



OUTWOODS PRIMARY SCHOOL EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

Our Early Year's policy describes the framework upon which the beliefs and practice of this school are based. This policy should be used in conjunction with the Teaching and Learning policy, Assessment policy, SEN policy, Inclusion policy and the Safeguarding policy.

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five 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 together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all early years' providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.' **Statutory framework for the Early Years.**

Rational

We believe that every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to reach their full potential. Children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. In the Foundation Stage, children learn best through play based activities and first-hand experiences. Each child is unique and is valued as an individual who begins school with a variety of experiences and knowledge upon which the Foundation Stage builds. We aim to provide a secure foundation through learning and development opportunities based around the needs of each child.

Aims

We aim to:

- ❖ Provide a happy, caring, safe and secure environment for learning, which meets the individual needs and interests of the children.
- ❖ Develop warm and secure relationships between children and adults.
- ❖ Provide opportunities for all children to succeed in an atmosphere of care and to feel valued.
- ❖ Provide a high quality curriculum in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage document.
- ❖ Monitor each child's progress throughout the Foundation Stage, assessing their individual needs and helping children to progress.
- ❖ Develop an awareness of moral and social values.
- ❖ Encourage active learning through first-hand experiences both in indoor and outdoor play.
- ❖ Encourage children to become self-motivated and independent learners with a positive attitude to learning and self-discipline.
- ❖ Value the cultural diversity within our school and community.
- ❖ Ensure that all children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability have the opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable curriculum.
- ❖ Foster positive home-school links and share a common sense of purpose with parents. Each child is assigned a Key Person with a team of practitioners contributing towards the care and learning for the children and their parents.

The Foundation Stage

We adhere to the Statutory Framework of the EYFS (2017) and the four guiding principles that shape and guide practice within our Early Years setting. These are:

- **A Unique Child:** Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- **Positive Relationships:** Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- **Enabling Environments:** Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and carers.
- **Learning and Development:** Children develop and learn in different ways. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

The content of the curriculum within the Early Years unit is set out in the Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage where guidance is given on effective learning and teaching through the seven areas:

Prime Areas

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

Specific Areas

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

All areas of learning are important and interconnected. The prime areas are crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. Children are supported through the four **Specific Areas** through which the three **Prime Areas** are strengthened and applied.

The way in which a child engages with other people and their environment underpin learning and development across all areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner. The **Characteristics of Effective Learning** are:

- Playing and Exploring
- Active Learning
- Creating and thinking critically

The characteristics of effective learning describe factors, which play a central role in a child's learning and in becoming an effective learner. They are vital elements of support for the transition process from EYFS to Year 1. The characteristics of learning run through and underpin all seven areas of learning and development, representing processes rather than outcomes. Information describing the child's characteristics of effective learning will provide Year 1 teachers with vital background and context when considering the child's next stage of development and future learning needs. The commentary that follows the child through to Year 1 consists of a short description (i.e. one to two paragraphs) of how the child demonstrates the three key characteristics of effective learning.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

Foundation Stage staff (Teachers and Teaching Assistants) use observations as the basis for planning. Foundation Stage staff are skilled at observing children to identify their achievements, interests and next steps for learning. These observations then lead the direction of the planning and ensure that the children's interests are explored and developed. This fostering of the children's interests develops a high level of motivation for the children's learning. The planning objectives within the Foundation Stage are taken from the Development Matters statements from the Early Years Foundation Stage document. We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal observations. Each child's level of development must be assessed against the 17 early learning goals by the end of the year. Practitioners must indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are exceeding expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). This is the EYFS Profile. This is then shared with parents and the Year 1 staff on their transition to Key Stage 1. The children's development is also tracked using the school's

tracking system (SIMs) as well as our own internal tracking systems at the start of the year and at regular intervals throughout the year.

Outdoor Provision

'Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage benefit from spending a lot of time learning through playing outside, whatever the weather. This makes a significant contribution to the excellent progress they make, particularly in their personal, social, emotional and physical development as well as their communication skills.'

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We believe that all areas can be addressed equally in the inside and outdoor areas. Well-planned outdoor play is a key way in which Early Years staff supports young children to learn with enjoyment and challenge. It enables children to learn by working on a larger, more active scale than is possible indoors. The learning environment is set up to support and extend children's learning in all areas of the curriculum. In the Nursery class, children have free access to the outdoor area. Reception children are provided with daily access to the outdoor area, which has a system in place to monitor numbers and allow all children equal access.

Parents

We believe that all parents have an important role to play in the education of their child. When parents/carers and practitioners work together in early years settings, the results have a positive impact on the child's development.

Partnership with parents is valued and a two-way communication is encouraged through:

- Induction meetings prior to the children starting in the Nursery or Reception classes.
- Curriculum meeting for Reception parents in the autumn term.
- 'All about me' documents completed by parents termly to inform teachers about children's achievements at home.
- Termly parent/teacher interviews to discuss a child's progress or their next steps.
- Parent's booklet provided to inform parents on the EYFS practices and curriculum.
- The use of the home/school contact book to communicate with or convey any concerns or issues to staff in school.
- The Parent Observation Board where parents are able to add their own observations on the 'I'm a star!' slips to compliment the observations that are completed in school.

Transition

Our aim is to establish a smooth and successful transition to school and from Foundation Stage into Key Stage 1.

This is facilitated by:

- Visits to partnership pre-school settings.
- Parents completing an 'all about me' document to share information about their child with the Nursery and Reception teams.
- Meet the teacher meetings with parents and children.
- Play sessions offered to children in the summer term.
- Inviting all prospective parents to a meeting in the summer term about their child's start to school.
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting in the autumn term outlining the Reception curriculum, to enable them to understand the value of supporting their child's learning at home.
- The Nursery children spending time in the Reception classes in the summer term prior to them starting in the autumn term.
- The Reception children spending time in the Year 1 classes in the summer term prior to them moving in to Key Stage 1.