



EARLY YEARS TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

WOLSEY HOUSE PRIMARY SCHOOL



HEADTEACHER: MR S POWELL
CHAIR OF GOVERNORS: MR M PEATFIELD

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Statement of intent

Every child deserves the best possible start in life. At Wolsey House Primary School we greatly value the importance of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in providing a secure foundation for future learning and development and understand our responsibilities in ensuring that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe.

This policy has been developed in conjunction with the relevant DfE guidance and legislation and seeks to provide:

- **Quality and consistency**, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
- **A secure foundation** through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each child and are assessed and reviewed regularly.
- **Partnership working** between staff and parents and carers.
- **Equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Childcare Act 2016
- Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- Education Act 2011
- DfE 'Early years foundation stage statutory framework'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Early Years Policy
- Early Years Assessment Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy

2. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board are responsible for:

- Ensuring the school has clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.
- Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the setting and its pupils, and the effective and efficient performance management of staff.
- Ensuring that there are appropriate policies, procedures, and practices in place to deliver the '[Early years foundation stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework](#)' in line with statutory requirements.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Acting in accordance with the '[Headteachers' standards](#)' and the expectations of the school community.
- 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.
- Promoting positive and respectful relationships across the school community and a safe, orderly and inclusive environment.
- Understanding and acting within the statutory assessment frameworks which set out the duties, responsibilities and reporting arrangements to be followed.
- Establishing and sustaining high-quality, expert teaching across all subjects and phases, built on an evidence-informed understanding of effective teaching and how children learn.
- Ensuring teaching is underpinned by high levels of subject expertise and approaches which respect the distinct nature of subject disciplines or specialist domains.

- Ensuring a broad, structured and coherent curriculum entitlement which sets out the knowledge, skills and values that are taught.
- Establishing effective curricular leadership.
- Ensuring valid, reliable and proportionate approaches are used when assessing children's knowledge and understanding of the curriculum and ensure effective use is made of formative assessment.
- Forging constructive relationships beyond the school, working in partnership with parents and carers and the local community.

The early years leader is 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 SLT.
- Supporting the policies, ethos and vision of the school and actively promoting high levels of achievement in the early years stage.
- Leading the early years team in the planning and delivery of a creative and stimulating curriculum based on the educational programmes of the 'Early years foundation stage (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 early years stage.
- 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.
- Developing and maintaining effective relationships with parents and carers, colleagues, the governing board and the local community.
- Ensuring parents and carers 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.
- Providing regular 1:1 meetings with staff to support professional development.

All early years staff are 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.
- Having proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school.
- Demonstrating consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct.
- Having a firm understanding of child development and age-appropriate needs.
- Supporting and promoting children's early education and development in the EYFS.
- Planning and delivering valuable learning experiences, environments and opportunities that are appropriate to the age, stage and needs of individual and groups of children.
- Identifying the needs, interests and stages of development of individual children.
- Using formative and summative assessment to track children's progress to plan next steps and shape learning opportunities.
- Working cooperatively with colleagues and other professionals to meet the needs of all children and enable them to progress.
- Liaising closely with parents and carers to help them promote their child's health, wellbeing, learning and development.
- Identifying any areas of concern relating to children and their learning, development and emotional needs.
- Considering whether a child may have SEND which requires specialist support, and knowing and understanding the policy and procedure to follow to provide this.
- Taking charge of their own personal development, including undergoing additional training, and identifying what support they need to benefit children and the provisions in place to support them.

3. Learning and development

In partnership with parents and carers, we promote the learning and development of children to ensure they learn and develop well, are kept healthy and safe and have the knowledge and skills they need to start school.

Curriculum planning

Provision and practice within the early years is based on the requirements of the DfE's 'Early years foundation stage statutory framework'.

The EYFS framework outlines seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in the early years. These are categorised as 'prime areas' and 'specific areas'.

Prime areas – defined as the areas that are particularly important for building a curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships, and thriving:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social, and emotional development

Specific areas – defined as the areas through which the prime areas are strengthened and applied:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive art and design.

Activities for independent learning in nursery and reception include imaginative and deconstructed role-play, multisensory and fine motor activities such as sensory play and using tools, self-help tasks such as dressing or preparing snacks, and problem-solving challenges e.g. building with open-ended materials. We believe that by encouraging children to take responsibility, make choices, experience trial and error in their play, fosters independence. We plan activities that give the children the opportunity to develop their fine and gross motor skills. These are examples of activities and experiences that we provide for our children:

Play-based activities

- Role-play
- Sensory and creative activities
- Building and construction
- Digital play

Skills-based activities

- Self-help tasks: We encourage children to dress themselves, pour their own drinks and help with simple food preparation, such as the healthy snack.
- Fine motor and pre-writing skills: We provide activities such as threading cards, cutting with child-safety scissors, using various tools for mark-making.
- Tidying and responsibility: Tidying up is part of our daily routine. We give children responsibility for putting resources away. This helps them learn where the resources are stored.

Encouraging a supportive environment

- Allow children to make choices: There are opportunities for the children to make their own decisions about what to learn or play with to build motivation.
- Opportunities for trial and error: Children are given the time and space to experiment, make mistakes, and try again without immediate intervention.
- Establishment of clear routines: Structured routines ensure that our children feel safe, secure and understand what is expected of them.
- Encourage questioning and reflection: We use open-ended questions and provide opportunities for the children to talk about their ideas and what they have learned.

When planning the early years curriculum, we:

- Consider the individual needs, interests, and development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all areas of learning and development.
- Stimulate children's interests, responding to each child's emerging needs and guiding their development through warm, positive interactions coupled with secure routines for play and learning.
- Reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and adjust their practice appropriately.

If a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, we discuss this with the child's parents and carers and agree how to support the child. Staff will also consider whether a child may have a special educational need or disability which requires specialist support.

For children whose home language is not English, we:

- Take reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning, supporting their language development at home.
- Ensure that children have sufficient opportunities to learn and reach a good standard in English language during the EYFS, ensuring children are ready to benefit from the opportunities available to them when they begin Year One.

We have ensured that a broad range of activities and experiences have been planned. We have also ensured that our plans are based on the following three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically

4. Assessment

Assessment plays an important part in helping us to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, plan activities, and assess the need for support. We regularly assess where the children are, through accurate and detailed observations. These provide us with information for immediate and future planning, not only for our individual classes but also for individual children's next steps in their learning. Observations enable us to ensure learning is embedded and consistent and that all children continue to make progress. Our ongoing assessments ensure our planning, adult interaction and learning environment; including continuous provision, support children to reach their next steps. We plan interventions for groups or individuals if and when necessary.

Tapestry is used to build online learning journeys to celebrate the children's learning and progress over time with parents and carers. Evidence of learning is also recorded with Nursery and Reception "Big Books" which document the children's learning experiences over the academic year.

In line with statutory requirements, we undertake a summative assessment of each child's development at certain stages.

These are:

- Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) – a short assessment of early mathematics and early literacy, communication and language which is taken within the first six weeks of a child starting Reception, regardless of what time of the year this occurs.
- The EYFS Profile – a comprehensive assessment completed at the end of the EYFS to provide a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, attainment against the ELGs, and their readiness for Year 1.

Ongoing formative assessments are used to assess the day-to-day learning and development of children in the EYFS. We interact and observe children, so that they gain an understanding of their achievements, interests and learning needs, this information feeds into the future learning experiences that are planned for the children.

Parents and carers are kept up-to-date with their child's progress and development, and the early years leader and teachers will address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents and carers.

When undertaking assessment activities, all staff members have due regard to the school's Assessment Policy, any assessment and reporting arrangements for that year, Government and Local Authority guidance and advice.

5. The learning environment

We understand that the physical and emotional environment play an important role in supporting, enabling and extending pupils' learning and development.

We provide a safe and stimulating environment that values active learning, exploration and play, where children feel free to create, make links and develop critical thinking skills.

We ensure that the learning environments are well-organised and suitable for group, individual and whole-class learning, with interactive displays and easily accessible resources utilised to encourage independence.

At all times, children will have access to indoor and outdoor learning environments. Staff will plan provision to ensure that there are a range of learning opportunities available, and that the learning opportunities available in the outdoor environment build on and develop those inside.

Independent learning is encouraged through planned continuous provision where children can make their own selection from a variety of resourced areas, including:

Staff will support children to navigate and access the learning environment, intervening and interacting where necessary to ensure that all learning opportunities and teaching moments are captured and capitalised upon.

Appropriate and stimulating educational visits and visitors, from both within and outside of the local community, will be arranged to further expand children's learning experiences.

We value the importance of positive relationships. To support this, staff ensure that they:

- Know and understand the families, e.g. their cultures.
- Interact and empathise with children.
- Support children's emotions.
- Ensure that children feel valued and confident to try new things.

6. Parental and Carer involvement

We firmly believe that the EYFS cannot function without the enduring support of parents and carers and that children benefit from a strong partnership between staff and parents and carers.

To capitalise on children's school and home experiences, we are committed to working closely with parents and carers and creating an ongoing dialogue. We ask parents and carers and carers to support us by:

- Ensuring that their child regularly attends school, giving reasons for any absences.
- Informing us of any concerns or problems which may affect their child.
- Actively engaging in the school community.
- Meeting with the teachers where possible
- Enabling their child to be as appropriately dressed as possible with regard to the School Uniform Policy – parents and carers should talk to their child's class teacher if this is a problem so that we can support this.
- Enabling their child's knowledge and understanding through sharing the ideas sent from school.
- Encouraging their child's development and progress.

We support parents and carers by making the following information available:

- The school's privacy notice for parents and carers and children
- How we deliver the EYFS Curriculum and how parents and carers can access more information

- The daily routine and the activities offered in the school's EYFS Curriculum and how parents and carers can assist their child's learning at home
- How we support children with SEND in the EYFS
- Details of the food and drink provided to the children, including Healthy Snacks
- Details of the policies and procedures in place.
- The procedure to be followed in the event of a parent failing to collect a child at the appointed time, or in the event of a child going missing at, or away from, the setting.
- Staffing details
- Telephone number for parents and carers to contact the school in an emergency.

We provide support, advice and workshops for parents and carers, with the aim of developing a two-way understanding so that we can use children's home cultures and backgrounds to enrich and underpin teaching. We also provide parents and carers with the opportunity to join pupils in sessions called "Families Days" on a regular basis. Tasks are set to be completed at home under parental supervision.

Parents and carers are kept up-to-date through the use of conversations, the school website, texts and emails through Weduc.

Parents and carers and Carers are invited to termly parents and carers' consultation evenings; however, we operate an open-door policy and parents and carers are welcome to talk to teachers at the start and end of the school day. We understand and value the importance of talking with parents and carers, and ask parents and carers to contact us to make appointments if they want to speak for more than a few minutes to a teacher.

We have a Complaints Policy in place which is shared with parents and carers – written records are kept of all complaints we receive.

7. Inclusion

All children are valued as individuals, irrespective of any protected characteristics, in line with the Equality Act 2010. The Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy will ensure that the needs of all children are met, regardless of their protected characteristics.

The EYFS curriculum will be planned in order to meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace.

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy will ensure all children receive the support they need and are given the best learning experience possible. SEND in the EYFS setting will be monitored and managed by the school SENCO.

8. Transition

We understand the importance of the transition process and, therefore, will adapt its practices to support children settling into their new environment. The school's transition action plan is reviewed collaboratively by staff members on an annual basis.

The Early Years Transition Policy outlines the procedures, actions and timeframes that we follow at the following transition points:

- Transition to Nursery
- Transition to Reception
- Transition to Y1

9. Monitoring and review

The quality of teaching and learning is continuously monitored.

This policy is reviewed by the early years leader, headteacher and governing board on an annual basis. The next scheduled review date of this policy is November 2026.

Any changes to this policy will be communicated to parents, carers and members of staff. Parents and carers can request a copy of the policy from the school office. The office email address is office@wolseyhouse.leicester.sch.uk

Headteacher:	MR S POWELL	Date:	NOVEMBER 2025
Chair of Governing Body:	MR M PEATFIELD	Date:	NOVEMBER 2025