



Water Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy



Member of staff responsible: Emma Smith

Policy reviewed: September 2023

Date to be reviewed: September 2024

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Background

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) or Reception comprises all children in the academic year in which they are aged 4 to 5 Years. At Water Primary School, the Reception children are in a mixed class comprising of 21 reception children and 5 year 1 children.

At Water, we believe that children are active learners who learn through their senses, through investigation, experimentation, listening, watching, social interaction, questioning and exploring. During their time in Reception all children are given the opportunity to gain independence and a positive self-image. They develop skills and understanding of the world around them through a range of planned activities both in and out of the classroom, broadening what they know and deepening their knowledge.

In Reception we are required to use the EYFS Framework and we assess each child's progress against the Early Learning Goals in June each year.

Visions and Values

Our unique and inspiring EYFS Curriculum is designed to reflect the interests and needs of our children and to immerse them in a language rich environment. We prioritise high quality interactions through continuous provision, invitations to learn and adult focussed activities. Our children guide and drive their own learning through carefully resourced continuous provision with enhancements to aid the development of skills and knowledge.

Each topic planned is tailored to our cohort, with the aim of ensuring that all children leaving Reception are ready to start the KS1 curriculum.

All topics are carefully resourced and are introduced with high quality, diverse story books or age appropriate non – fiction texts.

Our Early Years curriculum aims to teach all children the skills and knowledge in order that they reach the seventeen Early Learning Goals described in the Early Years Foundation Stage framework.

We start the school year with high quality baselining interactions. We know our children well and quickly recognise those who will need early intervention due to entering our setting with low starting points. We monitor who is and is not on track regularly, put in timely interventions and tailor future planning to provide more opportunities for skill development and progress.

Much of our curriculum is play-based, however there is also a need for some direct teacher-led, focus activities to ensure all children gain essential knowledge and skills. When appropriate, activities are expertly modelled, and priority is given to providing sufficient sustained periods of play with support and resources to allow children to repeat and practise their taught skill development.

Every Child Matters - Our principles and aims are:

- To provide a solid foundation in the seven areas of learning through well planned activities.
- To provide a balanced range of experiences and activities to enable each child to develop emotionally, socially, physically, creatively, intellectually, spiritually and morally.
- To enable children to make an effective and happy transition from home, playgroup or nursery to school through effective liaison.
- To value children's own experiences, their imagination, their curiosity and the range of skills that they bring into school and to use that as starting points in their learning.
- To provide a caring, stimulating, challenging and well-structured environment in which children are motivated towards independent learning.
- To ensure equal access and opportunity.

- To value parents as partners in the education of their child. To keep parents well informed about the curriculum and their child's progress.
- To value early childhood itself.
- To ensure that children with special needs are identified as early as possible and receive appropriate support wherever possible.
- To promote an atmosphere that encourages confidence and independence.
- To plan and structure activities with clear intentions and objectives.

Induction

At Water Primary School, we aim to make the transition into school as smooth and as comfortable for children as possible. Every year school offers an informal open/parents' day where parents and children can look around the whole school. In addition school also offers two 'move up' mornings. These are mornings where the child can become accustomed to the school environment, potential classmates and teachers. Every parent will be provided with an up to date 'starting school booklet.'

Positive Relationships

Key Person

In Reception each child is required to have a **key person**, a professional who is ultimately responsible for the overall assessment of an individual child. At Water, as there is an intake of 20 children each year, the key workers are the class teachers and designated teaching assistants. Each child will be aware that they can share any news that they have and have a time to talk with their key person if/when necessary. The class teachers are supported by 2 teaching assistants and volunteers and depending on the individual needs of children each year, possibly SEN support. Every member of the Early Years team is made aware of the need for privacy and confidentiality of information.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value being Partners with them in their child's education through:

- Talking to parents about their child when they first visit school and sending a transition document.
- Offering parents and children time in school before they start through an open morning and two 'move up' mornings.
- Speaking to parents informally at the beginning and end of each day, when children are dropped off and picked up.
- Operating an open-door policy for parents with any queries.
- Sharing learning regularly with parents.
- Sharing success regularly through a celebration assembly where parents are invited to join us to celebrate their child's achievements.
- Encouraging parents to share 'wow' moments from home for their child's learning journey.
- Offering two parents consultation evening appointments per year.
- Sending a report on child's attainment and progress at the end of the school year.

Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

The EYFS profile sums up and describes each child's development and learning achievements at the end of their Reception Year. It is based on ongoing informal assessment in the seven areas of learning and development. The class teachers are responsible for completing the EYFS profile but will be assisted in carrying out regular assessments by the teaching assistants.

As a child progresses through the Foundation Stage, the Early Years staff will make judgements based on their observations of the child in all seven areas of learning. At Water Primary School 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 often inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for developing enthusiasm for learning and for building capacity to learn and form relationships:

Prime Areas:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

Staff will also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

Specific Areas:

- Literacy
- Maths
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Principles into Practice – Our Teaching Approach

The class teachers will:

- Plan stimulating activities using the Early Learning Goals to ensure progression from the Foundation Stage to Key Stage One.
- Provide a curriculum that has a balance of approach between child initiated and teacher directed activities.
- Make use of the extended classroom (outdoor provision) throughout to provide challenges across the seven areas of learning.
- Use observations and assessments to inform staff of the differing needs of children.
- Use information provided from an initial assessment and information provided by nurseries.
- Plan for differentiation, including necessary support for children with SEN and ensuring that more able children are given tasks that will challenge and stimulate their thinking.
- Ensure through planning that all children have equal access and opportunities.
- Record every term each individual child's progress against the EYFS assessment scales. The teachers will also add this progression to the Lancashire on-line tracker.
- Create a curriculum plan for each half term, with enhancements for each area in the classroom to be changed every two weeks.

Enabling Environments

The classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, quiet, creative etc. The classroom has defined learning areas, where children can locate equipment and resources independently. There is an enclosed outdoor area. Activities are planned both indoors and outdoors, enabling children to develop in all areas of learning.

Classroom displays are aimed to both support and celebrate learning. These are meaningful, up-to-date, exciting and engaging. Care is taken in preparing them each half term to ensure that they have a positive impact on learning.

Learning through Play

We value the importance of play in our Reception environment. There is an overwhelming body of research that identifies purposeful structured play both indoors and outdoors as the most appropriate learning style for young children. Well planned play is the key in which young children learn with enjoyment and challenge. In play they behave in different ways. Through different forms of well organised play, different challenges are presented to increase the children's learning about themselves, other people and the world in which they live in. Sometimes their play may be energetic, sometimes they will describe and discuss what they are doing and sometimes they will be quiet and reflective.

Through play, in a secure environment with effective adult support, children can;

- Explore, develop and represent learning experiences that help them make sense of the world.
- Practise and build up ideas, concepts and skills.
- Learn to control impulses and understand the need for rules.
- Be alone, alongside others or co-operate as they rehearse their feelings.
- Take risks and make mistakes.
- Communicate with others as they investigate or solve problems.
- Express fears or relive anxious experiences in controlled, safe environments.
- Establish warm, caring relationships, raise self-esteem and confidence.

At Water the learning environment in the Early Years is well planned and well organised providing a structure for teaching within which children explore, experiment, plan and make decisions for themselves, thus enabling them to learn, develop and make good progress. The Early Years Foundation Stage prepares children for the transition into Key Stage One.

Outdoor Provision

In the Reception class, children have daily, supervised access to the outdoor area. We aim to provide learning opportunities outside that link with our topic. There is scope for independent learning, alongside child-initiated tasks. Pupils use the outdoor area during playtimes, lunchtimes and lesson times. This learning environment is set up to support and extend children's learning in all areas of the curriculum.

At Water we understand that learning outside the classroom:

- Supports the development of healthy and active lifestyles by offering children opportunities for physical activity, freedom and movement, and promoting a sense of well-being.
- Gives children contact with the natural world and offers them experiences that are unique to outdoors, such as direct contact with the weather and the seasons.
- Helps children to understand and respect nature, the environment and the interdependence of humans, animals, plants, and lifecycles.
- Supports children's problem-solving skills and nurtures their creativity, as well as providing rich opportunities for their developing imagination, inventiveness and resourcefulness.

We understand that the outdoor environment:

- Can provide them with space, both upwards and outwards, and places to explore, experiment, discover, be active and healthy, and to develop their physical capabilities.
- Offers space and therefore is particularly important to those children who learn best through active movement. Very young children learn predominately through their sensory and physical experiences which supports brain development.
- May be the only opportunity children have to play safely and freely while they learn to assess risk and develop the skills to manage new situations.

Planning

Well-planned focus tasks and enhancements are the key to making children's learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive. Effective learning builds on and extends what children know and can do. Our planning is always informed by observations we have made of the children, and takes into account the individual needs of the children.

At Water we understand that planning in the early years is about meeting young children's needs so that they can play and learn happily in ways which will help them develop skills and knowledge across the Prime and Specific areas of learning in the EYFS.

Long term planning

Topics are planned for each of the six half terms. Early Learning Goals and areas of focus are distributed over the terms to provide a broad and balanced curriculum.

Medium term planning

Medium-term plans are made to ensure that over a half term certain areas of learning are addressed – for example, focusing on particular stories to help children to think about 'friendship'. These plans need to be in place so that all the necessary resources such as books and props can be gathered. However, all of our planning is flexible and used as a guide rather than to be followed religiously. We address particular aspects of the curriculum in more detail each term. We include links between areas of development and opportunities for computing. Learning objectives, assessment opportunities and activities and experiences for each area of learning and development are identified. The class teachers also provide a curriculum map, every two to three weeks, stating the enhancements that will be in place.

Short term planning

The most important planning that is done is the short-term daily/weekly planning that arises from discussions with the children and their parents and is based around their current interests.

The teacher will identify specific learning objectives, activities, differentiation, SEN needs, deployment of adults and resources in weekly planning. Planning may be changed on a daily basis in response to individual need, specific events, weather conditions and discussions which is informed by our on-going observational assessment.

Assessment, Recording and Monitoring

At Water Primary School, we undertake assessment for learning. We analyse and review what we know about each child's development and learning, and then make informed decisions about a child's progress. This enables us to plan the next steps to meet their development and learning needs.

All practitioners who interact with the children contribute to the assessment process, which is regular and ongoing. Each child has an Early Learning Journey, which consists of work carried out independently or with an adult, as well as the observations carried out in class.

At the end of the Reception year, a child's progress is recorded against the Early Learning Goals. At Water Primary School, we use the Lancashire EYFS Tracker to track pupil progress. Data is added to this on a termly basis.

The class teachers meet with the Headteacher termly for formal monitoring of progress. Parents receive a written report at the end of the year which provides details about their child's progress in each area of learning.

Formative assessment

This type of assessment informs everyday planning and is based on on-going observational assessment of each child's achievement, interests and learning styles. Formative assessment may take the form of anecdotal observations, focused observations, baseline assessment, annotated pieces of work, photographs, video and information from parents. This information is entered into each child's Early Learning Journey and then entered onto the Lancashire EYFS Tracker for analysis each term.

Summative assessment

Summative assessment is carried out on a termly basis at Water by the class teachers. It summarises children's progress towards the early learning goals. Outcomes of this assessment are recorded and practitioners use the information gained to identify a child's strengths and their learning needs. The final summative assessment takes place towards the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage when children are in the final term of the reception class. This 'sums up' all the different information from on-going assessments that have been made about the child. This information is used to judge whether a child is 'Emerging', 'Expected' or 'Exceeding' in each of the different areas.

Equal Opportunities

At Water we aim to provide all pupils, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, gender or ability, equal access to all aspects of school life. Every child will be valued as an individual at Water.

Inclusion

Children with special educational needs will be given support to enable them to benefit from the curriculum. This includes children that are more able, and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities. Additional support may be given to a child depending on need, thus increasing the adult/pupil ratio. Each child identified as having specific learning needs will receive an Individual Education Plan (IEP), which will be shared with their parents, as soon as possible to ensure that their needs are being met.

Welfare and Safety

It is important to us that all children in the school are safe. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. 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 to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children (see Child protection Policy).

At Water Primary School, we understand that we are required 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 who look after the children are suitable to do so.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required (e.g. Intimate Care, Welfare records).

Conclusion

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Marking policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- ICT Policy
- Equality Policy
- Health and Safety Policy