

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy

Water Orton Primary School



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1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the 2025 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

3. Structure of the EYFS

At Water Orton Primary School, we cover the Reception year of the EYFS. The school does not have a nursery class but has forged very close links with the onsite nursery provider 'The Treehouse' where most pupils in our Reception classes attend for nursery provision. The Reception year group are taught in a mixed aged class combined with Year 1 pupils.

4. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2025 EYFS statutory framework and supported by both the Development Matters Framework and Birth to Five Matters: Non-Statutory Guidance Framework.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and interconnected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

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

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

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

Our early years setting provides excellent opportunities for our children to become independent learners and to generate a love of learning through a well-planned EYFS provision. This includes:

- A rich and varied **enquiry led curriculum** which is planned to allow for children's interests and promote curiosity, open ended challenge and foster making links between learning
- Full coverage of the foundational skills of the EYFS framework, as well as making sure that the children are equipped to meet the challenges of Key Stage 1 and beyond
- Planning a balance of direct whole-class teaching (carpet meetings), small-group teaching, partner work and peer support with Year 1 children and independent 'discovery time'/free flow where the children can play and explore the learning environment.
- Giving sufficient direct teaching time for phonics, reading, writing and mathematics. Weekly handwriting sessions to develop correct letter formation early on
- Providing frequent opportunities for children to practice and consolidate their growing knowledge
- Ensuring that regular play opportunities underpin the approach to teaching and learning in the foundation stage.
- Valuing a high quality outside learning environment that can be accessed throughout the day
- Enrichment activities and experience such as PE sessions led by PE coach, optional enrichment clubs after school, school trips, and visitors in

4.1 Planning

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staff working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding children's activities, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

To best combine the requirements of both the EYFS framework and Year One Curriculum planning and teaching is delivered in the style of an **Enquiry Approach**.

This allows for open ended, child-initiated learning that creates opportunities for fostering curiosity and wonderment for the world around them. It is an approach that allows for strong links to be made between real life experiences and learning in the classroom which is then built upon with the careful planning of skills and knowledge as they enter Year 1.

4.2 Teaching and Classroom Organisation

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, nurturing and positive interaction.

Children have direct teaching inputs in the style of carpet meetings throughout the day to allow for specific skills and knowledge to be taught. There is then opportunity to develop and widen this in the classroom and outside environments through access to continuous provision.

Literacy

There is a valued importance of oracy and communication and language in EYFS. To support this, the Drawing Club approach is used to support early Literacy skills and develop children's wonderful world of storytelling.

Sentence dictation and handwriting sessions are also delivered as part of the weekly timetable to embed and give opportunity to practice these foundational skills.

Phonics and Reading

Water Orton uses Little Wandle Phonics Scheme to deliver the systematic daily teaching of phonics beginning in the Autumn term. Lessons follow a progressive and consistent structure that ensure children are taught the sounds and skills they need to learn to read.

Children are heard read up to three times a week by a range of adults and are encouraged to read at home little and often. They bring a carefully matched phonics book home once they are ready and supplement this with weekly visits to the school library, where they can choose a book that is of interest to them.

Maths

Maths is delivered in small adult-led groups throughout the week using a mixture of practical and hands on learning strategies such as going outside, using manipulatives, being creative, singing and chanting. We use the scheme White Rose Maths to support the systematic delivery of maths to allow for core concepts and mathematical understanding to be built upon.

Classroom Organisation:

There are 3 classrooms that are all connected and have access to a separate contained outdoor learning space. Children have access to this space all year round and throughout much of the day. The learning spaces are led between 3 classroom teachers and supported by multiple teaching assistants who support both large groups and individual children on a 1:1 basis.

5. Assessment

At Water Orton Primary School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also consider observations shared by parents and/or carers.

Sonar Tracker, our school's online tracking system, is updated termly to help track coverage and assess progress. Class provision maps record intervention baseline, plan, and impact figures, termly, to be shared at pupil progress meetings. Parents will be informed when children are receiving early intervention and guided as how they can further support their child at home.

Assessment in Reception happens in different ways, these include:

- **Baseline Assessments**

Within the **first 6 weeks** that a child starts Reception, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) and our own school baseline assessment. This Baseline assessment will enable a starting point to be established and will ensure clear targets can be set for the next half-term.

- **Regular Observations**

Regular observations will be made by the practitioners, these will be documented through notes, professional conversation and photographs.

- **Recording Work**

We use an electronic journal system called Seesaw. Each child has a personal electronic learning folder which will record their learning throughout the year. They will also have an English and Maths book that will be used to record writing and maths work that is completed in small groups.

- **Checkpoints**

Checkpoints are carried out at the beginning of the year and at the end of every term to assess where children are working at and set targets. These are recorded on the Sonar Tracking System.

- **Early Learning Goals**

At the end of the year the children will be assessed against the Early Learning Goals (ELG), a report of this data is given to the local authority containing a summary of each child's data.

- **School Reports**

A report summarising each child's achievements will be sent to the parents at the end of the school year.

- **Profile Data**

Profile data is discussed with the Year 1 teacher to ensure there is a smooth transition from EYFS to Key Stage 1. At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child. This forms part of the Annual Report which is sent to parents in July. Targets for the beginning of the next academic year are also included within the Annual Report and a copy handed to the next class teacher.

6. Working with parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development via opportunities to meet with staff at planned parents' evenings. The EYFS profile also helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities by the time they finish Reception.

All parents are made to feel welcome and valued through a range of different opportunities e.g. formal and informal meetings, stay and play sessions, open days, organised activities such as workshops and opportunities to support school with events such as school trips.

Class Dojo is a school system that is used to communicate with parents and give an insight into the learning that is taking place in school. Class Dojo is updated regularly with photos, announcements, reminders and celebrations to help families feel connected to the school community.

At the start of each half term a curriculum map is shared with families so that they can see the learning that is coming up for that half term and give opportunity to support this learning at home.

7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

We ensure that at least one member of staff onsite is trained in paediatric first aid. (This is a minimum requirement and, under all but exceptional circumstances, there are multiple trained staff on the school site)

We promote good health in general, in the early years by following the Jigsaw Curriculum for PSHE. This includes age-appropriate teaching about relationships.

We promote children's understanding of their own bodies and talk through ways of ensuring that they can report feeling unsafe through our 'Taking Care' project.

We have close links with the school nurses, who visit the school to undertake basic health checks (with parent consent) and talk to the children about staying healthy. We promote good oral health, by talking to the children about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth

We engage in activities delivered by the Warwickshire Road Safety Club to help to teach children how to be safe when walking and riding bikes and scooters.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

8. Food and Nutrition

In line with the revised Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework (September 2025), the school will have regard to the DfE's published nutrition guidance. Meals, snacks, and drinks provided for pupils in the EYFS will be healthy, balanced, and nutritious.

Foods high in salt, sugar, or saturated fat will be avoided, and foods that present a choking risk will be prepared safely. Staff are trained in paediatric first aid and safe eating practices and will ensure close supervision during mealtimes. The school maintains clear procedures for managing and communicating food allergies and dietary requirements with parents and carers, and for the safe storage and preparation of food.

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the headteacher and monitored by the FGB every 3 years.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy and infection diseases policy
Administering medicines policy	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See Evacuation Plan
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy