

North Wootton Academy

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

BRIEF OVERVIEW

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception Year. At North Wootton Academy, our EYFS accommodates children from the age of 4 to 5 years. In our school, we have two Reception classes which has capacity to educate 45 children. Both classes are parallel Reception classes with 22 or 23 children. Conkers class has a full time qualified teacher, two part time teaching assistants and one full-time child specific teaching assistant. Acorns also has a full time qualified teacher, one full time teaching assistant and two full time child specific teaching assistants. To ensure we offer best Early Years practice and consistency, both Reception classes work very closely together sharing planning, activities and an outdoor learning environment.

AIMS

At North Wootton Academy, we endeavour to give each child a positive and meaningful start to their school life in which they can establish solid foundations on which to develop into independent and resilient lifelong learners.

We aim to create an environment where children can get on with the joy of being a child and where they do not see a distinction between work and play. Children in Early Years are at a stage in their development where the best way for them to learn is through active, self-initiated activity. We achieve high levels of engagement and progress by enabling children to pursue their own interests.

We encourage children to develop independence within a secure and friendly atmosphere. We support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as co-operation and sharing and we help each child recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and by developing the confidence to work towards personal goals.

Here at North Wootton, our high expectations enable each child to develop socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally and to achieve their full potential. We offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited availability for development through a wide range of new and exciting first hand experiences that will give children the opportunity to consolidate, explore and test their skills, knowledge and understanding alongside existing experiences. We ensure that children are kept healthy and safe and that they achieve the knowledge and skills they need to continue their school career.

STAFFING AND ORGANISATION

At North Wootton Academy, we have an intake of 45 pupils, with two Reception classes. They share the use of two classrooms, an undercover canopy area and a dedicated outdoor area. Continuous provision is provided over two rooms. The classrooms have carpet areas, and the rest of the space is organised into learning zones for the children to access. There is also a quiet room for small group interventions.

Staff are organised to support the children in a balance of adult led and child initiated experiences throughout the day. All sessions include free flow access to the outdoor area. Practitioners are aware of the need to be flexible in order to respond to unplanned events that the children are interested in.

THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE CURRICULUM

Previously, the Reception classes followed the curriculum as outlined in the 2014 Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) document, which is available to download at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>.

However, this year (2020-2021), North Wootton Academy are participating in the EYFS reforms early adopter year from September 2020 to August 2021. This guidance can be found here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/896810/EYFS_Early_Adopter_Framework.pdf

The framework:

- Sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well.
- Ensures children are kept healthy and safe.
- Ensures that children have the knowledge and skills they need to start school.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

1. A Unique Child
2. Positive Relationships
3. Enabling Environments
4. 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, as well as celebration/sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships and aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families.

ENABLING ENVIRONMENTS

We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Through observations, we assess the children's interests and stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging and achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Our foundation stage has two reception classrooms and a large outdoor area, which is shared. All our learning environments are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The seven areas of learning are defined so that children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

AREAS OF LEARNING

The EYFS is made up of three prime areas of learning:

1. Personal, Social and Emotional Development
2. Communication and Language
3. Physical Development

There are four specific areas of learning:

1. Literacy
2. Mathematics
3. Understanding the World
4. Expressive Arts and Design

At North Wootton, all areas of learning are delivered through a well-planned play based approach, with a balance of adult led, adult directed and child initiated activities. Throughout the foundation stage, our long, medium and short-term plans ensure that each child has the opportunity to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in every area at the appropriate developmental level. Our long term planning ensures coverage so that all children have opportunities to work towards and achieve the Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS. We plan for daily teaching sessions on Phonics, Maths and English which is differentiated depending on the children's development. Shared writing is planned for on a daily basis and all pupils will take part in a guided or shared reading session at least once a week from the Summer term. Additionally, story scribing is always accessible for all children.

EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

We aim to provide an attractive, challenging learning environment that offers high quality opportunities for the children to learn through play, both indoors and outdoors. There is a range of “continuous provision” available in the classroom, that is designed to offer open-ended, practical learning opportunities. Children are supported to think creatively and imaginatively and explore how resources can be adapted. Each week, the provision is enhanced with additional resources, based on the previous week’s observations and the current topic. Adults support children in progressing by: answering questions; modelling skills; providing vocabulary; and giving suggestions.

Adult led activities are practical in nature and based on first hand experiences wherever possible. The children are supported to develop problem-solving skills through open-ended tasks and opportunities to share their thinking with others. The number of adult led ‘Challenge’ activities that the children take part in increases throughout the year, as their concentration develops. Pupils are able to choose which challenges they access, although this is monitored and adults will intervene where necessary to encourage access. It is not important for every child to do every activity. The children participate in activities that are important and meaningful to them.

PLAY

Learning through play underpins our approach to teaching and learning in the foundation stage. We embrace the fact that young children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them to learn. In doing so, we can provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning and to help them make sense of the world. Children have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own. They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experiences at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests, inspire those around them and consolidate their understanding and skills. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. Our adults take an active role in child initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating, teaching and extending play, skills and language.

CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE LEARNING

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective learning and the reception teachers plan activities with these in mind. The characteristics highlight the importance of a child’s attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them.

The three characteristics are;

1. **PLAYING AND EXPLORING** – children investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’.
2. **ACTIVE LEARNING** – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements.
3. **CREATING AND THINKING CRITICALLY** – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

OBSERVATION AND ASSESSMENT

At North Wootton Academy, we use a range of strategies to gather information about the children's learning and development and use this information to ensure that our planning meets the needs of all learners. Children are closely observed and observations are used to support their next steps. During child initiated activities, all members of Reception staff gather observations using Tapestry. Each child has an online Tapestry 'Learning Journey' which stores all observations, along with parental contributions. New observations are shared with parents throughout the day once they have been approved.

Within the Autumn term, practitioners use the Reception Baseline Assessment to assess pupil's starting points. Once the pupils are judged to have good levels of well-being and involvement, practitioners begin to assess pupils in the prime areas. These judgements are based on ongoing observations not tests. This information is closely monitored to ensure that all children are making good progress. The assessments made on Tapestry are used to track pupil progress throughout the year. Pupil progress meetings are held termly.

In the Summer term, practitioners consider the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELGs) in the EYFS Profile to decide whether each child is working at the expected level, exceeding the level or have not yet met the level. Judgements against the ELGs are based on observations; all relevant records; discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

The results of the Profile are shared with parents and/or carers with opportunities for them to meet their child's class teacher to discuss the information.

At the end of the year, Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This helps to create a smooth transition and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1.

The EYFS profile results are reported to the local authority, who monitor and moderate the judgements made.

OUTDOOR LEARNING

At North Wootton Academy, we strongly believe in the importance of children accessing the outdoors freely, independently and frequently. We value the learning that takes place in the outdoor environment and the opportunities it gives for the Characteristics of Effective Learning. We use the areas for child initiated play, enhanced provision and adult led challenges. We make use of a variety of different areas of the school grounds including: a canopy area; a playground, trim trail and climbing apparatus for physical play; a nature and gardening area; and a large Forest Area.

Clear routines and boundaries, combined with supportive staff and an enabling environment, allow children to take risks and exceed expectations.

The Early Years Leader is currently completing a Level 3 Forest School qualification that will enable Forest School to take place at North Wootton Academy. Initially, this will begin with Reception children before opening it up to additional groups of children within the school.

PARENT PARTNERSHIPS

We value the contribution that our parents and carers make to their child's learning and take every opportunity to work in collaboration with them. Each half term, we publish a curriculum newsletter on the school website to inform parents of what their child will be learning and how they can support them at home.

Within each term, we hold parent and teacher consultations. Detailed reports are shared in the summer term.

The children take banded reading books and library books home to share. We encourage parents to record their home reading in the Reading Records. Throughout the year, we hold curriculum awareness sessions for parents to find out how their child learns in school.

COMMUNITY LINKS AND THE WIDER WORLD

Over the year, we arrange visits from members of the local community to support our topic work. We also arrange trips for children in the EYFS within the local community, for example visiting the library or the local park. The children take part in educational visits linked to their topic work. Film clips, non-fiction texts and artefacts are also used to introduce new concepts in real-life contexts. We aim to develop the children's awareness of other cultures by exploring different countries and celebrations.

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

Children must learn to communicate, negotiate and manage their own behaviour within agreed rules and boundaries.

Please refer to the school's 'Behaviour Management' policy for more information.

HEALTH AND SAFETY AND SAFEGUARDING

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. Please refer to the school's 'Safeguarding Children' policy for more information.

We are a healthy school and our children in EYFS receive free fruit from the Government scheme. The children are encouraged to have a piece of fruit during free-flow snack time. This encourages children to become independent and make their own decisions. They have access to their water bottles at any point during the school day. Reception children are eligible for free school meals or can choose to bring in a healthy packed lunch from home.

Information about the children's dietary needs is sought when they enter the setting. A list of the children's dietary needs is available in the classroom and all practitioners have regard to this when putting out food and drink in the snack area or when leading a cooking or food tasting activity.

The school lunch menus are available on the school website so that parents and carers can support their children to choose their food.

The Reception classes have access to their own toileting facilities and we teach the children the importance of hygiene, hand washing techniques and throughout the year we plan cooking activities to give children experiences of a range of healthy food.

INCLUSION

Our whole school ethos, as well as that of the foundation stage, embraces inclusion. We recognise and respect the abilities and strengths of our children at all levels of development and the wealth of knowledge and experience that they bring from their differing backgrounds and cultures.

We give 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 and we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of individual children, so that children are able to reach their full potential. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds. We aim to 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

We will provide: a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively; a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued; resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping; challenging activities for all children and for those whose ability and understanding are advanced. We will monitor children's progress and take action to provide support as necessary. Where a specific need is suspected we will liaise with the Special Educational Needs co-ordinator and seek advice from outside agencies. We adhere to the Equal Opportunity and Inclusion policies of the school.

PREMISES AND SECURITY

All access to the school is either through the main school door or playground gate, which are both kept locked during the school day. Staff use a code to gain access to the building and sign in and out. The office staff are responsible for verifying the identity of any visitors before they enter school. Visitors are asked to sign in to the school visitor's log and are given a lanyard to wear. Staff are aware of their role in challenging anyone who is not recognised and asking for identification from anyone claiming to be from an outside agency.

The gate to the staff car park is kept locked. To gain access into the school, visitors alert office staff by ringing the bell. School members of staff gain access through a code.

The external doors are closely monitored by staff when children are entering or leaving the setting, to ensure that they cannot leave unaccompanied. The online register is used to check how many children are present. When moving from one area school to another, head counts are used to check that all children are present before leaving.

ARRIVAL AND COLLECTION OF CHILDREN

Children can enter school between 9:00-9:20am. Parents must accompany the children onto the Reception playground. Each child is marked present using the online register by the class teacher.

When collecting the children at the end of the school day, parents and carers use the Reception outdoor area. If a child needs to be collected during the school day, parents report to the school office.

Under no circumstances is a child allowed to leave with anyone other than those named on the child's collection arrangement form, unless the parent has given written permission. Parents are given a collection form when enrolling their child in school to verify who is allowed to collect their child. In exceptional circumstances, a parent may give verbal permission, but a description will be required. If there are any queries regarding a child's collection, the office staff will contact the child's parent/carer to discuss the situation with them.

If a child is not collected and the parent/carer is uncontactable, the other names on the child's registration form will be called to collect the child. If no-one on the child's registration form is contactable, the head teacher should telephone the Social Services Duty Officer or Out of Hours Duty Point. Arrangements should then be made for the child to be removed to an appropriate place of protection agreed by the Social Services Department. It remains the responsibility of the Social Services Department in conjunction with the Police to contact the parents and if appropriate, to inform them of their child's whereabouts.

MISSING CHILD

If a child disappears during the school day, practitioners will; check with all members of staff when the child was last seen and that they have not been collected by a parent/carer, organise a thorough and systematic search of the building and surrounding playground etc, inform the head teacher of the situation and telephone the child's parents or other emergency contact to explain the situation and double check that the child is not there or their whereabouts known. If the child is still unable to be located, the school will notify the police of a missing person.

OUTINGS

Written parental permission to take the children into the local environment is sought upon admission to the school. Further permission is obtained for any other outings. Risk assessments are completed for each type of outing.

PROMOTING AWARENESS OF DANGERS AND HOW TO STAY SAFE

We encourage the children to take an active role in ensuring their own safety and involve them in discussions about health and safety issues. For example, the risk assessment for using the Forest Area is shared with children, who are expected to follow the rules independently. The school follows the a thorough PSHE programme, which encourages children to think about who can help them in different situations. We are supported by the council's 'Road Safety Training' team to teach the children about road safety.

RISK ASSESSMENTS

In addition to the school's risk assessment, daily risk assessments are completed in Reception to ensure that any hazards are identified and managed before the children enter the classroom.

COMPLAINTS

Please refer to the school's 'Complaints' policy.

TRANSITIONS

At North Wootton, we recognise that starting school has the potential to be a stressful time for both children and parents. To this end, we have established a strong procedure for transitions to ensure that our children and parents are as confident and secure as they can be when facing the challenges of entering Reception.

Due to Covid-19, the transition into school looked different to previous years. Below I have included a table of transitions.

Timeframe	Description of Transition
April 2020	Welcome Pack — Letter from school
May 2020	New Parents Evening: Presentation**
June 2020	Video/Phone Call to all Parents and Children
	End of June EB to contact all Nursery/Pre-School Settings to arrange a telephone conversation to discuss children.
July 2020 Break up Friday 17th July	Stay and Play Session 1 — Wednesday 22 nd , Thursday 23 rd & Friday 24 th July — 1 hour, 10:00am – 11:00am — EB to lead sessions (ask Sam)**. — JG to be present. — Book bags given out with 'My Little Book to Big School'.
August 2020	Tapestry Video Message - Keeping in touch (Can you catch?)

	<p>Stay and Play Session 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Wednesday 26th, Thursday 27th & Friday 28th August — 1 hour, 1:00pm – 2:00pm — EB to lead sessions (ask Sam)**. — JG to be present.
<p>September 2020</p> <p>Return to work Wednesday 2nd September for 3 INSET days.</p>	<p>Home Visits (see table below)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Monday 7th & Tuesday 8th September carried out by Emma or Sam and a TA each. — 20 home visits each day (10 per teacher) — 30 minute visits, 10 minutes travelling time
	<p>Stay and Play Session 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Wednesday 9th, Thursday 10th & Friday 11th September — 2 hours, 9:00am – 11:-00am
	<p>Class Allocations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Sent out 3pm Friday 11th September 2020 by ParentMail.
	<p>Staggered Intake</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Week commencing Monday 14th September — 4/5 children added each day. — All children in by Friday 18th September.

In Reception, all parents are offered a home visit prior to their child starting school and in Reception the majority of children are also visited in their Nurseries/Pre-schools. This year, phone conversations to Nurseries/Pre-schools will take place instead. This gives children the security of meeting with their teachers in a safe, familiar environment and gives parents time to ask questions and share knowledge or any concerns they have about their child. In the Summer Term, reception children have the opportunity to meet with their teachers once a week for 3 weeks.

At the beginning of the school year, Reception children are given staggered entry times to ensure that they have the time to feel welcomed and to support them in exploring their new environment.

At the end of Reception, children have the opportunity to meet with their new teachers in their classrooms for one whole day prior to starting Year one. At the end of each school year, teachers have the opportunity to share their knowledge of each child's knowledge, understanding and achievements, including end of year assessment data, with their next class teacher to ensure that all teachers have a well-rounded picture of the children prior to the new school year.

ILLNESSES AND INJURIES

Parents and carers are asked not to send their child to school if they are unwell and to inform the school office of their absence. Parents/carers are asked to inform staff if their child is suffering from a minor ailment so that appropriate care can be given. Children must not return to school within 48 hours of a bout of sickness or diarrhoea.

If a child becomes unwell whilst at school, a member of staff will:

- phone the parents/carers, explain that their child is unwell, explain the symptoms noted and ask them to collect their child.
- sit with the child in a quiet place away from other children, if possible, until the parents arrive.
- if the child has had sickness or diarrhoea, explain the policy of at least a 48 hour clearance of either symptom before the child may return.

Advice relating to notifiable diseases is displayed in the school office.

In the case of an injury, appropriate first aid will be administered by a qualified first aider. A first aid kit is kept in the Reception area and its contents are in accordance with advice from the Health and Safety Executive and the Community Health Physician. First aid cover is provided at lunchtimes. All accidents are recorded in one of the school's accident books and signed by the member of staff who dealt with the incident. The staff member dealing with the incident is responsible for completing an accident slip and this is sent home with the child at the end of the day. Parents/carers may be contacted by telephone to inform them of an injury if deemed necessary.

We ask for written parental consent to seek any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment in the future when the children are admitted to school. In the case of a more serious accident to a child, the practitioner/school will contact the parent/guardian to agree a course of action if time permits. If the parent/guardian cannot be contacted the practitioner/school will seek appropriate medical attention or treatment for the child. The child should not be given anything to eat or drink. If a child or adult needs to be transported to hospital, every effort should be made to use a car with fully comprehensive insurance including business use. Two adults must accompany the child, and one adult must accompany a member of staff. Should an ambulance be required, one adult must accompany the child or adult. The child's registration form must be taken to the hospital with the child.

MEDICINES

Only drugs/medicines prescribed by a registered Medical Practitioner will be administered to children. Parents should complete and hand in a Medication Consent Form, along with medicine, to a member of staff. Drugs/medicines must only be administered to the child for whom they are prescribed and all drugs/medicines must be kept in the original container stating whom they are prescribed for and dosage information. Unwanted or unused medicines must be returned to the parent for disposal. A record of the drugs given should be made indicating the time, dosage and signed by the person administering the dose. The child's parent should sign this each day that medicine is given.

Training for prescribed medication that is invasive i.e. EPIPENS etc is available via the school nurse. If an individual child requires a care plan, this will be drawn up in partnership with parents and the school nurse.

UPDATED: 14TH SEPTEMBER 2020

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BY: Emma Bond (EYFS Leader)