

WEST RISE COMMUNITY INFANT SCHOOL  
&  
WEST RISE NURSERY

# A Policy for the Early Years Foundation Stage

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## Welcome to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) at West Rise Community Infant School.

The EYFS is a very important stage in the child's development and education, it applies to children from birth until the end of the Reception year. At West Rise Community Infant School all children join us at the beginning of the school year in which they are five.

### **The Early Years Foundation Stage framework**

The Nursery and Reception follow the curriculum as outlined in the 2017 Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) document, which is available on the school website or to download at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>. This document is a principled approach to Early Years education, bringing together children's welfare, learning and development requirements through **four guiding principles**:

- A unique child
- Positive relationships
- Enabling environments
- Learning and development

*Working to these principles is central to the work of the Nursery and Reception classes at West Rise and as such fully embedded in our work and reflected in this policy document.*

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support to achieve their full potential. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure 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. When parents choose their child's school they want to know that the provision will keep their children framework that provides that assurance'

*(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage)*

## **PRINCIPLES AND AIMS**

All children at West Rise are given the opportunity to experience the very best possible start to their education

At West Rise we aim to

- Provide an enabling environment in which all children feel included, secure and valued.
- Provide well planned learning opportunities where children can explore, investigate and learn both indoors and outdoors.
- Build on what children already know and can do and celebrate individual achievement.
- Recognise and respect individuality and value children's interests
- Work closely with parents and develop parents as partners in their child's education.
- Help children develop respect and trust in their relationships with each other and with the adults in school.
- Promote self esteem as well as enable children to reach their full potential through high expectations.
- Teach the children about wellbeing and their brains. Encourage a culture of mindfulness and gratitude in all that we do.

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

At West Rise we are committed to providing equality of opportunity for all children. We recognise and value diversity in all its forms and really value the uniqueness of each child and the experiences that children bring to school. We ensure that the learning opportunities provided set realistic and challenging expectations that seek to meet the needs of all children. Children are encouraged to develop respect for themselves and each other.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN) AND DISABILITY**

At West Rise, teachers in the Early Years Foundation Stage work hard to ensure that all children receive provision and support that is appropriate to their individual needs.

The EYFS team both Nursery and Reception have a key role to play in working with parents to identify learning needs and respond quickly to any area of particular difficulty or strength. We ensure that all children make the best possible progress and achieve their full potential. Our S.E.N policy outlines how we support children's learning.

The S.E.N. policy at school is based on the Government's code of practice.



## ORGANISATION

The nursery children are cared for in the beautiful purpose built nursery which is housed in the building at the front of the school. The Nursery is adjacent to the reception classes. Such close proximity allows a smooth and effective transition into school. However, wherever a child has their pre-school experience we work hard to ensure a smooth transition into school.

The reception children are taught in one of their three classes and have access to beautiful and stimulating areas for out-door and creative learning.

Careful timetabling ensures that all children have experience of working in a variety of groupings and across all areas throughout the week. Our outdoor areas, in both nursery and reception are especially important, we believe that opportunities to learn through outdoor play is crucial to children's all round development.

Each class in reception has a class teacher and main class teaching assistant as well as other teaching assistants who teach and support the development of our reception children. Our favourable staffing ratio enables us to support each child to give of their best and to make best progress.

## THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE – LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The EYFS learning and development requirements comprise of seven areas of learning. However, young children learn in an integrated way and as such they do not necessarily separate learning between one curriculum area and another. This ensures the delivery of a holistic, child-centred curriculum which allows children to make lots of links between what they are learning.

The curriculum is centred on **three prime areas of learning**:

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

Providers must also support activities through **four specific areas** which strengthen the prime areas. These are:

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

### **Characteristics of Effective Learning**

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning and the nursery and reception teachers plan activities with these in mind. The characteristics highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them. The three characteristics are;

- Playing and Exploring – children investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’
- Active Learning – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- Creating and Thinking Critically – children have and develop their own ideas; make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

<b>LEARNING AND TEACHING</b>
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### **Active Learning through Play**

At West Rise we believe that learning for young children should be a natural, rewarding and enjoyable experience. Children are able to have time to explore ideas and interests through play and active involvement with the reception environment. We know that children learn in different ways and at different rates, and within this children are challenged and encouraged to achieve their best. We organise the day to provide a balance between the following:-

- Child initiated Activities - children make choices from within the learning environment to meet his/her outcome for learning.
- Adult Initiated Activities- practitioners provide the resources to stimulate and consolidate learning.

□ Adult Directed Activities – Children engage in planned activities to meet specific learning outcomes.

At West Rise, we recognise that young children learn best when they are active. We understand that active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods. Therefore, we believe that Early Years education should be as practical as possible and our EYFS setting has an ethos of learning through play. We recognise the importance of children's play. It is an essential and rich part of their learning process, supporting them in all areas of development. Play is a powerful motivator encouraging children to be creative and to develop their ideas, understanding and language. Play is also flexible and able to suit the preferred learning style of the child. It can provide multiple ways for children to learn a variety of different skills and concepts.

### **Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSE)**

At West Rise we believe that successful PSED is fundamental to all aspects of children's lives and learning.

Children gain confidence, self-esteem and build relationships with each other, through a range of experiences and in a variety of situations. Through play, circle time and everyday interactions, children become aware of each child's own needs and views and those of others. This encourages them to form good relationships. We aim to promote awareness and appreciation of what makes us unique, of their own culture, and that of others.

As children play and learn, they gain a sense of right and wrong and an understanding of the importance of appropriate behaviour. We work hard to provide children with a safe environment in which to learn. We have high expectations of behaviour and attitude to life and learning in general. Our wellness curriculum, mindfulness and wise owl fixed and growth mind set work, underpins all we do.

### **Communication and Language & Literacy**

At our school, the development of communication and use of language is at the heart of young children's learning. Children will have many opportunities to develop language eg; through role-play, conversations and class discussions. They also learn that there is a time for careful listening.

We aim to provide a print rich environment which shows language in signs, notices and obviously books. We foster an enthusiasm for books of many kinds. The children read daily and listen to stories, make up their own and begin to realise that reading unlocks meaning from the printed word.

Children are started on the Oxford Reading Tree reading scheme as soon as they enter Reception. We encourage parents to support them by providing a reading record so that we can share the process of teaching their child to read, and help parents to focus on their next step.

Through play and focused activities children will be able to understand the purpose of writing and begin to write for themselves. We develop an understanding of phonics through the 'Letters and Sounds' programme as well as 'Jolly Phonics', a sensory approach to phonic teaching.

### **Mathematics**

'Maths is everywhere and maths is fun'... this very much underlies our approach to the teaching of mathematics in the Foundation Stage.

Through number songs and rhymes and through maths games and stories, children develop mathematical understanding, through play and focussed activities children learn to use and understand mathematical language and identify and use numbers. Confidence in mathematics is developed through daily routines eg: register and calculating how many for school dinner. Through practical experiences such as counting, comparing, making patterns and exploring shape, space and measures children enjoy mathematical learning.

### **Understanding of the World**

Children are very curious about the world about them. Through practical experiences, seeking to find out and given opportunity to question, children begin to develop the skills and knowledge that help them to make sense of their world. As children find out about people and places they begin to know about their own cultures and beliefs and those of other people.

The children are introduced to information technology as a way through which they can gain further understanding. All children have opportunity to use computers, Ipads and digital cameras. Every Reception class has an interactive whiteboard. In design technology children are encouraged to work with a range of materials, they develop in confidence as they design and make.

Through topic work, source materials and visits, children further develop interest and understanding of their world. They begin to find out about the past and the present, about features of the environment, the natural and made world. They are encouraged to ask questions and to predict the outcome of their early experiments. We use the 'rhythm' of nature, the seasons, growth and change as a context for work in this area of learning.

## **Physical Development**

As with all other areas of learning, we recognise the importance of physical development, inside and outside the classroom. Through physical experiences such as PE, games and dance children develop awareness of space, co-ordination and control of movement. We encourage the children to develop awareness of what their bodies can do as well as recognising the importance of health and safety. The benefits of exercise and healthy living are key messages that the children learn. The development and refinement of finer motor control is also given strong emphasis. Children are able to work with clay and dough, handle tools and objects to support their physical development.

## **Expressive Arts and Design**

We aim to provide a stimulating environment that encourages creativity. Children have opportunity to develop their imagination through role-play, music, dance, art and design.

Exploration and experience of working with colour, shape, texture and form (2Dimensional, 3Dimensional) is the main approach to art and design in the Foundation Stage. We focus on developing confidence and encouraging children to value the process of being creative as well as the end product. Children's creations contribute to displays. They are encouraged to respond to their own and other's work.

Music has a big place in the early years' curriculum with many opportunities to play instruments, sing, move to music as well as listen to sounds, rhythm and music of many different types.

## **Good Level of Development (GLD)**

This is something each child is expected to achieve by the end of their Reception year. When a child has reached the Early Learning Goal in all the Prime Areas and Mathematics, Literacy and Understanding of the World, they have achieved a GLD.

At the end of their Reception year they are assessed against the statements in the document 'Early Years Outcomes' The children are judged to be either 'working towards', 'achieved' or 'exceeding' the Early Learning Goals.

## PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT

We plan a broad, balanced, differentiated and progressive curriculum. Our plans ensure a balance of experience across the areas of learning. We plan for learning both indoors and out, this ensures a balance of adult led teaching activities with clear objectives alongside children's own 'child initiated' learning as they play. The EYFS framework provides a long term plan to follow by ensuring that all Early Learning Goals are covered throughout the academic year. Medium term planning is created and takes into account the individual children's learning and developmental needs. All Areas of Learning and Development are planned for and available to access within the setting.

Assessment of children's learning is made as an ongoing process. Our observations of children are used in two key ways:

- 1 - to help us plan the next steps of learning for each child
- 2 - to feed the EYFS Profile and to record information for their Learning Journey books.

The main EYFS assessment method is through practitioners' observations of children in different teaching and learning contexts, including both adult focused activities and child initiated play. Observations take place on a daily basis (both formally and informally). Practitioners make time to carry out planned observations of individuals and groups of children regularly. They also make spontaneous observations in order to capture significant moments of children's learning. All practitioners are involved in observing children. Practitioners use observations to support their developing knowledge of individual children. It informs them of children's abilities, needs, interests, play schemas and learning styles. Observations are evaluated, children's learning priorities are identified and relevant learning opportunities are planned to support children to make the next steps and progress. Learning Journey books record children's progress over the academic year in all Areas of Learning and Development of the EYFS framework. Samples of children's work are gathered, along with photographic evidence and observations.

Assessment includes:

- Entry Baseline Assessment (carried out using the EYFS Profile during the children's first six weeks upon entering the setting) which includes information from parents and other agencies such as pre school providers
- continuous child observations
- pupil and parent voice
- dated samples of children's work
- end of EYFS; with the expectation is for children to exceed the Early Learning Goals

## **BUILDING POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS – PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS *and* CARERS**

Parents and carers joining West Rise Community Infants School are encouraged to be fully involved as partners in their children's education. We believe that parents and teachers need to work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect within which children and families can feel secure and confident.

We look to you as key carers to share information with us about children's development and learning needs and at the same time parents are kept fully informed about the curriculum and their children's learning through many different ways. Parents are encouraged to share information about their children's development and to share their child's successes with us.

Information about learning in school is shared through

- newsletters
- Parent planning feedback sheets sent home each week. Which also suggests ways in which parents can be involved in their children's learning at home
- weekly posters on classroom doors outline our planning for learning.
- Reading records
- A two-way process of communication is fostered through as many opportunities as possible.

Parents are invited to attend termly parents' meetings during the course of the academic year. The first of these takes place during the Autumn term to allow practitioners and parents to discuss how children have settled into the setting. Another parent's meeting takes place during the Spring term where practitioners will feedback on children's learning and development progress. In the Summer term parents have an opportunity to review their child's year at the third meeting when end of year reports come home.

We love having parents working with us in school and welcome parental support in the classroom and on school trips.

*'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' (Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage)*

## **Health & Safety and Safeguarding**

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 follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance (2017) and we adhere to the school's safeguarding policy. We are a healthy school and our children in EYFS receive free milk, have access to fresh water and free

fruit from a Government scheme. Reception children are eligible for free school meals or can choose to bring in a healthy packed lunch.

Each foundation stage classroom has access to their own toileting facilities and we teach the children the importance of hygiene, hand washing techniques and throughout the year we plan cooking activities to give children experiences of a range of healthy food.

## **TRANSITION TO YEAR ONE**

Please see our separate attached 'Transition policy' on our website.

## **THE ROLE OF GOVERNORS**

The Governors support and monitor developments and resource provision within the EYFS they are welcome visitors. Each year one specific Governor links with Reception. The Governor will discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners regularly and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion. The Headteacher, Deputy and Head of Year will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

## **ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS AND SPECIAL INFORMATION**

At West Rise we have a comprehensive policy for transfer and transition which seeks to ensure that the transition from home or pre school into school is both smooth, calm and effective.

Some features of this important transition are noted below.

- Visits to the school
- Admission meetings for Parents
- Starting school information and "taster" sessions
- Termly Parent Consultations
- Summer Open Afternoon
- Curriculum meetings and events
- Policy for Induction

## **SPECIAL FEATURES ABOUT OUR SCHOOL**

- Wonderful reception classrooms with their extensive outside classroom (playground)
- West Rise Nursery – the whole Early Years Foundation Stage on one site
- Close links with feeder pre schools and West Rise Junior School

- A vibrant stimulating curriculum
- A policy to ensure smooth and effective transition throughout our school
- A Community Sports hall which the children use for PE
- A thriving 'Friends' Association
- Close working relationships with parents
- Outstanding progress and achievement
- Mindful environment

**An excellent reputation for the work we do.**

We aim to capture and sustain young children's interests, to enable them to become motivated learners with a desire to continue learning. We will support and inspire children as they take their earliest educational steps, nurture their talents and ensure that they look forward to their future education with confidence and enthusiasm.

