

Wilden V. A. Primary School

A Church of England School



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Early Years Foundation Stage Policy - March 2020

The mustard seed, the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches.

Matthew: 13, v 32

In partnership with parents, governors, St Nicholas Church and community, we strive to ensure all children are embraced and nurtured. Our creative curriculum teaches our children to be generous, loving, resilient, inquisitive and courageous; enabling them to flourish as they journey through God's ever changing garden of life.

We would like our school, which reflects Christian and British values, to be at the heart of the community, sharing, supporting and learning together with everyone as equals. Our children have the right to high quality learning experiences to help them to be the best they can be. We encourage our children to be creative, unique, open-minded and independent individuals, respectful of themselves and of others in our school, our local community and the wider world.

We aim to nurture our children on their journey through life so they can grow into safe, caring, democratic, responsible and tolerant adults who make a positive difference to British Society and to the world. "Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to their full potential. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure safe and happy childhood is important in its own right, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. Children may choose to begin attending our Foundation Stage Unit the term they are 3 years old. Pupils begin attending school full time at the start of the academic year when they turn five.

The EYFS 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 and sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children at Wilden VA Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school. In our school we believe that all our children matter. 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. In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively; planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- planning opportunities that 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;

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children through respectful relationships, enabling them to understand boundaries and limits, and to help them understand why these exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

Welfare

"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 understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2017.

We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare of children;
- promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill;
- manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs;
- ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so;
- ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose;
- ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs;
- maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

Positive Relationships

At Wilden VA Primary School we recognise that children learn to be strong independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children.

We do this through:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in school and offering home visits;
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our classes;
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There are opportunities for parents each term to meet with the teacher at which they discuss the child's progress with the teacher;
 - arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: Performances and assemblies throughout the year, stay and play sessions, parents evenings, curriculum evenings.

All staff involved with the EYFS work hard to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them.

Enabling Environments

At Wilden VA Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

The planning within the EYFS follows the schools' Long Term Plan and Medium Term Plans (MTPs), which are based around termly themes. These plans are used by the EYFS teachers as a guide for weekly planning, however the teacher may alter these MTPs in response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children. We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, and this involves the teachers and adults within the setting. They also contain information provided by parents and other settings. Each child's level of development is recorded against seventeen assessment scales derived from the ELG's.

The Learning Environment

The EYFS classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The classrooms are set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and located equipment and resources independently. The EYFS has its own enclosed outdoor area. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children opportunities to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant.

We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all seven areas of learning.

Learning and Development

We recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are inter-connected.

Teaching and Learning Style

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. Features that relate to the EYFS are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;

- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS;
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents.

Play

"Children's play reflects their wide-ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development."

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and 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. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Active Learning

"Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods." Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfactions as they take ownership of their learning.

Creativity and Critical Thinking

"When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions." Children should be given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can

access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classrooms both inside and outside to extend their learning.

Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning:

Prime Areas:

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

Specific Areas:

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

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELGs) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teachers to follow the principles stated in this policy. There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. The identified Governor will discuss EYFS practice with the EYFS Staff regularly and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion. The Head Teacher and Foundation Stage Lead will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children in line with our whole school ethos and approach to Safeguarding.

Head Teacher

Date

Chair of Governors.....

Date