the school poetry recitals.

Talk4Writing is the basis for our writing scheme with a focus on orally retelling stories and on independently writing simple phrases and sentences.

Mastery mathematics is taught through the White Rose Scheme. This includes 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 and organise the learning environment in order to provide high-quality play opportunities which reflect these interests and extend their learning 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 more 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 self-regulate 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 the child'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 child's ability to self-regulate. In order for a child to self-regulate they need to develop executive functions. Executive functions are where the child can hold information in their mind, focus their attention, regulate their behaviour and plan what to do next. These functions are the initial focuses when children start in early years.

Using these functions and language development, the children then develop the growing ability to self-regulate.

Self-regulation is the ability to focus their thinking, monitor what they are doing and adapt where appropriate, regulate feelings, show patience and resilience.

We teach learning behaviours through:

- *High expectations for learning*
- *Clear routines and procedures that help build self-assurance for children*
- *Purposeful and challenging experiences*
- *Purposeful Play*
- *An enabling learning 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*

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.
- Working walls will reflect the whole class learning in Maths, English and the Knowledge Curriculum
- A Display will demonstrate high quality independent writing across the learning areas.
- Questions related to the learning expectation, will be used in all learning environments, enabling the development of language. These will develop across the academic year, as the children's reading knowledge develops.
- There will be opportunities for children to write in all areas of the learning environments.
- The environment will provide stimulating resource areas, which are accessible and open-ended so that they can be used, moved and combined in a variety of ways independently to enhance play.

Areas:

There will be a variety of areas in the classroom:

- Teacher input area
- Fine motor skills
- Block/construction
- Maths
- Writing
- Reading
- Phonics
- Expressive art and design
- Imaginative
- Investigation
- Snack
- ICT
- Music/Sound
- Water
- Sand
- Physical development
- Role play

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.

Learning areas other than writing will have the equipment available for children to choose to write whilst immersed in their play.

Teachers will explain specific learning expectations in particular areas to the class when activities change.

Outside Learning:

Opportunities to learn outside are essential for the development of all children.

All schools offer a sustained time outdoors to develop Teaching and Learning. This time is imperative for the vital development of the 'The Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning'.

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

There will be opportunities to write in all areas.

The outdoor areas:

- Provide the children with a different environment where they can develop their learning and self-regulation.
- 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
- Provide role play activities
- Provide musical activities with a variety of objects
- Provide an area to develop the knowledge of growing plants and vegetables
- Provide large physical activities including climbing and balancing (including bikes)

Outdoor areas will be enhanced as the children develop their learning through a specifically taught subject and according to their observed interests fascinations. This is to support the children moving their learning forward and demonstrating they are secure with knowledge in a variety of contexts.

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 policy.

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: hoping to take this out

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 with enhancements/writing opportunities and key questions	

8	Check the gates are secure	
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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 are 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 children's 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	

Date of approval: Date of review: Signed:

7	Ensure independent learning has enhancements/writing opportunities and key questions	
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