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| **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**  Within this document, the term **‘Early Years Foundation Stage’ (EYFS)** is used to describe children who are in our Nursery and Reception Class.  **Our Vision**  In our EYFS, we want learners to be independent, happy, curious, motivated and to be good communicators. We want every child to have a strong foundation for his/ her future learning.  As outlined in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021):  **‘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.’**  To achieve all of this, we work hard to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children. We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that provide a secure foundation and which enable children to become confident and independent. We value the individual child and work alongside parents and others to meet their needs and to help every child to reach their full potential.  The following documents should be read in conjunction with this policy: Admissions Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy; Behaviour Policy; Parents as Partners Policy.  **Overarching Principles**  We adhere to the Statutory Framework for the EYFS and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings.   * 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 * Importance of **learning and development.** Children develop and learn at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)   **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 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 and child-initiated * Have a key person approach and provide a close home/ school links. * Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and out * Are committed to the continued professional development of our staff     **Our Foundation Stage Curriculum**  We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children’s needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to meet the early learning goals.    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**  **Curriculum Delivery**  **‘Early childhood Is an explosion of experience!’**   * **Jennie Lindon**   Within our EYFS, children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences based around exciting topics which are carefully chosen to support the development of the skills children need to acquire. Through these topics, children explore, think creatively and are active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning by using the interests of children to further engage and inspire them. Our learning environment supports the intent of a coherently planned and sequenced curriculum, and the characteristics of effective learning which underpin everything we do in our EYFS:   * **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   Our continuous provision is carefully chosen to help children to develop the skills appropriate to their stage of development. Other planned activities and resources are closely linked to children’s next steps. We create a stimulating environment which encourages children to develop and consolidate their skills, both inside and outside.  Practitioners working with the youngest children in Nursery 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. The balance shifts towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as the children move into Reception.  In both Nursery and Reception, children have the opportunity to work as a whole class, in a small group, with a partner and independently. Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. During children’s play, early years practitioners interact to stretch and challenge children further.  Children in our Nursery follow the ‘First Steps to Phonics’ scheme. This builds the foundations for our ‘Success for All’ phonics scheme which starts in Reception and continues throughout Key Stage One. Reception children are taught how to match letters to sounds, how to blend and segment to read and spell simple words, and how to decode and write basic sentences. Reading books are closely matched to children’s phonic knowledge. Throughout both Nursery and Reception there is a strong focus on developing language, vocabulary and understanding across the seven areas of learning. Staff model using key vocabulary during play, introduce topic-specific words and foster a love of stories, rhymes and poems in a variety of ways.  Early maths skills are developed in Nursery, with children encouraged to count, recognise numbers, sort objects, recognise shapes and make patterns. The White Rose Maths scheme is also used in Nursery to familiarise children with the models used in Reception and throughout KS1 and KS2. In Reception, children follow the Maths No Problem! Foundation scheme, which develops children’s mathematical understanding through practical activities with lots of opportunities to talk about maths!  In both Nursery and Reception, we begin each half-term with a chosen topic. The topics are selected carefully to spark the children’s imaginations and provide lots of opportunities for learning! High quality texts (fiction, non-fiction, rhymes and poems) and resources are chosen to enrich children’s vocabulary. Throughout the first few weeks’ teaching of the topic, children’s interests are taken into account and then built upon for the rest of the half-term, meaning that each year’s planning is unique because it is matched to the interests of the children.  **Observation and Assessment**  Ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process. As part of our daily practice we observe and assess children’s development to inform our future plans. Each week, we focus on key areas of learning and track children’s achievement to enable us to shape future learning. These observations also help us to build a picture of what each child can do, and they are recorded in children’s learning journeys in the form of written observations, samples of work and photographs. Everyone is encouraged to contribute to these learning journeys, including parents, who can share photographs and information with us via our learning platform, eSchools. We have termly meetings to discuss each child’s development, and we use our own assessment documents based on ‘Development Matters’ to ensure that children are making good progress and working at the expected level for their age.  On entry into Nursery and Reception, we complete a baseline assessment for each child, which recognises their current level of development and enables us to plan their next steps. These are completed by all staff working with the children. The Reception baseline assessment also includes discussions between Nursery and Reception staff, and the statutory RBA (Reception Baseline Assessment).  In the final term of Reception, an EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The EYFSP shows a child’s level of development as assessed against the Early Learning Goals. It indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development or not yet reaching expected levels. Judgements are moderated internally and Reception staff attend Assessment Moderation Partnership meetings throughout the year. This gives them the opportunity to discuss judgements with staff from schools within the local authority. The results of the profile are shared with parents/ carers, Year One teachers and the Local Authority.  **Safeguarding and 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.’**  - Statutory Framework for the EYFS, 2021  Children’s safety and welfare is paramount. We have stringent policies, procedures and documents in place to ensure children’s safety:   * All staff have a secure knowledge of safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures, and complete training on this every year, as well as receiving updates throughout the year. * Each child is assigned a key person and parents/ guardians are informed of their child’s Key Person at the start of the year. As stated in the Statutory Framework for the EYFS, the role of the Key Person is:   **‘… to ensure that every child’s care is tailored to meet their individual needs, to help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with their parents.’**   * All EYFS staff have completed Paediatric First Aid training and follow school First Aid and Administration of Medicines policies which adhere to the EYFS Framework. * Toileting and Intimate Care agreements are sent home at the start of the year. Records of when children have required changing are kept, and for children who need additional support, a meeting with parents/ guardians is arranged to discuss their needs. * We adhere to the ratios as set out in the Statutory Framework for the EYFS * We promote healthy eating through snack time, and discuss any dietary requirements with parents/ carers. * We are part of the school’s toothbrushing scheme which promotes oral hygiene amongst children aged 3-7 * We ensure that children know how to evacuate the building safely in an emergency * We use a password system to ensure that children are only released to agreed adults. Parents/ carers complete a form stating who may collect their child, their relationship to the child and their chosen password, * We follow the school’s policy and procedures on health and safety, however, we also complete our own risk assessments for issues specific to our EYFS   Please see our separate policies and procedures on Safeguarding, Child Protection, Health and Safety, Lone Worker, Toileting and Intimate Care, Lost Child, Fire, Administration of Medicines, Healthy Eating, First Aid, Behaviour Management.  **Inclusion**  We value all our children as individuals at William Cassidi, 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 all of our children fulfil their potential. 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, our school SENCO and outside agencies. Please also see our policies on Inclusion, Single Equality and SEN.    **Parents as Partners and the Wider context**  We strive to create and maintain partnership with parents, carers and child care providers 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: Foundation Stage Transition meetings, Parent Teacher Consultations, Home-link books, e-schools (including our gallery, activities for home and weekly blog), and our open door policy. Our school website provides information for parents on how the EYFS is delivered in our setting and how parents/ carers can access more information.  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**  Children begin Nursery at different times throughout the year. Before they start, children and their parents attend an introductory session to develop familiarity with the setting and practitioners. Parents receive a small booklet containing information and they talk to staff about their child’s needs and interests.  In June, we hold meetings for parents of children who are due to start Reception in September. At the meeting, parents receive information about the transition to Reception and they also take home a pack containing all of the information covered at the meetings. The meetings are also a good opportunity for parents to familiarise themselves with the Reception classroom, look at resources and to chat informally to staff.  As we have a shared outdoor area, Nursery children are already familiar with Reception staff, which helps to create a smooth transition. In July, we hold two transition days for the children to help them to familiarise themselves with the daily routine.  In the final term in Reception, the Reception teacher and Year 1 teachers liaise to discuss the individual children, their needs and analyse the assessment data to inform planning to ensure a smooth transition and progression in learning. The children also visit Year 1 to share a story in the weeks before the summer holiday, and they spend a morning in Year 1 in July.  E. Hill and K. Howell; June 2023 |

Please also refer to- safeguarding policy

E safety policy

SEN and inclusion policy

Attendance policy

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