



Wittering Primary School

Early Years Policy

Wittering Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Keeping Children Safe in Education, Safeguarding Policy, the Code of Conduct, Acceptable Use Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy, Health and Safety policy should be read in conjunction with this policy.

Early Years Lead – Sarah Sutherland

Aim

At Wittering we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning. We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent. We value the individual child and work alongside parents and others to meet their needs and help every child to reach their full potential.

As outlined in the Statutory Framework for the EYFS 'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfill 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.' (Statutory EYFS framework 2023) We adhere to the Statutory Framework of the EYFS and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings.

These are:

- 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

- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with SEND. (Statutory EYFS framework 2023)

Principles into practice

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven areas of learning, using play as the primary vehicle for learning
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support
- Work in partnership with parents and within the wider context
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-initiated, adult-led and child-initiated, supported by the adult
- The whole reception team work with all children to develop close relationships with individual children
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and outside.

Foundation Stage Curriculum

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests, cultural capital and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve the early learning goals and ensure they are ready for Year 1.

All the seven areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

These three areas are the **prime** areas:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

Children are also supported through the four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The **specific** areas are:

- Literacy

- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which they explore, think creatively and are active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

As a team, we write medium term plans using the EYFS based on a series of topics, each of which offers experiences in all seven areas. These plans are reviewed by the SLT. These plans are flexible for unplanned circumstances or children's responses.

Practitioners working with the children below age-related expectations will focus strongly on the three prime areas, which are the basis for successful learning in the other four specific areas. The three prime areas reflect the key skills and capacities all children need to develop and learn effectively, and become ready for school. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as the children move through the Early Years at Wittering and grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

Children have whole group and small group times which increase as they progress through the EYFS with timetabled daily phonics sessions using Twinkl phonics, teaching aspects of Mathematics and Literacy, including shared reading and writing.

The curriculum is primarily delivered using a play-based approach. 'Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play which is guided by adults.' (EYFS Framework 2023) We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are planned by the adults. During children's play, early years practitioners interact to stretch and challenge children further, asking key questions and extending vocabulary choices.

In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice. We create a stimulating environment to encourage children to develop their learning both inside and outside.

Observation and Assessment

All children will complete the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) which will be submitted to the DfE within the first six weeks in which a child starts reception.

As part of our daily practice we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform our future plans. We record our observations through various means one of which is Tapestry which compiles an online learning journal. All staff contribute to observations and discussions take place. Parents are able to access their child's journal online and contribute by added their own observations or commenting on staff observations. These ongoing observations are used to inform the EYFS Profile/Developmental Matters/ Early year outcomes bands. Alongside Tapestry, teaching and teaching assistant staff record observations in daily diaries which are monitored by line managers and the SLT. The children have their own 'scrapbooks' where we evidence key or special events/achievements. Our assessment system across the

school is Insight and we also make use of the No More Marking writing assessment process across the Soke Education Trust. The child's progress is reviewed every term/half term and is regularly discussed with parents. In the Autumn and Spring term, parents are invited to attend a parents evening. Within the final term, we provide the parents with a report based on the child's progress throughout the year. The parents are then given the opportunity to discuss the report and make comment.

Safeguarding

Only school equipment is used for recording pupils and their work. Pediatric first aid trained staff are permanently deployed within the EYFS Unit and always accompany trips and visits. As a school we use the My Concern online platform to record any child protection concerns.

Health and Safety

Children's safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. We have stringent policies and procedures in place to ensure children's safety.

We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious snacks and following set procedures when children become ill or has an accident/injury.

Inclusion

We value all our children as individuals at Wittering irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace so that most of our children achieve the Early Learning Goals. We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so, work closely with parents and outside agencies

Parents as partners and the wider context

We strive to create and maintain partnership with parents and carers as we recognise that together we can have a significant impact on a child's learning. We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child's education and care in numerous ways. Working with other services and organisations is integral to our practice in order to meet the needs of our children. At times we may need to share information with other professionals to provide the best support possible. We draw on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on outings/inviting members of the community into our setting.

Transitions

Transitions are carefully planned for and time given to ensure continuity of learning. At any transition, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child and other settings, including nurseries and childminders. Children attend introductory sessions (both with and without parents/carers) to develop familiarity with the setting and practitioners.

Children start school on a two week part-time basis. Following this, the children enter school full time.

In the final term, the respective teacher and Year 1 teacher liaise to discuss the individual children and their needs and analyse the assessment data to inform future planning.

The role of the EYFS Lead

The EYFS Lead is responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in EYFS through:

- Monitoring and evaluating the EYFS through assessment of pupil progress
- Provision of the EYFS curriculum (including intervention and support programmes)
- Ensuring a quality learning environment
- Considered deployment and provision of support staff
- Taking the lead in policy development
- Auditing and supporting colleagues in their Continuing Professional Development
- Purchasing and organising resources
- Keeping up to date with recent developments in EYFS
- Attending EYFS phase meetings across the Soke Education Trust
- Moderation alongside Soke Education Trust EYFS colleagues
- Attending and contributing to SLT meetings
- Act as a point of contact for parents/carers either via the Class Dojo platform or in person.
- To monitor and review achievement and attainment of all pupils and curriculum provision across the EYFS classes
- Liaising with nurseries and childminders to ensure smooth transitions
- Regularly reporting to the school's governing body.

The role of the class teacher

The EYFS class teacher is responsible for ensuring effective teaching and learning via the progression of knowledge, skills and long-term memory of the children in their care by:

- Implementing the EYFS Policy
- Taking responsibility for the methods of teaching and learning used in order to ensure that policy and practice is joined up throughout the EYFS, including lesson planning, record keeping and assessment procedures
- Developing strong contacts with relevant agencies in order to stay aware of all initiatives in matters relating to EYFS children, particularly those with SEND
- Planning, implementing and evaluating the continuous development of our provision for EYFS children, taking into account training requirements, appropriate teaching resources, timetable arrangements etc.
- Facilitating excellent communication between EYFS staff and parents/carers on all aspects of our EYFS provision
- Assisting in the process of managing and appraising the work of our teaching assistants
- Assisting in mentoring, supervising and guiding new staff recruited into our EYFS classes
- Actively contributing to the process of the self-evaluation of our EYFS provision

- Promoting and developing the outdoor learning opportunities within the early years, encouraging all staff to understand the benefits of outdoor learning.

Updated		Ratified		Review Frequency	Next Review	Signed By	
By	Date	By	Date			Head	Chair
Sarah Sutherill	September 2023	LGC	04.02.24	2 Years	Autumn 2025	<i>C. Blake</i>	