

WINGATE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Policy for EYFS

July 2021

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Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Introduction

This policy statement reflects our own school philosophy on the implementation of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). In this setting the policy refers to children who are taught in the Reception classes. In our school we place great value on the learning in early childhood and consider this learning to be the fundamental building blocks upon which all other learning is based, as the statement below indicates;

“The ladder of education can never be secure unless the first rung is firmly in place”

Rosemary W Peacock. HMI.

Furthermore, this policy reflects our school commitment to the Rights of the Child and our achievement of becoming a Rights Respecting School and it complies with Article 28 of the UNCRC ‘Every child has the right to an education’ as well as Article 29 ‘Education must develop every child’s personality, talents and abilities to the full’. Although direct reference to this is not continuously made, the policy has been written with full awareness of our responsibility and commitment to children’s Rights.

Our Vision

At Wingate Primary school, we believe that early childhood is valid in itself and is a part of life, not simply a preparation for work or the next stage of education. The Reception Year is such an important part of early childhood development and we feel this is the year in which children will need to develop independence, resilience, self regulation and kindness. We can achieve this by providing our children with a safe, happy and comfortable environment;

“If young children feel safe, they can take risks, ask questions, make mistakes, learn to trust, share feelings and grow.”

Alfie Kohn

Statement of Intent

In Reception we learn differently to the other year groups in our school. The majority of our learning and development is progressed through effective play. We aim to provide a creative and child initiated curriculum where every pupil can thrive. We will promote independence, resilience, compassion and determination throughout our Reception setting, underpinned by a nurturing and positive ethos.

Through our teaching, relationships with children and our learning environment, children will have a holistic curriculum, which enables them to develop and explore their own interests. Day in, day out, our children will follow their interests through open-ended resources and effective adult interactions within the continuous provision. We will then notice the fascinations our children have, so we can respond and create opportunities to follow these fascinations and learn more about them. Some interests that children often have are planned for in our curriculum planning, however this planning can be adapted in order for our children to follow their own fascinations. Each child will form a foundation of phonic knowledge, Early

Reading, Writing and Mathematics. These are either taught in discrete sessions, streamed groups, or while the children are engrossed in their play (depending on the appropriateness). We believe that this curriculum forms a powerful foundation for life-long learning at Wingate Primary school. It allows our children's first year in our school to be an exciting, enjoyable and unique time in their lives, which will help them to continue to be the most important people in the world!

Rationale

The aims and principles for the EYFS in our school

The 1998 Education Act expressed aims for the curriculum during the period of compulsory schooling. It should:

'promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils' 'prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life'.

The 1998 report on educational provision for the under fives from the Education, Science and Arts Select Committee confirmed that:

'The aims for under fives are basically the same as those for any other phase with the exception that very young children need a considerable additional amount of care. Care and education for the under five's are complementary and inseparable.'

The overarching aim of the EYFS is to help young children achieve the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) in Development Matters. The developmental bands 0-60 months are covered prior to the ELGs and are divided into Prime and Specific Areas. To ensure every aspect of the whole child is taken into account. Staff will also look at how they learn through the 'Characteristics of Effective Learning' – Playing and Exploring, Active Learning and Creating and Thinking Critically.

Playing and exploring:

- finding out and exploring (Shows curiosity about objects, events, people/ Uses senses to explore world around them/ Engaging in open-ended activity/ Showing particular interests).
- using what they know in their play (Pretending objects are other things from experience/ Representing experiences in play/ Takes on a role in their play/ Acts out experiences with others)
- being willing to have a go (Initiates activities/ Seeks a challenge/ Shows a can-do attitude/ Takes risks, engages in new experiences and learns by trial and error)

Active learning:

- being involved and concentrating (Maintains focus on their activity for a period of time/ Shows high levels of energy and fascination/ Not easily distracted/ Pays attention to detail)
- keeping on trying (Persists even with challenges/ Shows a belief of more effort or a different approach pays off/ Bounces back after difficulties)
- enjoying achieving what they set out to do (Shows satisfaction when meeting their goals/ Being proud of how they accomplished something – not the result - / Enjoys meeting challenges for their own sake rather than rewards or praise)

Creating and thinking critically:

- having their own ideas (Thinks of ideas/ Finds ways to solve problems/ Finds new ways to do things)

- using what they already know to learn new things (Makes links and notices patterns/ Makes predictions/ Tests ideas/ Develops ideas of grouping, sequences, cause and effect)
- choosing ways to do things and finding new ways (Plans and makes decisions about how to approach a task, solve a problem and reach a goal/ Checks how well their activities are going/ Changes strategy as needed/ Reviews how well the approach worked)

All staff are driven to ensure the children achieve appropriately to their developmental stage and will do this by:

- **Setting the standards** for the learning, development and care young children should experience when they are attending a setting outside their family home, ensuring that every child makes progress and that no child gets left behind;
- **Providing for equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice and ensuring the every child is included and not disadvantaged because of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties or disabilities, gender or ability;
- **Creating the framework for partnership working** between parents/carers and professionals, and between all settings that the child attends;
- **Improving quality and consistency** in the early years sector through a universal set of standards which apply to all settings, ending the distinction between care and learning in the existing framework, and providing the basis for the inspection and regulation regime;
- **Laying a secure foundation for future learning** through learning and development that is planned around the individual needs and interests of the child, and informed by the use of ongoing observational assessment;

The following guiding principles shape the practice in the early years:

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**
- 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.
- Importance of **learning and development**. Children develop and learn at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Curriculum and Provision for EYFS

In our school we will provide a teaching programme which promotes children's learning in:
 Personal, Social and Emotional Development
 Communication and Language

Physical Development
Literacy
Mathematics
Understanding the World
Expressive Arts & Design

It is recognised that the curriculum for young children encompasses the experiences and the resources which the school provides, the relationships which exist within the school, and the procedures and organisational approaches, which contribute to the ethos of the school. All of these aspects of school life provide valuable learning opportunities and contribute to the achievement of these overall aims. In our school we believe that:

- Early childhood is valid in itself and is a part of life, not simply a preparation for work or the next stage of education.
- In the early years children learn best through first hand experience.
- What children can do, not what they cannot do, is the starting point in children's education.
- Children must be taught how to think, not what to think.
- Children need to explore and learn about the natural environment.

Young Children's Learning

In our school we provide a wide range of curricular experiences for our children, and in Foundation Stage these experiences are planned through and around play. The environment in our school is both challenging and adaptable, as we provide for the differing learning needs of our children. We understand that young children learn most effectively within a challenging and carefully resourced environment, and through planned and purposeful play activities. Spontaneous play is valued, extended and supported, and an appropriate balance is maintained between child-initiated, independent activities and adult-directed activities. Play is used as a context through which language and communication is developed and extended.

'Through play children:

- *Explore, develop and represent learning experiences that help them make sense of the world;*
- *Practise and build up ideas, concepts and skills;*
- *Learn how to control impulses and understand the need for rules;*
- *Can be alone, be alongside others or co-operate as they talk or rehearse their feelings;*
- *Take risks and make mistakes;*
- *Think creatively and imaginatively;*
- *Communicate with others as they investigate or solve problems;*
- *Express fears or relive anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.'*

(Curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage - QCA/DfEE)

All staff in our school recognise that how children are encouraged to learn is as important as what they learn.

Promoting Young Children's Learning

Children in our school have opportunities to learn through instruction, copying, trying, asking questions, making mistakes, practising, succeeding and repeating. These opportunities are brought together through play and talk.

This is demonstrated through the organisation of the classrooms, the grouping of children and the management of their learning, which ensures that:

- Children can initiate activities that promote learning and which enable them to learn from each other;
- Children learn through movement and using all of their senses;
- Children have time to explore ideas and interests in depth;
- Children feel secure, which helps them to become confident learners;
- Children can learn in different ways and at different rates;
- Children make links in their learning;
- Creative and imaginative play activities are planned to promote the development and use of language.

Underpinning Principles

In Wingate Primary School we believe that children have a right:

- To feel warm, comfortable and welcome
- To an environment which is clean, lively and stimulating
- To structure and order within their day
- To feel safe, secure, confident and valued
- To make choices and to develop independence
- To have adults who will care for them
- To have a balanced range of activities
- To use materials and resources which are clean, well cared for and safe
- To have time to practise and to try things out
- To have their successes celebrated
- To have space to move around

Provision for children within the foundation stage in our school acknowledges these basic rights and ensures that:

- staff understand that children develop rapidly during the early years - physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially;
- all children feel included, secure and valued;
- early years experience builds on what children already know and can do;
- no child is excluded or disadvantaged;
- parents and practitioners work together;
- the curriculum is carefully structured;
- there are opportunities for children to engage in activities planned by adults and also those that they plan or initiate themselves;
- practitioners are able to observe and respond appropriately to children;
- well-planned, purposeful activity and appropriate intervention by staff is used to engage children in the learning process;
- rich and stimulating experiences are provided within a learning environment, which is well planned and well organised.

These underlying principles are demonstrated through the school environment, the learning opportunities provided and the relationships which exist within our school.

Opportunities for Learning

Within the Reception classes in our school, the following areas our children play and learn in are the:

- *Domestic Role Play and Imaginative Play Area,*
- *Dressing Up Area,*
- *Small world play, which may be initiated through the interests of the children or planned to link in with learning topics,*
- *Mark making area,*
- *Painting Area,*
- *Transient Art Area,*
- *Reading Area,*
- *Investigation Area,*
- *Sand Area,*
- *Water Area,*
- *Wood work Area, resourced with child appropriate woodwork tools and balsa wood,*
- *Small Construction Area, resourced with a variation of mobilo, brio, duplo and lego*
- *Creative Workshop Area – using recycled materials and resources to join them,*
- *Wooden Block Area,*
- *Maths Area,*
- *Technology area, resourced with laptops, iPads or Beebots.(Spring term)*
- *Outdoor Classroom with continuous provision for learning through sand, water, imaginative role-play, big small world, games area, growing and digging area, mud play area and large construction area.*

Enhancements are also introduced by staff to enhance learning specific to our planned curriculum.

Planned learning is also promoted through:

- the **relationships** which exist within Foundation Stage and our school as a whole between adults and children, children and their peers, adults and other adults;
- the **daily routines** and **classroom organisation**;
- planned **adult focused** activities for individuals and groups of children.
- continuous provision in all areas.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

Our school is characterised by the quality of care that is extended to all of its members. Values such as thoughtfulness, politeness, consideration, sharing, tolerance and understanding are built into the ethos and the teaching of the school. Emphasis is placed upon the quality of the relationships, which exist both within the school and in the wider community.

Religious Education

Religious Education makes a valuable contribution towards helping children to know about their own culture and beliefs and to learn to respect other cultures and beliefs. The multi sensory nature of good experiential RE will help children's creative and physical development. Guidance on RE in the foundation stage can be found in Durham's Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education. Children in Reception follow the Programmes of Study for Christianity, Buddhism and elements of Hinduism.

Planning for Learning and Teaching

Targets for children's learning are defined in the statutory document 'Early Years Foundation Stage.'

Children progress towards these targets at different rates. However, it is our aim to ensure that all children have appropriate opportunities to enable them to make maximum progress. Therefore, activities are differentiated to take account of children's differing stages of development supporting those children who are working towards the goals as well as those who have reached or exceeded them. Planning for all children within the foundation stage relates to the areas of development in the Foundation Stage Profile. However, specific learning objectives for more able children will ensure that, within this framework, progress towards and within the National Curriculum is promoted.

Within Reception in our school activities are planned and resourced for long, medium and short term learning with the emphasis placed upon the learning needs and interests of our children. Resources and tasks are regularly reviewed to ensure that children's learning is continually developed and extended.

Staff plan for areas of continuous provision where children can extend and develop their own learning across the year. This long term planning ensures that, throughout the Reception year, children receive a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes the attainment of the Early Learning Goals. Planning maps out key steps in children's learning and takes account of children's age and stage of development.

Topics and themes are planned in the medium term, lasting for as long as the needs and interests of the children are met, curricular demands and events in our local community and the wider world. Medium Term planning is informed by children's prior attainment.

Short term planning encompasses enhancements to continuous provision to deepen and extend learning experiences. In our school, great emphasis is placed upon Creative and Physical development and all children are provided with opportunities for individual, small group and whole class experiences in these learning areas during a typical week.

Short term planning identifies adult deployment, intended learning outcomes, and shows how activities will be differentiated for individuals or groups of children. The evaluation of short term planning informs future learning activities, ensuring that continuity and progression in children's learning is promoted.

Staff continuously evaluate the learning and provision in Foundation Stage, both formally and through discussion. Planning and evaluations are monitored by the Head Teacher regularly, and Curriculum Leaders monitor learning, teaching and provision so that achievements of our Foundation Stage children are built upon as they move into Key Stage 1.

Equal Opportunities

Wingate Primary School is committed to providing equal opportunities for all pupils through the organisation, ethos, curriculum and resourcing of the school.

Staff employ organisational strategies and teaching approaches, which undermine gender, cultural and religious distinction and actively intervene to ensure that all children access fully the learning opportunities provided.

Special Educational Needs

Wingate Primary School acknowledges that the central issue of the policy for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities is that of raising achievement for all. In addressing curricular provision for children the school recognises that, as stated in the Warnock Report:

'The purpose of education for all children is the same; the goals are the same. But the help that individual children need in progressing towards them will be different.'

Curriculum planning ensures that children encounter the same learning opportunities as their peers and those experiences recognise the differing levels of attainment and rates of progress of individuals. Planned learning opportunities support the development of all children's development in the areas covered by the Foundation Stage Profile. Further details can be found in our school's Special Educational Needs Policy.

Parent/ Carer Involvement

Staff recognise that parents/ carers are a child's first educators and value the important role which parents/ carers play in their child's learning. A commitment is made to involve parents/ carers through informal contact with staff and through the provision, on a termly basis of more formal discussions about children's progress in Reception. Parents/ carers are encouraged to work in school on a formal or informal basis. Parents/ carers working with children other than their own will be asked to undergo a DBS check to ensure the safety and security of all our children in line with our School Aims and LSCB guidelines.

Information for parents/ carers is provided through Curriculum Overviews, regular Newsletters, the Family Engagement Notice-board and school displays as well as through formal and informal discussions with staff. Parents/ carers have the opportunity to speak with Teachers each day from 8.45-8.55 or after the school day as well as other times by appointment.

Induction Arrangements

Most of the children in our school attend Wingate Nursery School and so close liaison has been developed between both schools to aid the transition of our children. Throughout their time in the Wingate Nursery the children have regular opportunities to come into school to take part in Physical Education either in the hall or on the adventure playground. In the summer term, Foundation Stage staff from Wingate Primary School will make a phone call to the parents or carers, providing key dates and a brief explanation of the induction process and information about their child. Later in the summer term, staff from Wingate Primary school will visit Wingate Nursery to discuss the following year's intake. Staff from Reception then spend a day at the nursery meeting the children and observing/ discussing them with Nursery staff. If your child attends another nursery provider, staff will make contact with that provider and make an appointment to visit the setting if appropriate. Parents/ carers of children due to start Reception are invited to an induction meeting in our school led by the Head Teacher and involving all Reception staff to explain routines and procedures in our school. Parents/ carers are then shown around our school and have the opportunity to discuss matters further with staff. Opportunities are provided for completion of admission documentation including Emergency Contact Forms. Our uniform suppliers take orders for uniforms for delivery prior to the start of the new academic year. If for some circumstances arise where you are not able to attend a meeting, you will be invited for a one to one meeting and a brief introduction PowerPoint will be put on our website and Facebook page explaining the routines and procedures in our school. In September all children enter on the first day of term. Parents bring their children into class to begin at 9.30 a.m., then the children have lunch with the other children and finish at

2.30p.m. By the second day all children will attend full time school from 8.55am until 2.55pm. Parents/carers are encouraged to help their children to walk into school independently. For the first few days, older children will greet the children in the school yard and help them into school.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

The school assesses Reception children using Early Excellence Assessment Tracker (EExAT). The EExAT records children's well-being, levels of involvement, observations linked to the EYFS, their characteristics of effective learning and captures their development providing information to whether each child is on track or not in relation to their age. This is presented in a record sheet, which shows the whole picture of each child's learning, and development while in our school. This is an integral element of the school's recording system, which is used throughout the foundation stage to monitor pupil progress and to inform the Foundation Stage profile which is completed in the Summer Term. The information and resulting analysed data informs pupil grouping, curriculum planning, and target setting for individual children in Reception and as they move into Key Stage 1. Assessment opportunities are identified within the long term planning. Assessment information is collected as an integral part of the teaching and learning process. A written report on the Prime and Specific areas of learning is prepared at the end of the Reception year, which forms the agenda for a formal discussion, which is held in the second half of the summer term.

Children in Reception will record in their books at least once per week. This piece of work will mainly consist of a writing opportunity or a numeracy concept, which reflects the children's learning and understanding of phonics and writing. Other pieces of recording that may be carried out weekly may be an observation of the children in areas. This will include photographs and an explanation of the children's learning which links back to the EYFS profile which will be recorded on EExAT. Reception staff will focus on the extraordinary moments of each child's learning when documenting observations of children. This will allow Reception staff to focus on the play and interaction with the children rather than on gathering evidence that is easily remembered by staff.

Recording in books will provide evidence of each child's learning and an indication of verbal feedback to the children from the adults in Reception. Additionally, the children will read in a guided reading session or a 1 to 1 reading session each week. Their learning within this session will be documented in a guided reading record or on a Reading Assessment sheet in the child's workbook.

Monitoring the Implementation of the Policy

The implementation of this policy is monitored by Foundation Stage Teachers and the Head Teacher through the schools identified procedures for curriculum monitoring, and through performance management. The curriculum monitoring system is described in the Staff Handbook.

This policy is written with consideration to our school commitment to the Rights of the Child and our achievement of becoming a Rights Respecting School. Although direct reference to this is not continually made, the policy has been written with full awareness of our responsibility and commitment to Children's Rights.

Date of Review May 2022