



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

“All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives, so their experiences in early years have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe, and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning provide the foundation children need to fulfil their potential.”

Early Years Foundation Stage Framework 2023, Department for Education.

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, and for sparking a sense of curiosity and a love for learning. 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.

We believe that every child has the right to grow up safe and healthy, that they derive enjoyment and achievement in what they do, and they are given the opportunity to make a positive contribution to the world around them. Every child should be supported to thrive in their development and reach their full potential.

Our overarching aim of the EYFS is to help young children achieve these outcomes. We will provide a broad, balanced and enriching 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. Our curriculum in the EYFS is tailored to meet every child’s individual needs and interests.

We aim to:

Provide a safe, challenging, stimulating, nurturing, and caring environment which is sensitive to the needs of the child, including children with additional or special educational needs. We will 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. We use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress at their rate, in order to reach their personal milestones. Children are enabled to make choices and decisions, fostering independence, self-confidence and autonomy. We see it as essential to work in partnership with parents and guardians, as well as previous settings and we value their contributions. Our priority is to ensure that all children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender, or ability are enabled to achieve under our care. We strive to provide opportunities whereby children experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development, where they are encouraged to take risks, ask questions, and are motivated to forward their own thinking. Rich, impactful and enjoyable experiences are provided 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 to inspire and develop a positive attitude to learning.

Positive relationships. We recognise that children learn best when they feel safe, and this relies on secure attachments with educators and care givers. We strive to develop loving, caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families. We also ensure that children are supported to develop kind and supportive relationships with their peers.

Enabling environments. We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development, especially in the EYFS. 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. We endeavour to always offer a safe and inspiring learning environment both indoors and outside. We offer high quality resources, both set up by adults or independently accessible by children, which move learning forward and aid in development.

Learning and development. Teachers prioritise getting to know each pupil at the very beginning of their time in school, through the Reception Baseline Assessment, their own observations and conversations with previous settings and caregivers. This ensures every child is supported to make progress from their personal starting points. High quality lessons and activities are provided across the Foundation Stage curriculum to ensure every child has the chance to develop and achieve.

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 conversations and an end of year report. Parents are encouraged to read with their child and are supported to do this effectively. 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.

Teaching staff prioritize forming positive attachments with children at the very start of their school loves. This ensures children feel safe and supported in school, meaning they get the very best out of their learning. Children are supported to form kind and caring relationships with peers and to start to build relationships. They are taught to navigate social situations and build their resilience when this goes wrong.

Enabling Environments - There are specific areas where the children can be active, be focused, be 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 learning opportunities, whilst also providing free access to high quality resources. We ensure that play-based learning is highly valued and that children have opportunities to direct their own learning, paired with adult-led sessions to forward progress. Our indoor and outdoor spaces are calm, inspiring and safe. They foster a sense of intrigue and curiosity, whilst also reducing cognitive load. Our classrooms continually strive to be places where children love to be and where they feel a positive attitude towards their learning. Our environment evolves throughout the year to reflect our individual children, their passions, interests and experiences. We ensure that resources and spaces are safe and tidy, and are always monitored by an adult.

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, and where this is not possible, to reach their own personal milestones. These areas of learning can be split into three prime and four specific areas of learning, all of which are 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

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.

All children sit the Reception Baseline Assessment within the first few weeks of their Reception Year. This is a non-threatening assessment taken 1-1 with the child's class teacher as a way of assessing their individual starting points. Results are submitted to the DFE. Along with teacher's own observations and conversations with previous settings and caregivers, this acts a valuable form of information for which to base future planning.

Teachers and Learning Assistants carry out observations of children whilst engaged opportunities which support their learning and development. These are often recorded on our online learning platform, Seesaw. Observations are carefully carried out to as not to interrupt or disrupt the flow of learning, but so as to determine a child's understanding, ability or progress in a given area. Parents and Carers also have the ability to contribute observations or comments on their child's learning or progress through the online learning journal.

The planning within the EYFS is based around planned topics but is flexible to accommodate children's interest or ability levels. These plans are used by the EYFS team as a guide for weekly planning. However, these are continually adapted in response to the ever-changing needs 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, secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them." **Early Years Foundation Stage Framework 2023, Department for Education.**

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 2023. This includes the following:

- Safeguard children.
- Ensure the adults who have contact with children are suitable.
- Promote good health.
- Support and understand behaviour.
- Maintain records, policies, and procedures.

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 – All staff who come into contact with children are made aware of any specific medical needs they may have, for example eczema, asthma, food allergies/intolerances, epilepsy, and this is displayed in the classroom environment and on our online systems. Staff are made aware when medication is required, and this is only administered by a registered first aider under the guidance of a medical care plan completed by parents or carers or medical professionals.

Inhalers and ointments will be stored in a First Aid box in each classroom, out of reach from the children but easily accessible by staff. These are checked frequently. Specific members of staff are First Aid Trained and first aid training is always up-to-date.

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. Children are supported to take adequate precautions against adverse weather.

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. Staff follow the school's intimate care policy and no intimate care is to be given without the expressed 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. Where it is felt that children may need additional support in their transition to school, members of the Foundation Stage Teaching team will also visit preschool settings 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.

Phased induction – for the first two days of term, children will attend school on a half day basis and with only half of their class at a time. 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, in which case a personalised transition timetable may be agreed with the child's parent or carer.

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. Our Year 1 classrooms are set up in a similar way to our EYFS classrooms and continue to promote a provision approach to learning.

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.