



West Hill Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Let's shine together



Our vision is a school where everyone shines

What we do and encourage as a school family;

Achievement – excellence in teaching and learning which excites and inspires our children to be the best they can be.

Happiness – smiling, engaged and articulate children who are listened to, encouraged and given every support to maximise their own individual potential.

Friendship – children who are kind and caring towards each other, building lasting friendships.

Respect – a respect for people, each-others' beliefs, our environment and all living things.

Responsibility – independent, creative thinkers who have the confidence to be responsible for themselves, their behaviour and for others.

Co-operation – working together, listening and valuing others' opinions within the school family and the wider community.

This policy was adopted by West Hill Primary School on
March 2015

Date of Review	Body responsible for review	Date of next review
November 2021	Subject Leader	Autumn 2024

STATEMENT OF SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

At West Hill Primary School, our school community has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are our pupils. This means that we have a Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy and Procedures in place which we refer to in our prospectus. All staff including our volunteers and supply staff must ensure that they are aware of our procedures. Parents and carers are welcome to read these on request.

Sometimes we may need to share information and work in partnership with other agencies when there are concerns about a child's welfare. We will always ensure that our concerns about our pupils are discussed with their parents/carers first unless we have reason to believe that this is not in the child's best interests.



1. Purpose

There are four main aims to this policy:

- 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
- 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**

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the 2021 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

3. Structure of the EYFS

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) refers to children from birth to five years of age. At West Hill Primary School, children are admitted from the age of four and remain until the age of five in the EYFS.

4. Play

At West Hill Primary School, we recognise that play underpins all learning and development for young children. Most children play spontaneously although some may need adult support. It is through play that children develop intellectually, creatively, physically, socially and emotionally. By providing well planned experiences based on children's spontaneous play, both indoors and outside, we support our children to learn with enjoyment and challenge. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside and with other children and adults as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

The early years experiences we offer our children are based on the following principles:

- Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

Unique Child:

“Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.”

(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage - 2021)

At West Hill Primary School, we give every child the opportunity to achieve their best. We have realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of all our children across the areas of learning and development. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with disabilities, children with additional educational needs, children with medical needs, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

Positive Relationships:

“Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships.**”
(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage - 2021)

At West Hill Primary School, we believe that the positive relationships we build are the key to effective partnerships between all practitioners, parents, carers and families. All members of staff in the Foundation Team take responsibility for ensuring that the child feels safe and cared for, in order to develop a positive sense of well-being and achievement.

We meet the needs of all of our children by:

- working with parents/carers right from the start to find out about their child’s needs, feelings and interests
- developing effective partnerships with families throughout the year by offering regular opportunities for them to talk about their child’s progress
- encouraging families to talk to any member of the Foundation staff, to foster two way communication with parents / carers and families
- helping parents to support children’s learning and development
- recognising that friendships and relationships are an important part of a child’s development from birth

Enabling Environment:

“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.”
(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage - 2021)

At West Hill Primary School, our environment is carefully planned both indoors and outdoors to help children achieve across all aspects of the EYFS. Opportunities are provided for children to take part in a wide range of experiences and to extend their interests.

We meet the needs of all of our children by:

- encouraging children to communicate and talk about their experiences
- developing children’s independence and decision making by providing an environment where children can freely access resources and select from the experiences on offer
- using the outdoor environment on a regular/daily basis to enhance learning and development
- analysing children’s responses to different situations and identifying their future learning needs
- using materials and equipment that reflects both the community that the children come from and the wider world
- encouraging a positive attitude to learning by ensuring our planning begins by observing the children in order to consider their current interests, developmental stage and learning style
- we plan to build on what the children know, understand and can do.

Learning and Development:

“Children develop and learn at different rates.”
(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage - 2021)

Practitioners teach children by ensuring challenging, playful opportunities across the prime and specific areas of learning and development.

5. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2021 statutory framework of the EYFS.

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 3 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

All of the areas are delivered through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult-led (child working with the adult) and child-initiated (child chosen) activities, both indoors and outdoors.

At West Hill Primary School, we ensure that the requirements of the EYFS are met through all seven areas of learning and development, in order for children to make progress towards the Early Learning Goals, which are the established expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

6. Planning

Staff plan activities and experiences that enable children to develop and learn effectively.

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, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice:

- Individual needs are met by delivering personalised learning.
- Baseline assessments on entry are used to inform planning and individual needs.
- The Class Teaching Assistant (TA) has extra time with the children who need help in any area of learning, established by observations and assessment.

- Planning is based on the Early Learning Goals and the learning environment is planned to work towards these outcomes according to the individual needs of the children.
- Children with learning difficulties are planned for individually with help and advice from outside agencies.
- Children who achieve beyond what is expected are offered activities that will challenge and stretch them.
- Positive attitudes to diversity and difference are promoted, both in the classroom and outdoors, by making sure that all children are listened to and respected, through PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Emotional) activities and the ethos of the classroom practice based around the school's ethos and mission statement.
- A balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities are planned, based on first-hand experiences that encourage active learning, exploration, experimentation, observation, problem-solving, prediction, critical thinking, decision-making and discussion.
- Skills and knowledge are taught in the context of practical activities.
- Planning and assessment is linked to children's individual achievements, assessment of their achievements by informal and focused observations which inform planning.
- Learning is supported through the class teacher's interaction with children.
- A variety of activities are provided to support different learning styles: visual, auditory and kinaesthetic.

7. 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. As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for Year 1.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Children are provided with experiences and support to help them develop a positive sense of themselves and of others, respect for others, social skills and a positive disposition to learn. Children's emotional well-being is supported to help them to know themselves and what they can do.

We achieve this in a variety of ways:

- forming warm, caring attachments
- establishing constructive relationships with parents, with everyone in the setting/school and with professionals from other agencies
- acting as positive role models and taking account of different needs and expectations
- building children's confidence to take manageable risks in their play, providing support and planning experiences that offer challenges
- giving encouragement and appropriate praise
- supporting children to understand about good health, for example, use of sunscreens, sleeping, hygiene (including oral health), eating and exercise
- planning opportunities for children to play by themselves, in pairs and groups and support the development of independence skills, how to make good friendships and a positive attitude to learning
- providing time and space for children to concentrate on experiences, to develop their own interests and to develop the resilience to persist and wait for what they want

- establishing opportunities for play and learning, acknowledging children’s particular religious beliefs and cultural backgrounds
- providing positive images that challenge children’s thinking and help them to embrace differences in gender, ethnicity, language, religion, culture, additional educational needs and disability

Communication and Language

Children are supported to develop their spoken language and listening skills as part of the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations and interactions they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. They are provided with opportunities to practise and extend their use of language and gain confidence and understanding.

Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will also give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, storytelling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

We achieve this in a variety of ways:

- providing a language-rich environment to allow communication to thrive
- ensuring opportunity for quality conversations with adults and peers throughout the day
- reading to children and engaging them in stories, non-fiction and creative role play
- encouraging children to ask questions to clarify their understanding and interest
- holding conversation that will engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers to support children in building language effectively
- supporting and encourage our children to participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary
- encouraging children to listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions
- offering explanations for why things might happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems when appropriate
- providing opportunities for children to express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from an adult

Literacy

Children’s learning and competence in communicating, speaking and listening, being read to and beginning to read and write is supported and extended. Children are provided with opportunities and encouragement to use their skills in a range of situations and for a range of purposes, and are supported to develop the confidence and disposition to do so.

We achieve this in a variety of ways:

- supporting children to communicate their thoughts, ideas and feelings and building relationships with adults and each other

- providing daily opportunities to share and enjoy a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books, rhymes, music, songs, stories and poetry
- identifying and responding to particular difficulties in children's language development at an early stage
- providing positive role models by reading and writing and showing children what can be written and read
- talking with and listening to children to engage them in conversation
- linking language with physical movement in action songs, rhymes, role play and practical experiences, for example, cooking and gardening
- planning an environment that is rich in signs, symbols, notices, numbers, words, rhymes, books and pictures that takes into account children's different interests, understandings, home backgrounds and cultures
- showing awareness of and sensitivity to the needs of children learning English as an additional language, using their home language, where possible
- providing time and relaxed opportunities for children to develop spoken language through sustained conversations between adults and children, both in one to one and in small groups and between children themselves.
- Ensuring that the daily phonic session is systematic, rigorous and paced.

Mathematics

Children are supported to develop their understanding of problem solving, reasoning and numeracy in a broad range of contexts in which they explore, enjoy, learn, practise and talk about their developing understanding. They are provided with opportunities to practise and extend their skills in these areas and to gain confidence and competence in their use.

We achieve this in a variety of ways:

- developing mathematical understanding through all children's early experiences including songs, stories, games and imaginative play
- encouraging and valuing children's exploration of real life problems
- using mathematics as an integral part of daily experiences, modelling and encouraging child participation
- providing time, space, resources and encouragement to discover new words and mathematical ideas

Understanding the World

Children are supported to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding that help them to make sense of the physical world and their community. Their learning is supported by offering opportunities to talk about the lives of people around them and to compare and contrast events and objects in the past and now.

By making use of the local environment and observations from stories, non-fiction texts and maps, children are enabled to explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries. Children are provided with opportunities to encounter creatures, plants and objects in their natural environments and in real-life situations; undertaking practical investigations and work with a range of materials.

We achieve this in a variety of ways including:

- creating a stimulating environment that offers a range of experiences to encourage children's curiosity and interest

- making effective use of outdoors, including timetabled 'Forest School' and use of the local neighbourhood
- inviting families and carers to share their experiences of the wider world
- using correct terms / vocabulary and asking open ended questions
- ensuring planned opportunities are based on first hand experiences that encourage exploration, experimentation, observation, problem solving, prediction, critical thinking, decision making and discussion
- encouraging children to talk about and reflect upon their experiences

Physical Development

The physical development of young children is encouraged through the provision of opportunities for them to be active and interactive and to improve their skills of co-ordination, control, manipulation and movement. They are encouraged and supported to use all of their senses to learn about the world around them and to make connections between new information and what they already know. Children are supported to develop an understanding of the importance of physical activity and making healthy choices in relation to food and lifestyle.

We achieve this in a variety of ways:

- valuing children's natural and spontaneous movements, through which they are finding out about their bodies and motivating them to be active
- providing a range of equipment and resources that are challenging and interesting and can be used in a variety of ways to support the development of specific skills
- introducing vocabulary to children alongside their actions
- providing space and time for children to engage in energetic play, to set their own challenges, persist and practice
- providing opportunities to take controlled risks, e.g.: climbing higher than they have previously in order to develop their physical skills

Expressive Arts and Design

Children's creativity is extended with practitioner support to develop their curiosity, exploration and play. Children are provided with opportunities to explore and share their thoughts, ideas and feelings, for example, through a variety of art, music, movement, dance, imaginative and role-play experiences and design and technology.

We achieve this in a variety of ways:

- valuing what children can do and children's own ideas
- providing a stimulating environment where creativity, originality and expressiveness are valued
- allowing time for children to explore and express their ideas in a variety of ways

8. Assessment

At West Hill 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. Practitioners also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

Baseline assessments, both statutory and in-house, are carried out at the beginning of the academic year and inform planning.

Evidence of attainment and achievement is collected in accordance with the EYFS Profile, throughout the year. The use of Tapestry, (an online Learning Journal), is used to store specific evidence and is shared with SLT and parents, as appropriate. 'Next Steps' are shared with parents in March after discussion at Parents' Evening. The EYFS Profile is used to inform reports to parents which are written at the end of the academic year.

At all stages in the year children who are identified as not meeting their developmental expectations are highlighted and targeted with additional support. 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:

- Emerging** - Not yet reaching expected levels
- Expected** - Meeting expected levels of development

The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers.

Other agencies are involved with children with special educational needs, e.g. the advisory teacher for the deaf, County Autism team, Educational Psychologist, School Nurse and advice and help is sought to aid inclusion.

9. Working with parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers. At West Hill Primary School, staff work hard to build these positive relationships and actively encourage dialogue between parents/carers and the school.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development through regular Tapestry, (online Learning Journal), updates, weekly 'This week we have...' letters, half-termly curriculum letters, half-termly 'aspirations' documents, information evenings, open afternoons, the weekly newsletter, the school website, parental questionnaires, comments in the Home-School Diary, parents' evenings and a written report each year. Informal opportunities to share concerns or achievements are welcomed in the playground, before and after school. The EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

A welcoming atmosphere is created by approachable staff who greet the children and their families in the playground in the morning and deliver them to the parents/carers at the end of the day. Learning Behaviours certificates, stickers, house points, Headteacher awards and half-termly trophies are given for 'wow!' moments and achievements, or acts of kindness.

10. Induction and transition arrangements

There is a very close working partnership between West Hill Primary School and West Hill Pre-School. Pre-school children are invited to watch the school nativity production and the Reception Class children are invited to take part in the Easter celebrations organised by the Pre-School. Staff from the school and Pre-School meet to discuss any needs or arrangements prior to children moving to school in September and they provide the school with assessments of the children at the end of their Pre-School career.

In the first half of the summer term, prior to starting at West Hill Primary School, the EYFS teacher(s) make visits to the Pre-School to introduce themselves to the children and to begin building a positive relationship.

Before starting school, Pre-School children visit the Reception Class. Parents/carers are given an induction/information pack and the EYFS teacher(s) contact the parents via telephone before the summer break.

The EYFS teacher(s) hold open sessions for parents and children on the first day of the Autumn Term and support open opportunities to meet with parents throughout the year.

A questionnaire is given to parents requesting details of children's interests and achievements, likes/dislikes. Parents are asked to share achievements and learning taking place at home via the online learning journal, Tapestry. Half-termly curriculum letters and a weekly newsletter (archived on the website), reading books, weekly maths games, a letter detailing activities which have taken place each week are sent home each Friday; parents are encouraged to help with hearing readers.

The children are helped to settle in by the welcoming staff, building and grounds and by their buddies in Class 6 who work very hard to help look after the new children, particularly in the playground.

11. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our Child Protection and Safeguarding and Policy.

12. Monitoring arrangements

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teacher(s) to understand and adhere to the principles stated in this policy. The Headteacher will monitor implementation of this policy as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. This Governor will meet with the EYFS subject leader on a regular basis to discuss practice in the EYFS and feedback to the Governing Board. The EYFS subject leader produces an annual written report to the Governing Board.