



Westvale Park
Primary Academy

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

REVIEW: Every 2 years

LAST REVIEW DATE: 2024

Intent

Throughout our lives we learn continuously, and our learning begins on the day we are born. This is when the foundations for a child's future is laid, and why these are often referred to as the foundation years. Children learn more quickly during these early years than at any other time in life. To support their learning, children need to be surrounded by adults who nurture their moral, social, emotional and physical wellbeing to support them in being ready for the next steps of their learning journey.

At Westvale Park Primary Academy, we believe that an outstanding education in Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) will set children up with the skills they need to ensure the best possible outcomes throughout their formal education. However, it is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education. We believe that every child deserves personalised learning within highly stimulating classroom and outdoor learning environments. We follow the requirements of the 'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage' (2024).

EYFS is from birth to five years of age. All children begin school with a wide variety of experiences, and it is the responsibility of the adults working in the foundation stage to build upon their prior learning effectively. This is done through a holistic approach to learning, to ensure that parents, guardians and the Foundation Stage team work effectively together to support the learning and development of the children in their charge.

1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and their lives
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress, and no child gets left behind
- Close partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practices

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [2024 Statutory Framework for EYFS](#)

This document also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Structure of the EYFS

The Foundation Stage Village

Westvale Park Primary Academy and Nursery EYFS operate a foundation village that supports children from the age 2 to 5. We place great importance on the value of learning through both outdoor and indoor play and through our Foundation Village we provide a seamless early years' experience for children and their families, with the key principle that we support 'stage not age'.

Key benefits of a foundation village approach:

- Staff understand children's development across the foundation stage (ages 2-5)
- Children are more considerate and helpful towards each other
- Children going into our reception are more confident

- Improvement in children's language, as younger children learn from older pupils, whilst older children can explain to younger children
- Children benefit from staff sharing their expertise
- Environment offers a range of extension activities for pupils at different stages of their learning

The nursery is open from 8.45am to 3.15pm, term time only. The two reception classes are registered at 8:50am (doors open at 8:35am) and collection is at 3:20pm.

4. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2024 statutory framework of the EYFS. This has been developed in line with the Aurora Academies Trust Progression documents.

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development that are equally important and interconnected. However, three areas, known as the prime areas, are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

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

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

The Characteristics of Effective Learning

The Characteristics of Effective Learning are an important part of EYFS. A child's individual learning characteristics determine the way they respond to the teaching and learning taking place in the environment. These are as follows:

- **Playing and exploring – engagement**
Finding out and exploring
Playing with what they know
Being willing to 'have a go'
- **Active learning – motivation**
Being involved and concentrating
Keep trying
Enjoying achieving what they set out to do
- **Creating and thinking critically – thinking**
Having their own ideas
Making links
Choosing ways to do things

The Characteristics of Effective Learning are an essential ingredient to ignite a child's desire to learn, and are especially important for pupils aged two, who have their own unique view of the world, with every new experience becoming a magnificent adventure in learning and exploration.

Nursery Key Person

Children can concentrate, explore, make new friends and learn more effectively when feeling secure; a key person's role is to work alongside parents and carers to ensure that there is continuity of care for all children, therefore supporting the child's emotional well-being. The bond that develops between a key person, a child and a parent form the foundations for the entirety of a child's learning experiences.

4.1 Planning

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, practitioners working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

Staff also consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care and use this information to plan challenging and enjoyable experiences. Where a child has a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and incorporate these into their everyday practice.

4.2 Teaching

At Westvale Park Primary Academy, we recognise that the environment, both indoors and outdoors, is a key aspect of effective EYFS provision, and plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development. This begins by observing a child and assessing their interests, development and learning. Challenging but achievable activities and experiences are then planned to extend and reinforce learning.

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Practitioners respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

We understand that the youngest children are supported through a close partnership between parents and practitioners. All involved in a student's learning journey must share in the wonder and excitement. This will have a lifelong impact on the child's learning. We will ensure that there are spaces for physically active play, as well as cosy corners, both indoors and outdoors. Heuristic and loose parts play, which is very important for the younger children, will give them the opportunity to experience an environment where they can develop different ways to be creative and expressive in their handling of objects. Younger children have access to more child-led activities, enabling them to learn through first-hand experiences. As children grow older and their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, such as that in subsequent years.

5. Assessment

At Westvale Park Primary Academy, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement and interests. These observations are used to shape future planning. Practitioners also consider observations shared by parents and/or carers.

At Westvale Park Primary Academy, we use an online profile system called Tapestry. Teachers and support staff use tablets to take photographs and record observations of a child's learning during their time in Nursery and Reception. These profiles are only accessible by school staff and individual parents, who are given a unique username and password for their child's profile from the start of the Nursery and Reception years. These

profiles are a wonderful way for the school and parents to work together; parents can add their own observations of what their child has been doing at home, as well as comment on learning that has taken place at school.

The Progress Check at Age Two

It is a legal requirement that parents/carers be supplied with a short summary of their child's development in the three prime areas when their child is aged between 24-36 months. The Progress Check will be carried out by the nursery teacher and key person in conjunction with the parents and based on continuing observation and assessment of the child. It will consider parent's views and enable children to contribute actively to the process. The progress check will identify the child's strengths and any areas where the child's progress is slower than expected. If there are significant, emerging concerns (or identified SEN or disability), the key person will develop a targeted plan to support the child, involving other professionals, such as the school, SENCO and the child's health visitor.

EYFS Profile

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers.

6. Working with parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers. We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators, and we value the contribution they make.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. The progress check and EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Each child is assigned a key person who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate. In reception, the key person is the class teacher, supported by the Teaching Assistant (lunch time supervisor) to ensure support and care throughout the school day.

We offer parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our Nursery or Reception classes and encourage parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a termly formal meeting between parents/carers and key person to discuss the child's progress.

We provide a report on each child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.

Westvale organise a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents (e.g., Class and Sharing assemblies, Sports Day, Christmas production, Graduation)

We provide space in the children's 'Reading Record' booklets for comments relating to the children's achievements at home.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop excellent relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen.

7. Safeguarding procedures

Safeguarding is taken very seriously at Westvale Park Primary Academy. In the EYFS we adhere to the school's safeguarding policy. Safeguarding is the responsibility of all staff, and all staff are trained appropriately. The school has a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) to whom concerns can be raised and managed (Headteacher) and two deputy designated safeguarding leads (Mrs De Sa Pereira and Mrs Wilkinson).

8. Staffing

In our reception classes we always have at least one class teacher and one class teaching assistant.

In Nursery we have appointed a qualified teacher to lead the nursery. We also have enough support assistants to meet legal ratios for each session.

Where a child has an Education, Health and Care Plan we will support enhanced ratios in the village to meet their SEND needs.

Westvale Park Primary Academy has a robust recruitment procedure in place which ensures that members of staff employed in the EYFS are suitable.

Upon employment, all EYFS staff receive induction training to ensure that they understand their roles and responsibilities, including information about emergency evacuation procedures, safeguarding, child protection, and health and safety.

Staff are supported to undertake the appropriate training and professional development to ensure children receive the best quality learning experience.

All members of staff who have contact with children and families will be line managed by the Early Years Lead (Miss Goswell). Line management will provide opportunities for staff to:

- Discuss any issues, particularly concerning the development or wellbeing of children, including any safeguarding or child protection concerns
- Identify solutions to address issues
- Receive coaching to improve their effectiveness

There will always be at least one member of staff on the school premises who has a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate, but it is our aim for all EYFS members of staff to be PFA trained.

Any member of staff who has sole responsibility for looking after a group of children will also hold a PFA certificate.

Westvale Park Primary Academy will organise PFA training to be renewed every three years.

The list of staff who hold PFA certificates can be found in the school office, medical room, staff room and in our First Aid Policy.

Westvale Park Primary Academy provides a staffing ratio in line with the safeguarding and welfare requirements set out in the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'.

Only members of staff with level 2 English and Math qualifications will count towards the staffing ratios at level 3.

The school adopts the following staffing ratios in nursery:

For children aged three and over:

Where a staff member with qualified teacher status (QTS), early years professional status, or another suitable level 6 qualification is working directly with the children, there is one member of staff for every 13 children, and at least one other member of staff holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification.

Where a member of staff does not hold QTS, early years professional status, or another suitable level 6 qualification, there is one member of staff for every eight children. At least one staff member holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification, and at least half of all other staff hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification. At Westvale Park Primary Academy, we aim to have all staff with at least a level 3 qualification.

For children aged. 2:

We follow the same qualifications criteria as outlined above but there is one adult for every five children.

Only those aged 17 or over will be included in our ratios. Students/Volunteers will be always supervised.

When operating the Foundation Village, we will calculate the mixed age ratios by always considering the lowest aged pupils. Therefore, a group of 9 children (with six 2-year-olds, two 3-year-olds, and two 5-year-olds) would require 3 adults. Ratios will include adults if they are within sight or sound of the children.

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by the EYFS Lead and approved by the Headteacher every two years.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Supervision Policy and the WPPA EYFS Thrive Guide.