

# Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to reach 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 it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. When parents choose to use Early Years Services they want to know the provision will keep their children safe and help them to thrive. The Early Years Foundation Stage is the framework that provides that assurance.”

## **Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Department for Children, Schools and Families 2012**

Early school life experiences play a huge role in determining a child’s success at school. This experience is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. Jeavons Wood Primary School greatly values the importance that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. However, we also believe that it is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

Our aims are that every child’s right to grow up safe, healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and developing their wellbeing are respected. The overarching aim of the EYFS is to help young children achieve these outcomes. We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually. Each child is valued as an individual and teaching and learning is based on the understanding that children develop at different rates.

### **We aim to:**

Provide a safe, challenging, stimulating, caring and sharing environment which is sensitive to the needs of the child including children with additional needs. Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond. Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress. Enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence. Work in partnership with parents and guardians and previous settings and value their contributions, ensuring that all children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability achieve. Provide opportunities whereby children experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development. Provide experiences for all children, whatever their needs, which are inclusive rather than parallel.

**Principles:** The EYFS is based upon four principles:

**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 and 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 and rewards to encourage and 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, stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging and achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning.

**Learning and development.** The Foundation Classes 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 classrooms and outdoors is set up in learning areas where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

**In our school these principles look like this:**

**A Unique Child** - We value the diversity of individuals within the school and believe that every child matters. All children at Jeavons Wood are treated fairly, regardless of race, gender, religion or abilities. All families are valued within our school. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when we are planning for their learning. In Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging targets that match the needs of our children as individuals, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the year. We plan, giving opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence. We use a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs. We provide a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them learn effectively. We offer a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued. Challenging activities are provided to meet the needs of all children. Children's progress is monitored and action is taken to provide support as necessary (such as referrals to speech therapy). We work closely with parents, carers and other outside agencies to ensure all children's needs are met and we enable them to access the curriculum and make good progress

**Positive Relationships** - Parents/Carers are kept informed of their child's development throughout the year through parent consultations, informal chats and an end of year report. Parents are encouraged to read with their child and are given feedback by the class teacher or TA in their individual reading record about their reading achievements and next steps for learning. Parents are invited to curriculum workshops throughout the year, including Maths, Reading/Writing and Phonics. Parents are also invited into school for open mornings throughout the school year.

**Enabling Environments** - There are specific areas where the children can be active, be quiet, creative etc. The Foundation Stage has its own outdoor classroom area which enables us to offer outdoor learning opportunities, for doing things in different ways and in different scales than when indoors. The children can explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We provide the children with daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision. We ensure that play-based learning is highly valued and that children have opportunities to direct their own learning with planned opportunities provided by staff. We plan a learning environment both indoors and outdoors that encourages a positive attitude to learning and reflects the individual's fascinations, passions and abilities. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this promotes independent learning. We ensure that resources and spaces are safe to use and are checked regularly.

## **Learning and Development**

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum centres around 17 Early Learning Goals against which each child is assessed at the end of their Reception year. Within this there are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in early year's settings. All areas of learning and development are equally weighted in terms of significance and focus, and more importantly, they are all inter-connected. None of the areas of learning can be delivered in isolation from the others. They require a balance of adult led and child- initiated activities to enable most children to reach the levels required at the end of EYFS. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and to thrive.

**The three Prime areas are:** Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Communication and Language and Physical Development

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

**Specific Areas:** Literacy, Mathematics , Understanding the world and ☒ Expressive arts and design

## Characteristics of Effective Learning

Underpinning the curriculum are the three characteristics of effective learning which are reflected in both our teaching, planning and provision. These characteristics are:

**Playing and exploring** - children will have opportunities to investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'. Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

**Active learning** - children will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy their achievements. Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence, they learn to make decisions which provides them with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

**Creating and thinking critically** - we encourage and support children to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things. Children should be given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning. Adults can support children's thinking and help them make connections by showing interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open ended questions. Children can access resources and move around the classroom freely and purposefully to extend their learning.

**Observation, Assessment and Planning** Good planning is the key to making children's learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive. Effective learning builds on and extends what children know and can already do. Our planning shows how the principles of the EYFS are put into practice and is always informed by observations we have made of the children, in order to understand and consider their current interests, development and learning needs.

Observations are recorded in children's Learning Journals. Children have a Learning Journal folder. Teachers/Teaching Assistants, Staff members, Parents/ Carers can contribute to their learning journal and we frequently ask for specific areas or ideas for parents to contribute. Children and Parents have access to their Learning Journals and can choose to select items to put in it.

The planning within the EYFS is based around planned topics and the children's interests. These plans are used by the EYFS team as a guide for weekly planning. However, we may alter these in response to the needs or interests of the children.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning or intervention reflects identified needs.

## Safeguarding & Welfare

‘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.’

(Statutory Framework for EYFS 2014) At Jeavons Wood, we understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2014. This includes the following: To provide a setting that is welcoming, safe and stimulating where children can grow in confidence. Promote good health. Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children’s stage of development and individual needs. To ensure that all adults who look after the children, or who have unsupervised access to them, are suitable to do so and have undertaken the appropriate checks as required. Ensure that the setting, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for the purpose it was intended for. Maintain records, policies and procedures required for the safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children

**Keeping Safe** - 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. We encourage children to take risks and highlight the importance of keeping themselves safe by teaching them how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children.

**Medical Needs** – We keep a list of all children with specific medical needs eg. eczema, asthma, food allergies/intolerances, epilepsy, so that all members of the Foundation Stage team (and lunchtime supervisors) are aware of needs and what medication might be required. Inhalers and ointments will be stored in a First Aid box in each classroom. These are checked frequently. Specific members of staff are First Aid Trained.

**Good Health** - All children are provided with a fruit or vegetable snack each day. They have access to water at all times. We encourage children to bring their own, names water bottle into school daily.

**Intimate Care** -Intimate care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. However, depending on a child’s age and stage of development, they may need some support, for example dressing, wiping their bottom after using the toilet and changing underwear following an accident. In most cases, intimate care is to do with personal hygiene. Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child. No intimate care is to be given without the express written permission of the parent or guardian of that child in the form of an intimate care plan.

**Transition** - Starting school can be a difficult time for young children; we therefore plan this time carefully to support children with the transition and to ensure it is as smooth as possible for each child and that they settle into their new setting quickly and happily.

**Starting Foundation Stage** – Parents of all children starting in the next academic year will be invited to a Welcome Meeting in the Summer term to meet their child’s new teachers and other key staff and learn more about the Foundation Stage curriculum as well as how to support their child in becoming “school ready.” The particulars of the induction process for the September start will also be explained in some detail. In addition to this, members of the Foundation Stage Teaching team will also visit preschool settings wherever possible before the end of the summer term to visit the children in a familiar environment and to liaise with key workers to ensure that important information that will facilitate a smooth transition is passed on.

**Taster sessions** – towards the end of the summer term children and parents can attend a taster session in the Foundation Stage area to help children familiarise themselves with both the adults and the environment ahead of their September start. It also provides another opportunity for parents to talk informally with teachers and to ask questions as necessary.

**Home visits** - At the start of September prior to starting school, Parents/Carers will be invited to schedule a Home visit with their child’s class teacher. This visit is not in any way compulsory, but is offered to all.

**Phased induction** – for the first few days of term, children will attend school on a half day basis. In this way, children will adjust to their new setting’s routines and expectations without being overwhelmed by a long day. In the first full week of the Foundation Stage term, all children will begin complete days as a whole class unless teachers or parents/carers consider this not to be in the best interests of the child.

**Into Year 1** – As the Foundation Stage draws to a close we work very hard as a school to ensure that children are ready for Year 1 and to minimise the anxiety that change can cause. The Foundation Stage and Year 1 teachers work very closely together throughout the year and decisions about classes are discussed thoroughly. Once classes have been decided, there will be planned opportunities for children to spend time with their new Year 1 teachers towards the end of the summer term – this will consist of visits based in their new classroom

Parents and carers are the first educators of their children. We aim to build up a successful partnership with parents and carers that will continue throughout their child’s time at Jeavons Wood Primary School.