



Verwood C of E First School & Nursery
Early Years Foundation Stage Policy
13th November 2019

'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.'

The Foundation Years - March 2017

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. In our school, all children join us at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. They begin attending school full time after induction week in the Autumn Term.

Children are born ready, able and eager to learn. They actively reach out to interact with other people, and in the world around them. Development is not an automatic process, however, it depends on each unique child having opportunities to interact in positive relationships and enabling environments.

The four themes of the EYFS underpin all the guidance:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

A Unique Child

At Verwood CE First School 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. We promote a positive ethos where children's learning and achievement are recognised and valued (through praise, our Oak base displays, celebrating the children's learning in praise worship, Stars of the Day and through our Behaviour Weather System) to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within our school and celebrate our differences. All children at Verwood CE First 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 meet the needs of all our children through:

- 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;
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

It is important to us that all children in our school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they 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. We aim to protect the physical and psychological wellbeing of all children. (See Safeguarding Policy)

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."

At Verwood CE First School 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.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

Positive Relationships

At Verwood CE First School we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from a base of 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 play as partners in their child's education. We value this partnership through;

- open communication between parent, child and teacher through; parent completing transition documents for school and child compiling an 'All About Me' book over the summer ready to share with their teacher and classmates.
- new Parents Information evening in the term prior to child starting school
- offering one play session for child and parent to 'stay and play' in term prior to starting school
- new parents base information evening exploring how children learn best and how we can work together to support children's development
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress and contributing to the picture we build of each child's development through the use of Tapestry.
- encouraging parents to talk to their child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents during the Autumn and Spring term at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's development, a report on their child's development is shared at the end of the Reception year
- arranging events throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents (Christmas events, Potted Sports day, class assembly, school trips)
- encouraging children to contribute examples of their learning out of school to our Home Learning Board for all to celebrate!

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At our school the Reception teachers act as a 'Key Person' to all the children in their register group, ably supported by our Teaching Assistants.

We have good links with Verwood pre-schools and nurseries. Regular visits are undertaken during the transitional process. The EYFS teachers meet with staff to discuss new intake children. Staff and children from preschool are regularly invited to school events and share some facilities in school.

Enabling Environments

At Verwood CE First 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

Planning within the EYFS follows the school's Long Term Plan (The EYFS themes and commitments document) and Medium Term Plans (continuous provision document, related to Developmental Matters, which are based around child initiated themes). Short term planning is based on our observations of the children and responsive to their learning needs. Children's contributions, through questions asked and interests observed, are clearly highlighted on topic webs and weekly planning.

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 other adults as appropriate. These observations are recorded on Tapestry and form part of the children's individual learning journey through literacy, numeracy and creative books. These learning journeys also contain information provided by parents and other settings.

At Verwood CE First School, we use the EYFS development matters statements to record judgements of each child's level of development in each of the seven areas of learning. This information is discussed and shared with parents during the Autumn and Spring term. Their attainment is assessed using the EYFS profile in the Summer term, as a holistic summative document. A written summary of their learning dispositions is shared with parents and year 1 teachers at the end of their Reception year, reporting

their progress and development against the Early Learning Goals and assessment scales.

The Learning Environment

The Reception base is an open plan learning environment with access to a large outdoor space, all areas are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. The classroom is set up in learning areas, where children are able to choose equipment and resources independently. Our outdoor learning area offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children an opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and provide resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all seven areas of learning.

Learning and Development

At Verwood CE First School 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 interconnected.

Teaching and Learning Styles

Our policy on learning and teaching defines the features of effective learning and teaching in our school. (See Teaching and Learning policy). 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 wellbeing 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;
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school;

Characteristics of effective learning

Playing and Exploring

“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.

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 satisfaction 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 classroom to extend their learning.

Areas of Learning and Development

This consists of three prime areas and four specific areas. The prime areas cover the knowledge and skills which are the foundations for children's school readiness and future progress, and which are applied and reinforced by the specific areas. Where they have close links with National Curriculum subject areas – particularly Literacy and Numeracy – they form an appropriate baseline for the National Curriculum.

Prime Areas of learning

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

Specific Areas of learning

- 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. For each goal, teachers determine whether children are meeting expected levels, are exceeding them, or are below the expected level ('emerging'). Providers are required to share the report on each child, along with a brief report on the characteristics of learning, with the Year 1 teacher.

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. This 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 and Early Years Leader will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring cycle.

Reviewed November 2019