



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Intent

At Waverton Primary School, we are proud to promote curiosity, enquiry and creativity through a challenging and progressive curriculum where learning enables all children to fulfil their potential. We ensure full coverage of the EYFS framework through carefully planned half-termly topics. We strive for educational excellence by providing rich cultural and experiential opportunities, preparing all children for the next stage of their learning. Our Early Years curriculum places a strong emphasis on language, communication and reading, ensuring that books and stories are at its heart. We value each child as an individual and are committed to an inclusive education that promotes respect for all. We work in close partnership with parents, carers, the local community and school governors to secure the best outcomes for every child.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Waverton, children join us on a phased introduction at the beginning of the school year in which they turn five, ensuring a smooth and supportive transition.

The EYFS is underpinned by four overarching principles:

- A Unique Child – every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Positive Relationships – children learn to be strong and independent through warm, nurturing and secure relationships.
- Enabling Environments – where opportunities and experiences respond to each child's individual needs, and where strong partnerships between practitioners and parents/carers foster development.
- Learning and Development – recognising that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates, and that all areas of learning are equally important and interconnected.

A Unique Child

At Waverton, we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We are committed to providing a high-quality and consistent education, ensuring each child makes good progress and that any special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) are identified at the earliest opportunity.

We understand that children develop in individual ways and at different rates. Our EYFS provision supports this by encouraging children to develop a positive attitude towards learning through praise, encouragement, reward, positive feedback and opportunities for self-reflection.

Inclusion and Special Educational Needs

At Waverton, we believe that all children matter. We value diversity, respect individuality and ensure that every child is given the best possible opportunity to thrive. Children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities have equal access to the EYFS curriculum and are supported in line with our SEND Policy and Information Report.

In the EYFS, we meet the needs of all children through:

- providing a safe, supportive and inclusive learning environment in which the contributions of all children are valued

- using a wide range of adaptive teaching strategies based on children's developmental needs
- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, skills, interests and experiences
- supporting the development of self-esteem, independence and confidence
- closely monitoring and assessing progress to ensure that learning is personalised and responsive

Welfare and Safeguarding

At Waverton, staff understand that 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.

All EYFS staff:

- Follow our whole school safeguarding policy and the EYFS-specific risk assessment.
- Receive regular safeguarding and child protection training, including the PREVENT duty, in line with the EYFS 2025 requirements.
- Understand and implement procedures for safer recruitment, safer eating, attendance monitoring, intimate care privacy and whistleblowing, as set out in our updated safeguarding policy.
- Are trained to recognise and respond to risks to children's well-being in all its forms, including online safety and attendance concerns.
- Follow our medical conditions and allergies policies to safeguard children's health.
- Hold appropriate first aid training, with identified staff holding full Paediatric First Aid certificates in accordance with statutory requirements.

Safeguarding underpins everything we do in the EYFS, ensuring that all children are protected, supported and able to thrive.

Positive Relationships

At Waverton, we recognise that children learn best when they have secure, caring and respectful relationships with adults and their peers. We aim to build strong partnerships with children and their families through a range of structured and informal opportunities, including:

- Induction meetings for all parents during the term before their child starts school.
- 'Stay and Play' sessions in the Summer term prior to starting school.
- Teddy Bears' Picnic sessions in the Summer term to familiarise children with the school environment.
- Weekly visits from Waverton Pre-School and Stepping Stones to the outdoor area, supporting early familiarity and continuity.
- Opportunities for parents to discuss concerns or share information at the end of the school day.
- Parent evenings held in the Autumn and Spring terms.
- Weekly stay and play sessions during the Spring and Summer terms.
- End-of-year reports to summarise children's progress and achievements.
- Encouraging parental involvement and feedback through the 'Go Read' reading app and the 'Seesaw' homework app.

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All EYFS staff strive to develop positive, professional relationships with each child, interacting thoughtfully, listening carefully and responding to their individual needs. In our setting, the EYFS teacher acts as the Key Person for all children, supported by the Teaching Assistant, who focuses particularly on children with summer birthdays.

We maintain strong links with the two nurseries in Waverton to ensure smooth transitions. Transition sessions include weekly visits during the Summer term and visits to the nurseries with support from our Year 6 buddies, helping children to settle confidently into school life.

Implementation

The Learning Environment

The EYFS classroom at Waverton is carefully organised to allow children to explore, investigate and learn in a secure and safe environment. Learning areas are clearly defined, enabling children to find and access resources independently and make choices about their learning.

The EYFS class has its own enclosed outdoor area, which provides rich opportunities for children to experience learning in different ways and on different scales than indoors. Outdoor play encourages children to explore, use their senses, be physically active, and engage in exuberant, imaginative play. Staff plan a wide range of activities and resources outdoors to ensure children develop across all areas of learning.

At Waverton, staff reflect on the different ways children learn to provide high-quality, responsive teaching. We support children through three characteristics of effective learning:

- Playing and Exploring – children investigate, experiment, and ‘have a go’ at new challenges.
- Active Learning – children maintain focus, persevere when faced with difficulties, and celebrate their achievements.
- Creating and Thinking Critically – children generate their own ideas, make links between concepts, and develop strategies for problem-solving.

This environment is designed to nurture curiosity, independence and confidence, ensuring that every child is supported to reach their full potential.

Observing, Assessment and Planning

At Waverton, EYFS planning begins with information shared from pre-schools, insights from the Reception Baseline Assessment, and ongoing observations of children in the learning environment. Staff observe individual interests, learning styles, current developmental levels, and next steps in learning before planning a relevant, creative, flexible and progressive curriculum.

Development Matters is used as a guide for skills and knowledge, and the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) from the EYFS framework are carefully integrated across topics. Planning takes into account what children already know, their interests, and a sequenced curriculum, which forms the basis of our Medium Term Topic Plans. A yearly curriculum overview ensures that all areas of learning are covered systematically across the school year.

Topics are taught in ways that ensure coverage of all areas of learning, with a strong focus on communication, language and reading to promote a love of books and vocabulary development.

At Waverton:

- Phonics is taught daily following the school’s Ready, Steady Phonics programme.
- Mathematics is taught using Power Maths and Numberblocks to support early numeracy skills.
- Literacy skills are developed through a variety of approaches, including Talk for Writing, Drawing Club, Pathways to Write, and Helicopter Stories, ensuring reading is at the heart of the curriculum.
- Children engage in guided reading groups and, where appropriate, read individually with books matched to their phonic phase.
- Children are read to at least once a day to model fluency, expression, and comprehension.
- Physical Development is taught through our PE Passport programme.
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) is embedded across topics and daily interactions.
- Religious Education (RE) supports statutory knowledge and skills development.

Our approach to observation, assessment and planning ensures that learning is personalised, progressive and closely matched to each child’s needs, supporting them to achieve their full potential and be ready for the next stage of education

Learning and Development

At Waverton, staff consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care and use this information to plan challenging, engaging, and enjoyable experiences across all areas of learning and development. Staff value all areas equally and understand that they are interconnected, supporting holistic development.

The EYFS curriculum is structured into Prime and Specific Areas of Learning:

Prime Areas of Learning

- Communication and Language – Listening and Attention; Understanding; Speaking
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) – Self-Regulation; Managing Self; Making Relationships
- Physical Development – Gross Motor Skills; Fine Motor Skills

Specific Areas of Learning

- Literacy – Comprehension; Word Reading; Writing
- Mathematics – Numbers; Numerical Patterns
- Understanding the World – Past and Present; People, Culture and Communities; The Natural World
- Expressive Arts and Design – Creating with Materials; Being Imaginative and Expressive
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None of these areas can be delivered in isolation; all areas are equally important and depend on each other.

Learning is provided through a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities, with Early Learning Goals (ELGs) defining the expectations for most children by the end of the EYFS.

The Prime Areas are fundamental, underpinning and supporting learning across all other areas. The Specific Areas build essential skills and knowledge, growing from the Prime Areas and providing meaningful contexts for learning.

A yearly curriculum overview ensures that all areas of learning are progressively and systematically covered, allowing children to build skills, knowledge, and understanding in a coherent way across the school year.

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.”

At Waverton, staff understand that high-quality, sensitive and responsive adult interaction is crucial in supporting children’s learning through play. Staff provide opportunities for both structured and self-initiated play, enabling children to develop independence, creativity, and confidence.

Through play, children are encouraged to demonstrate the Characteristics of Effective Learning:

- Willingness to have a go – trying new activities and challenges
- Concentration and involvement – focusing and persisting in tasks
- Having their own ideas – generating thoughts and solutions
- Finding new ways of doing things – problem-solving and experimentation
- Choosing ways to do things – making decisions and exercising independence
- Enjoying achievements – celebrating success and reflecting on learning

At Waverton, learning takes place through a blend of whole-class, small-group, and individual teaching, alongside continuous play opportunities. Staff ensure children are able to express themselves, explore ideas, and demonstrate their deep learning through self-initiated play, while encouraging reflection on their experiences to consolidate understanding and build confidence.

Impact

The impact of the EYFS curriculum is measured through careful, ongoing assessment:

- Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) and WellComm Speech and Language Assessment on entry.
- Formative and summative observations, including guided reading, writing, maths, and topic work.
- Phonics assessment at least once per term; children benchmarked as appropriate.

- Evidence recorded in topic books, floor books, and subject-specific books.
- Arbor tracking system records end-of-year judgements: Emerging or Expected.
- Interventions and targeted support ensure children 'keep up' rather than 'catch up'.
- High expectations for children with SEND, ensuring strong progress from individual starting points.
- Parent reports summarising achievements, attainment, and progress, supported by pupil voice and end-of-year questionnaires.

Staff also report EYFS Profile results to the local authority and participate in moderation as required.

Supporting documents include:

- Reception Baseline Assessment records
- WellComm assessments
- Medium Term and Yearly Curriculum Overviews
- Topic books, Floor books, Subject books
- Arbor tracking records
- Intervention and SEND plans
- Parent reports and pupil feedback
- Moderation records
- SEND Policy and Information Report
- EYFS Policy

All practices are informed by:

- *Statutory Framework for the EYFS* (2012, 2014, 2017, 2021, 2023, 2024, 2025)
- *EYFS Profile Handbook* (2019; 2021 Early Adopter)
- *Development Matters* (2012; 2020)

Through this approach, Waverton ensures that all children make strong progress, are well-prepared for Key Stage 1, and experience a positive, inclusive, and enriching start to their education.

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