

Waterbeach Community Primary School



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Date reviewed: November 2021

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Contents

1. Legislation	3
2. Aims.....	3
3. EYFS Principles.....	3
4. Structure of the EYFS	4
5. Curriculum.....	4
6. Transition.....	6
7. Assessment	6
8. Working with parents	7
9. Safeguarding and welfare procedures	7
10. Monitoring arrangements.....	7
Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS	8

1. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [Early years foundation stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk) and the [Early years foundation stage profile handbook - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

2. Aims

It is every child's right to be healthy, enjoy and achieve with a strong sense of wellbeing. The overarching aim of the EYFS is to help young children achieve these outcomes. We will provide a positive and stimulating curriculum that will enable all children to develop in all areas of learning, socially, emotionally, physically and creatively.

At Waterbeach our Early Years Foundation Stage 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
- We provide a challenging, stimulating, caring and safe environment.
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- Close partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

3. EYFS Principles

Children are born ready, able and eager to learn. They actively reach out to interact with other people, and in the world around them. Development is not an automatic process, however. It depends on each unique child having opportunities to interact in positive relationships and enabling environments. The four themes of the EYFS underpin all the guidance.

The EYFS is based on these four themes;

A unique child.

Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. As practitioners we;

- Understand and observe each child's development and learning, assess progress, plan for next steps
- Support children to develop a positive sense of their own identity and culture
- Identify any need for additional support
- Keep children safe
- Value and respect all children and families equally

Positive relationships.

Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships. We believe positive relationships are;

- Warm and loving, and foster a sense of belonging
- Sensitive and responsive to the child's needs, feelings and interests

- Supportive of the child's own efforts and independence
- Consistent in setting clear boundaries
- Stimulating
- Built on key person relationships in early years settings

Enabling environments.

Children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.

Enabling Environments;

- Value all people
- Value learning
- Offer stimulating resources, relevant to all the children's cultures and communities
- Include rich learning opportunities through play and playful teaching
- Support children in taking risks and exploring

Learning and development. Children develop and learn in different ways. The Early Years Framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities. Practitioners teach children by ensuring challenging, playful opportunities across the prime and specific areas of learning and development.

4. Structure of our EYFS

Waterbeach School has three Early Years Foundation Stage classes which are linked and operate as a unit. The children have access to an ample outdoor area with a wide variety of play areas and resources. Teaching assistants support the children and the class teachers and have specialist knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements.

5. Curriculum

As an early years provider, Waterbeach School has created a curriculum which follows the requirements outlined in the 2021 EYFS statutory framework.

Throughout every day, practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn and this is shown through their practice. The ways in which young children learn are called the Characteristics of Effective Learning. The three Characteristics of Effective Learning are:

- Playing and exploring - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- Active learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- Creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. 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

The characteristics of effective learning and the prime and specific areas of learning and development are all interconnected. The ways in which the child engages with other people and their environment – playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically – underpin learning and development across all areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner. The prime areas begin to develop quickly in response to relationships and experiences. They run through and support learning in all other areas of the curriculum and continue to be fundamental throughout the whole of the EYFS. The specific areas include essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society.

5.1 Educational Programmes

Practitioners plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, practitioners working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas. There is also an aspect of planning in the moment whereby practitioners observe children in their self-initiated activities and move the children's learning forward by carefully interacting with them at that moment.

Practitioners also use their knowledge of each child's individual needs, interests, and stage of development to plan a challenging and enjoyable experiences. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, practitioners consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

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

5.2 Teaching

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

5.3 An enabling environment

The environment supports children to be fully engaged in purposeful play of their own choice and interest. Both the outdoor area and the indoor area allow for learning in all areas of development, but the two areas do not mirror each other. The indoor area is the ideal place for children to be calm and focused, pursuing activities which require small equipment and using resources that will not survive the outdoor elements. The outdoor area is more suited to louder and bigger activities enabling the children to explore in a natural environment.

6. Transition

During the Summer Term before the children are due to start school, our main priority is getting to know each child. We have an established induction programme that offers a range of opportunities for children and parents to come and visit the school and meet the staff, as well as time for practitioners to visit children if they attend one of our main feeder pre-school settings.

Our Early Years Foundation Stage at Waterbeach School has very good and established communication links with our feeder pre-school settings. We talk to them in detail about children's individual needs, relationships and skills. All the appropriate detailed assessment records are also passed on to us.

At the beginning of the Autumn Term we have a period of home visits, shorter days and a gradual induction which enables children to get to know each other, the school setting, routines and expectations and for us to get to know your child. It is a proven structure that ensures children start school happily and confidently.

Beginning 'big school' is a huge step for children to make. Even if they are used to attending longer day sessions at a pre-school setting, it is a very different experience. We are a large school and the children will be experiencing meeting new people, investigating and exploring new places as well as having new experiences every day – especially in the first few weeks.

7. Assessment

At Waterbeach Community Primary School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Practitioners observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Practitioners may sometimes record their observations, samples of children's work and photographs in the children's Learning Journeys and by using our online programme 'Tapestry'. Practitioners also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers which they are encouraged to share using 'Tapestry'.

At the end of the EYFS, Teachers 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 or
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers.

8. Working with parents

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

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. Written reports, regular meetings and the EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Each child is assigned a key person (This is their class teacher) who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

We also offer many opportunities for parents and/or carers to join us at school as we share guidance on how to support their children at home. These parent workshops include Phonics, Maths and Writing cafés. All workshops are then published on our website along with supporting documents.

9. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy and first aid policy.

There is always one member of staff at Waterbeach Community Primary school available who is Paediatric First aid trained.

10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by the EYFS lead practitioner and then reviewed and approved by the Head Teacher every three years.

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

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

- [Early years foundation stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/363272/Early_years_foundation_stage_statutory_framework.pdf)
- [Early years foundation stage profile handbook - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/363273/Early_years_foundation_stage_profile_handbook.pdf)
- Waterbeach Community School safeguarding policy
- Waterbeach Community School first aid policy.