



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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Issue	Date	Author/Editor	Revision Notes
1	Summer 2020	Jenna Gardner	<p>Original Policy documents copied into new format, with header, footer and version control.</p> <p>Policy reviewed and updated to ensure reflects current policy and practice in EYFS Framework. New transition arrangements added.</p>

Mission Statement: Our School Now

Our school provides a secure, caring, stimulating and challenging indoor and outdoor environment that promotes a love of learning. Our children, parents, families, staff, governors and community work together to enable each child to become a happy, healthy, well-balanced individual in preparation for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.

The ethos of the school is based on the Christian ideals of commitment, responsibility and respect and love for Jesus Christ, self and others. We are committed to working in partnership with all of those involved in our children's development to lead our children towards tolerance, understanding, justice, and sensitivity to the needs of others and appreciation of the world around them.

Our motto "Enjoy, Respect, Learn, Achieve"

Vision Statement: Our Vision for the Future

'A curriculum that is challenging, inspiring and engaging; in which all pupils flourish spiritually, creatively and academically to become confident young people.'

'With God's power working in us, God can do much, much more than anything we can ask or imagine.' Ephesians 3:20 New Century Version (NCV)

Aims:

Westhead Lathom St. James Church of England Primary School aims to:

- Provide a broad and challenging curriculum and a stimulating learning environment that extends outside the classroom,
- Develop enquiring minds and spirituality through curiosity, awe and wonder of the world,
- Teach, demonstrate and praise Christian Values,
- Value the power of prayer,
- Teach with innovative and investigative approaches to learning,
- Provide an enriching programme of extra-curricular activities and visits,
- Plan a rich, varied and up-to-date range of learning resources,

- Encourage children to achieve their highest standards in all areas of the curriculum and to seek excellence within an ethos of support, challenge and encouragement to succeed,
- Teach children to work independently, collaboratively and become highly motivated lifelong learners,
- Include opportunities for creative thinking in problem solving settings, developing divergent thinking, adaptability and flexibility in preparation for the many changes ahead in life, including the rapid progress in technology,
- Build partnerships between the school, home and community,
- Strive for continuous improvement in all that we do,
- Continually self-evaluate and continue to improve upon current practice,
- Work collaboratively towards common goals,
- Place self-esteem and a positive and inclusive approach to behaviour as high priorities thus ensuring that individuals respect and value themselves, others and the environment and is motivated to do their best in school and beyond in order to become a fulfilled adult who gives to the community.

We want a rich curriculum and it is important that our pupils expand their cultural capital by experiencing:

- Visits to churches, art galleries, libraries, museums, woods, beaches, music festivals, farms, theatres and other faiths' places of worship,
- Taking part in residential trips to develop social skills and independence,
- Taking part in a wide range of physical activities including taking part in sporting competitions, in order to develop healthy lifestyles,
- Eating in a café or restaurant,
- Other cultures' traditions,
- Forest school,
- Play in which they have to assess risk and make decisions,
- Independence and have responsibilities,
- Enterprise,
- Cooking and learning about nutrition,
- Using practical tools safely,
- Adult role models of reading and enjoyment of being read to, to enthuse them as lifelong readers,
- Quality texts throughout the curriculum,
- The fun of learning a new language,
- The local area and develop an appreciation for what we have in our locality,
- Local history and understand what life was like in our community in the past,
- Playing musical instruments, sing, dance and take part in school productions,
- Using a range of technology to enhance their learning,
- Learning outdoors including building an awareness of environmental and conservation issues,
- Being part of a community with strong values which help develop them into well prepared, confident young people,

- Helping those most in need through charity work and fundraising,
- Links with other schools,
- Wisdom, dignity, hope and community.

Introduction

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the teaching and learning of 'The Early Years'.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. Our Early Years Foundation Stage accommodates children from the age of 3 to 5 years and is a mixed aged class of Pre-School and Reception children. The class has a full-time Teacher, a full-time Level 3 Teaching Assistant and a part-time Level 2 Teaching Assistant.

Aims

At Westhead Lathom St James Primary School we aim 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 lifelong learners.

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

Our high expectations will enable each child to develop socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally and to achieve their full potential. We will 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 will ensure that children are kept healthy and safe and that they achieve the knowledge and skills they need for their transition to Key Stage One.

The Curriculum

Pre-School and Reception curriculum is planned and implemented using the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) document.

This document is based upon four principles:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- 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, stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging and achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning through an enabling indoor and outdoor learning environment.

Learning and development

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 and there are also areas where children can be quiet, reflective and rest.

Areas of Learning

The seven areas of learning are defined so that children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The EYFS is made up of three prime area of learning:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

And four specific areas of learning:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

At Westhead Lathom St James Primary School all areas are delivered through a well-planned play based approach, with a balance of adult led 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. Our topics follow children's interests which allow flexibility to ensure that children's needs are taken into account and that

learning is purposeful to them. We also celebrate events throughout the year to ensure their knowledge and understanding of the world around them is developed.

Play

Learning through play underpins our approach to teaching and learning. 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 teaching and learning and the reception teacher plans 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;

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.

Inclusion

Our whole school ethos is that we embrace 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; 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, such as the speech and language service and the educational psychologist amongst others. We adhere to the Equal Opportunity and Inclusion policies of the school.

Early Years Pupil Premium – we will endeavour to identify our least advantaged pupils and inform parents or carers of their opportunity to apply for their child’s entitlement to extra funding in school. All extra funding we receive will be used to support areas in which we identify that the child will best benefit. We will track children’s progress to ensure that they are making good progress and to ensure that support is adjusted to target specific areas as the child develops.

Assessment

Throughout Pre-School and Reception, children’s knowledge, understanding, skills and achievements are assessed and tracked using the developmental stages set out in the document ‘Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)’.

Our assessment depends on us getting to know our children very well and to this end we gather information from a range of sources; observations of the children in play, in adult led activities, through discussions with parents and carers and through talking to the children. We keep written and photographic evidence to help us build up a picture of children’s strengths and achievements and to help us to plan for children’s next steps in learning. We record their learning in an online journal system called Tapestry. Parents have full access to their child’s learning Journal throughout the entire time they are with us. They are then able to download and keep the journal at the end of the Reception year.

Observational evidence and samples of children’s work throughout the school year will be used to assess children as ‘emerging’, ‘developing’ or ‘secure’ based on their understanding and achievement of the Early Learning Goals set out in the EYFS curriculum.

Our children’s knowledge, skills and understanding will continue to be tracked throughout The Foundation Stage and assessed against the ELG’s at the end of Reception to establish an end of Foundation Stage achievement and learning profile for each child in preparedness for their transition to key stage one.

Transitions

At Westhead Lathom St James Primary School we recognise that starting school and moving up classes 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 each year group.

The reception teacher holds a parent meeting in the summer term with all parents whose children are due to start their reception year. This is to provide parents with key information, school expectations, knowledge on our curriculum and assessment and advice on how they can help their child.

In the summer term all children have the opportunity to meet with their new teachers in the next class for four set mornings, to help them prepare for their new experiences.

This is in conjunction with all new Pre-School and Reception parents being offered a home visit by the class Teacher and Teaching Assistant prior to their child starting school. The visits take

place during the first two days of the academic year. This gives the 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.

If required, at the beginning of the school year new Pre-School children can have staggered entry times if their parents feel this is necessary or the Class Teacher feels it would benefit the child in order to ensure that they have the time to feel welcomed and to support them in exploring their new environment. This is discussed with Parents during the home visit.

Due to the majority of our reception children having attended our nursery the need for reception aged children to have a staggered start is not required. However, if a reception child is new to our school then a staggered start may be discussed with the parent prior to the start of the academic year.

During children's time in Pre-School and Reception a range of shared activities are planned to help develop children's confidence and to ensure continuity in experiences throughout The Foundation Stage. Children in reception make use of the whole school facilities, such as the studio, playground and playing field for appropriate activities to ensure that children are confident and well prepared for moving around the school and for mixing with other children.

Community Links

At Westhead Lathom St James Primary School The Foundation Stage class enrich learning and encourages strong links with the local area through local visits and by inviting members of the local community into our school. Every half term we take part in Mature Movers at the local village hall. We exercise, learn and have fun with the people of the village and join in their exercises.

Partnership with Parents

We believe that parents and carers are a child's first educator and therefore work very closely to ensure they are involved in what their child does at school. We want parents to feel they can speak to us about their child and to feel comfortable in our setting. Along with the visit days we also offer social events through the school PTA, plus the class Teacher is there to greet children as they enter the school, building relationships and being there to ask questions. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to share information about their child, to ask questions and to discuss their child's learning with the teacher.

We believe that all parents have an important role to play in the education of their child. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. Parents are encouraged to join in with their child's education from the very start of their school journey. Parents are invited to assemblies and whole school Church events. They are invited to join in with trips outside school and to join in with a range of activities from supporting reading, writing and maths to sports day inside school.

From Pre-School parents have daily access to their child's online learning journal. They can comment, add their own pictures and tell us about any achievements outside of school. Homework and supporting home learning is given through this system also. From reception all parents are encouraged to support children's reading through completing reading records.

At Westhead Lathom St James primary school we value the importance of the three-way relationship between children, parents and staff, as it enables children to make good progress and to maximise their potential. We celebrate the children's progress and achievements, and share areas for further development. Children, parents and staff all have the opportunity to contribute. We provide parents with information about their child's baseline assessment during parents evening which is a formal parents meeting, where parents have the opportunity of speaking with the teachers to discuss their child's progress and development. Parents are always welcomed to discuss their children informally at the end of the school day. Parents are informed of their end of the year assessment by a written report along with the opportunity to download their learning journal.

Health & 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. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance and we adhere to the school's safeguarding policy.

We are a healthy school and our children have access to fresh water, milk and fruit daily. Reception children who stay for lunch are eligible for free school meals or can choose to bring in a healthy packed lunch.

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.