

Through all of its policies, Wellstead Primary School aims to provide:

A caring, family ethos in which all children can flourish.

Excellent standards of teaching which enable all children to achieve their full potential.

A curriculum which builds enthusiasm for learning and equips children for the next stage of their education.



Wellstead Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Introduction

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to achieve their full potential. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right, and provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.' (Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage)

The Revised Early Years Foundation Stage (Revised EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception Year. In our school, all children join us and complete the EYFS in the Reception Year.

Rationale

At Wellstead Primary School we believe the early years are the essential foundation for all future learning and that every child has the right to equality of opportunity. We recognise the importance of play in the child's learning and development and the need to provide structured learning opportunities through a variety of experiences. We recognise the importance and value of careful observations of the child's achievements to ensure the next steps on their learning journey are planned for.

We believe that a strong partnership between school and home is essential and that children learn and achieve best when this support is shared.

We encourage our children to value and respect themselves, others and their environment.

We recognise the value of good liaison between school and pre-school.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

A Unique Child

We recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, celebration/sharing circle times, reward stickers and certificates to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning and capture 'Wow moments' shared in weekly celebration assemblies and with parents via their online learning journeys.

At Wellstead Primary School, we understand that children learn best when they have positive relationships with the adults who are responsible for them. We recognise the welfare requirements for the EYFS to:

- Promote the welfare of children
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs
- Ensure all adults in the setting are trained and suitable to work there.
- Ensure the setting and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose and that risk assessments are ongoing.
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe, efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of children.

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Positive Relationships

At Wellstead Primary School, we recognise that children learn to be strong minded and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are the children's first and most enduring educators and value the contribution that parents make. In order to continue the learning journey as partners we begin working with new parents during the summer term prior to entry. We do this through:

- Induction meetings
- A visit to the class with their child to meet the staff
- Access to the school's weekly newsletter, brochure and website
- A home to school 'learning journey' sheet to pass on useful information about the child
- Informal visits to the school for a teddy bears picnic
- Encouraging them to talk about any concerns they have. Each child is allocated a 'Key Person' from the practitioners in the school.
- Three formal learning conversation meetings where each pupil's personal learning journey is discussed alongside the characteristics of learning – one per term
- An online learning journey where both parents and teachers add observations of each individual child's learning progress
- An annual narrative report with a 'best fit' judgement against the 17 Early Learning Goals
- Providing a termly information sheet and 3 weekly medium term planning, with ideas to support learning at home.
- Family learning and a range of other activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents.

We are currently developing links with our many feeder pre-schools. The Reception Class teacher and Headteacher endeavour to communicate with as many providers as possible.

Enabling Environments

We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to guide and support children to help them understand the need for rules and how to make fair decisions. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children (see child protection including safeguarding policy).

A Unique Child + Positive Relationships + Enabling Environments = Learning and Development

Observation, Planning and Assessment

Planning in the EYFS follows the school's Long Term and Medium Term Plans following Guidance regarding the 'Early Years Outcomes' (previously 'Development Matters') and pupil's current interests. These plans are used as a guide to form our short term planning (weekly planning), which is based around the individual children's needs and interests. Plans are necessarily flexible and frequently altered in response to children's needs and interests.

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We make regular assessments of the children's learning and use this information to ensure future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment mainly takes the forms of observation and annotated planning. Observations are recorded via an online learning journal using Tapestry software. Information and home learning can also be recorded by parents using the Tapestry system. We use the school assessment tracker to record judgements against the Revised EYFS Profile in month bandings, half-termly. Three formal learning conversation meetings where each pupil's personal learning journey is discussed alongside the characteristics of learning – one per term.

In the final term of Reception, we provide a narrative report and final 'best fit' summary to parents, reporting their progress against the 17 Early Learning Goal statements. Parents can discuss these judgements with the class teacher if they wish.

Judgements will be based upon a 'Best Fit' model. Practitioners will:

- Review their knowledge of each child from all sources (collected observations, annotated and retrospective planning, professional dialogue between practitioners, knowledge held that can be articulated)
- Consider the entirety of the Age/stage band/ELG descriptor, take a holistic view and not see/address individual sections in isolation
- Make a comparison to earlier or later age/stage bands to see which fits best
- Remember children will be able to do/know/understand more than is in the 'Early Years Outcomes' descriptors for their age/stage
- Use their professional judgement to make the best decision as to whether the child is 'typical' for their age or not

The Learning Environment

The Reception classrooms should be spacious, organised, well-resourced and well labelled, in order to allow children to explore and learn securely, independently and safely. It should be kept tidy to engender pride, respect, care, expectation and the value of resources. The teachers will need to model to the children how this should be done. This includes 'outside areas' where children should develop all areas of learning undertaking activities that cannot be done indoors. Outside areas are often shared with Year 1 pupils, particularly during the autumn term to aide with transition to Year 1. There are areas where the children can be active but also quiet and rest. Children can find and access equipment and resources independently. There is a fenced and gated outdoor area accessible via the patio doors and a nearby larger playground, field and adventure trail, which are used for some outdoor activities. The school grounds and the locality of the school provide learning opportunities and are regularly used to develop all areas of learning. Where possible, 'real' objects will be used in the environment. The school's Learning Environment Policy should be adhered to in the EYFS, in addition to this paragraph.

Learning and Development

We recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are all inter-connected.

"Children's' play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development"

The day will be broken up into 'segments' of taught learning for the children, including a focus on developing handwriting, phonics and mathematics. The length of these sessions will increase as the year progresses and be balanced with child initiated learning activities. RE will be taught on a weekly basis, following the Hampshire Syllabus and School Long Term Planning.

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Play

Play is a child's work. Play can be:

- Creative, repetitive or dramatic
- Complex or simple
- A way of developing communication skills
- A way in which social skills can be learnt
- Structured or unstructured
- A way of dealing with emotions
- A means of developing self awareness or self esteem
- A means of extending a child's concentration levels
- An opportunity to communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems
- An opportunity to express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe environments

Active Learning

"Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods"

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership over their learning.

Creativity and Critical Thinking

"When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions."

We encourage children to be creative through all areas of learning. Adults support children's' thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the setting to extend their learning.

Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning:

Prime Areas of Learning:

- Personal, social and emotional development
- Physical Development
- Communication and Language

Specific Areas of Learning:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive arts and design

"The **prime** areas begin to develop quickly in response to relationships and experiences, and run through and support learning in all other areas... The specific areas include essential skills and knowledge. They grow out of the prime areas and provide important contexts for learning." (*Early Years Outcomes, previously Development Matters, in the Early Years Foundation Stage*)

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All of these areas of learning are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals in the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children and their families are valued within our school. We believe that all our children matter and that they should be given every opportunity to achieve their best. 'Every Child Matters' and we provide our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning. The EYFS is also covered by the school's Single Equalities and Special Needs Policies.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with SEN, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from different social and cultural backgrounds, children from different ethnic or minority groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs
- Using a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary (i.e. initiating an IDP/IBP or working with outside agencies)

Able, Gifted and Talented

Children who are identified as Able, Gifted or Talented will be placed on the A, G and T register. Work will be differentiated when appropriate. On some occasions a pupil on the A, G and T register may be invited to attend special events and workshops.

Entry to Reception

All pupils will be offered a full-time place starting in the September after they turn 4. We will encourage all children to start with us on a full-time basis immediately. Part-time schooling (up until the term after a child reaches their 5th birthday) will only be negotiated with a parent, where it is clear that the child is not coping with the demands of full-time education.

Monitoring and Review

The EYFS teacher and staff will follow the principles in the policy.

The named Governor responsible for the EYFS is Pat Taylor. This governor is detailed to discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners regularly and provide feedback to the Governing Body, including the implementation of this policy, raising any issues that require discussion.

The Head teacher and Senior Leadership Team will monitor the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule e.g. through profile moderation, lesson observation etc.

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Revision No.	Date Issued	Prepared By	Approved	Comments
1	March 2015	BR	FGB	new policy to reflect guidance from Headteacher's briefing and 2014 revised guidance
2	March 2016			