



EYFS Policy

Date: September 2023
Review Due: September 2024

Reviewed Annually

Nursery and Reception provide Early Years education for children aged 3 to 5 years. Nursery provides an introduction to the various activities necessary in pre-school learning. This knowledge is built on, supported and extended throughout the year in order to prepare the children for compulsory full-time education in Reception.

When a child starts attending the Early Years, we ensure that every child's learning is tailored to meet their individual needs; we help the child become familiar with the school, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with their families. EYFS staff seek to engage and support families in guiding their child's development at home. We also help families engage with more specialist support if appropriate.

In Nursery, children attend morning, afternoon sessions and full day sessions. There is a qualified teacher and other staff including Nursery Nurses and LSAs. The Nursery offers extra sessions too, at £25 an extra session plus £3 for the lunch hour. Children with the 30 hour code may use this and pay £3 to cover the lunch hour.

Children can use the 15 hours and if more sessions are needed then they may pay the £25 per the extra session.

Depending on how many part time children attend each session and what space is available for lunch time, it is up to the school how many children can be allocated a full time space.

Our Core Values

Children at Willow Brook are part of a wider school community within The Griffin School's Trust network of schools. Children in the Foundation Stage begin to learn about the school's core values when they start in nursery. These values are based on Philosophy for Children.

- Caring
- Creative
- Collaborative
- Critical

Our values are built upon the three pillars of the Griffin School's Trust:

Proud Traditions
Wide Horizons
High Achievement

Our Aims

To develop the child personally, socially and emotionally by:

- Offering a safe and secure environment
- Making each child feel valued and cared for
- Helping the child form stable relationships
- Encouraging a sense of responsibility and consideration for others
- Developing a positive self- image increasing confidence, independence and control
- Developing an awareness that there are similarities and differences among all groups of people but that all groups are equally important
- Providing resources and materials that reflect the many different types of backgrounds, challenging multicultural and gender issues
- Developing a curriculum that includes discussion and activities on different religions, cultures and languages

To develop the child intellectually by:

- Providing a stimulating environment in which each child can learn through first-hand experience

- Promoting the use of language
- Stimulating the child's curiosity
- Giving opportunities for children to make their own decisions
- Encouraging active learning
- Encouraging self-evaluation

To develop the child physically, improving skills of co-ordination, control, manipulation and movement by:

- Providing opportunities for children to use their bodies effectively by providing space for learning experiences both indoor and outdoor.
- Develop fine motor skills through activities such as modelling, painting and construction.
- To develop an awareness of their physical ability

To develop the child aesthetically by:

- Providing a stimulating environment in which creativity, imagination, originality and expressiveness are valued
- Providing opportunities to experiment with a variety of materials
- Providing opportunities for children to use and explore their senses
- Encouraging children to be creative and express themselves through a variety of media; music, dance, role-play art activities.

To establish a smooth transition from home to school by:

- Starting from the child, taking into account previous pre-school experience
- By adopting an admissions procedure that eases the transition from home to school, e.g. play visits to the setting.
- Involving families with their children's learning by informing them that they can see the profiles, having opportunities for sharing families' expertise and experiences

We believe that each child should attend school with pleasure, satisfaction and profit, leave with anticipation and remember with pride.

Learning and Development

Curriculum

Our Foundation Stage begins when children start in Nursery and continues until the end of the Reception year. We recognise that the educational process starts earlier than this with learning in the home and many children attending a pre-school facility before they join our setting.

A broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum is rooted in our child centered philosophy, in which the focus is the development of the individual as a whole person. Active learning is at the heart of the developmental process; children learn best from hands on experience. Each child comes to our setting from a different starting point and planning the curriculum must take account of this. We aim to make our activities appropriate to the needs of each individual child. They must be flexible enough to take account of individual diversity as well as be relevant to everyone.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

- **Playing and exploring** - children will have opportunities to investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.

- **Active learning** - children will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements.
- **Creating and thinking critically** - we encourage and support children to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

The Foundation Stage curriculum is organised into seven areas of learning:

Prime Areas

1. *Communication and Language*

Involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

2. *Physical Development*

Involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

3. *Personal, Social and Emotional Development*

Involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

Specific Areas

1. *Literacy*

Involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.

2. *Mathematics*

Involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.

3. *Understanding the World*

Involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

4. *Expressive Arts and Design*

Involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

Staff consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all of the areas of learning and development.

Staff working with the youngest children are expected to 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, and become ready for main school.

It is expected that the balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

Throughout the early years, if a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, staff discuss this with the child's families and/or carers and agree how to support the child. Staff consider whether a child may have a special educational need or disability which requires specialist support. They link with the SENDCo, who works with them to help families to access relevant services from other agencies as appropriate.

Children learn best when they are in control and need to be given the opportunity to be responsible for their own learning. They need a stimulating and challenging environment, both indoors and outdoors, in which to develop. In particular, it should promote personal and social skills and support the acquisition and development of language.

We find that abstract learning can be difficult for children. They need experience of doing things, handling objects and exploring the physical and social world before they are ready to understand abstract concepts.

They learn best when they are actively involved in situations that make 'human sense' to them. Wherever possible, children should have the opportunity to learn through first-hand experience.

Personal, social and emotional well-being is the basis for successful learning and development. The whole child is important; social, emotional, physical and intellectual development is inter-related. Children develop individually and at their own rates and need to be given time to move through the developmental stages at their own pace.

More information about the EYFS is available for families and/or carers on the Department for Education website: <https://www.gov.uk/early-years-foundation-stage>

Organisation

Children develop rapidly during the Early Years - socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually and each child is entitled to provision that supports and extends knowledge, skills, understanding and confidence.

Effective education requires both a relevant curriculum and practitioners who understand and support children's progression through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals in each area of learning, with each child. The Foundation Stage curriculum is concerned with the child and the setting in which the learning takes place, the content of the learning and the effectiveness of the teaching.

Activities are planned and purposeful, providing opportunities for teaching and learning in both indoors and outdoors.

Admissions

Families are encouraged to apply for a place for their child by their second birthday. Initially places are offered to children the term after they turn three years old. Application forms for nursery admission are available from the school office. These have to be completed by families and handed into school office with the child's, birth certificate, proof of address and passport (if applicable). Reception places have to be applied for through the admissions department in the London Borough of Waltham Forest. The school is unable to process admission requests for Reception places directly.

Once we have the child's application form for Nursery or Reception the EYFS staff will plan home visits to meet the child and families in their home setting. This is when the parent and EYFS staff can discuss likes, dislikes of the child and any concerns the families may have.

Nursery (3s to 4s)

All Nursery staff are responsible for the progress and welfare of all the Nursery children. Throughout the year we will take children when they turn 3 or 4, this depends on spaces available. If a child does not use their space in the nursery and is absent a lot then it is up to management to offer that space to another child on the waiting list.

Reception

Children in Reception are rising 5 years and start in the Autumn Term. Only in special circumstances are children admitted later in the academic year. There are six members of staff in the year group and 3 classes with approximately 30 pupils in each class. Session times are from 8.45am to 3.15pm with lunch break from 11.30am -12.30pm.

The class teachers, supported by learning support staff, are responsible for the pupils in their classes. They consult with the Assistant Head Teacher whenever the need arises. Specialist staff teach Music, Drama, ICT and PE.

Planning

At Willow Brook we plan in the moment. The EYFS staff will observe the children and seize the learning moments of children when they first show curiosity, and support their next steps immediately. We embrace the concept of planning "in the moment" and emphasise the critical role of the adult in promoting child-led learning, and enable the children to, learn, play and develop in the here and now.

At Willow Brook Primary School, the children's learning in the Early Years department is based on the EYFS. The following four principles form the basis of the Early Years Foundation stage:

1 A unique child

Every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

2 Positive relationships

Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with families and/or a key person.

3 Enabling Environments

The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning.

4 Learning and development

Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of Learning and Development are equally important and inter-connected.

There are three stages of our planning process:

Provision and Resources

At Willow Brook Primary School, we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending our children's development. Through observations we assess the children's interests, stages of development and academic needs, before planning our learning

opportunities to ensure they are challenging, achievable, engaging and fun. Our Foundation stage is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely.

There are areas where the children can be active and be quiet and rest. The EYFS is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. Our Foundation Stage has its own enclosed outdoor area. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers the children further opportunities to explore, use their senses, develop their language skills and be physically active. We have resources both inside and outside enabling the children to develop in all the areas of learning.

Our Principles of High Quality Play are:

- Play challenges children and offers them the chance to learn in breadth and depth.
- Play draws on what children already know and can do and enables them to master what is new.
- Play enables children to apply existing knowledge and to practice their skills
- Play encourages children to communicate with others as they investigate or solve problems.
- Play offers children opportunities to explore feelings and relationships, ideas, and materials, connections and consequences.
- Play empowers children to make choices, to solve problems and to be independent in their learning.
- Play enables children to express fears or relive anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.
- Play encourages children to struggle, to take risks and to become resilient as learners.
- Play can be supported and extended but not interfered with by adults.
- Play presents no barriers to children because of their language, cultures, abilities or gender.

Role of the adult

- To observe child-initiated play to understand and provide for their interests and needs.
- To plan and resource a challenging indoor and outdoor environment.
- To support children's learning through planned play activity.
- To extend and support children's spontaneous/self-initiated play.
- To extend and develop children's language and communication in their play.
- To plan in the moment
- To provide evidence which will be kept in each child's 'special book'. This will be updated by the class teacher and LSA

Mini Trips

In Reception we are able to take the children on 'mini trips' to local venues throughout the year. This is a great way to benefit the children's learning in a variety of ways as we often plan our teaching around the children's interests.

Through a real life, engaging and exciting experience the children's learning is embedded as the experience relates to in-class learning and to real-life situations, for example if they decide they want to make a cake then we can visit the shop to buy ingredients, or they write a letter to someone and we can walk to the post box to post it. These trips help to develop many areas including their maths (money), speaking and listening (to each other to decide what they need), and deepen their sense of community.

Staff will make sure they leave via the main entrance only and make sure to sign in and out. All children will wear high visibility jackets.

Assessment and Record keeping

We analyse and review what we know about each child's development and learning, and then make informed decisions about supporting the child's progress. This enables us to plan the next steps for individuals and groups of children by providing challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning. All practitioners who interact with the child contribute to the assessment process. Staff review the target tracker data half termly with the Assistant Head Teacher, monitoring rates of progress and identifying strategies that address learning and teaching priorities and next steps.

Formative assessment

This type of assessment informs our everyday planning and is based on on-going observational assessment of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles. Our formative assessment may take the form of observations, annotated examples of work, photographs, and information from families.

Summative assessment

Within the foundation stage, the EYFS Profile is used to summarise and record evidence from formative assessments. These help form the end year reports that are shared with families. During the Reception year, children are assessed against the EYFS Profile.

Evaluation and Review

The Head of School and Assistant Head Teachers carry out half termly evaluating of the EYFS through observations, book scrutiny, performance managements and learning walks and discussions as part of the whole school evaluating schedule.

Families as Partners

Our Foundation Stage team strongly believe that developing an effective working partnership with families has a positive impact on children's development and learning.

We value families by:

- talking to families about their child before their child starts in our school;
- showing respect and understanding for the role of families as children's first and most enduring educator
- encouraging families to share accounts of their child's development and any concerns they may have and take action to support where appropriate
- providing a welcoming environment by being approachable and friendly
- establishing an atmosphere of trust and confidence
- inviting families to initial meetings to share information about their children and about our school
- giving the children the opportunity to visit the Foundation Stage Unit during the half term before starting school;
- inviting all families to an induction and presentation meeting to help families to prepare their child for Nursery or Reception during the term before their child starts school;
- encouraging families to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns

There are formal meetings for families at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress with the teacher/EYFS staff.

Families receive a report on their child's attainment, progress and characteristics of effective learning at the end of the Foundation Stage.

Transition

Starting school can be a difficult time for young children; we therefore plan this time carefully to support children with the transition and to ensure it is as smooth as possible for each child and that they settle in to their new class quickly and happily.

In both Nursery and Reception children are invited to a taster session before their official start date. Staff are on hand to meet and greet families with their children and answer any questions they might have. In Nursery, families are encouraged to come in and settle their children at the beginning of sessions. Towards the end of the year, as children are getting ready to join school full time, teachers will encourage more independence.

Families of all children starting in the next academic year will either be invited to an Induction Meeting in the Summer Term to meet their child's new teachers and other key staff, and/or offered a home visit by the teacher- this will be dependent on numbers starting at school. Both offer the opportunity to learn more about the EYFS curriculum. This is an opportunity for staff to:

- go through the school handbook
- explain about uniform, PE and school dinners/ free school meals
- explain about holidays and absences
- answer any questions families might have about starting school
- explain the arrangements for starting school in September
- talk to the families about the school and Government expectations at the end of the EYFS

We also try to visit any settings that are sending children to us.

In Reception, when children join the school in September, we find that it is best for all children to have staggered starts for the first week i.e. half days. We actively encourage independence and by the second week, we aim for children to be coming into class independently.

Throughout the Reception year, each child's involvement in whole school life will have been built upon; many of the teaching and support staff will already be familiar people to them. They will have taken part in assemblies as well as sharing lunchtimes with the Key Stage 1 children.

In the summer term the Reception children will have times when they meet their year 1 teachers and have story or work in small groups so that children and teachers can get to know each other before starting in September. Following from Reception there will be a smooth transition to year 1. Elements of the EYFS will be part of year 1.

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."

At Willow Brook Primary 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 2008.

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 effective learning environment by completing daily risk assessments for both inside and outside areas.
- 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 are committed to and endeavour to meet all these requirements.

Healthy Eating

All children, in Nursery and Reception, are provided with a healthy snack each day as well as being given the choice of a drink - milk and water. They have access to water at all times. School dinners are provided for free for all children in Reception and menus are available at the office. We have a range of vegetables, fruit and other healthy foods to encourage pupils to try a range of foods.

Intimate Care

Intimate care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. However, depending on a child's age and stage of development, they may need some support, for example dressing, wiping their bottom after using the toilet and changing underwear following an accident. We actively encourage families to start helping their children become independent with these tasks before they start Nursery so that they are toilet trained and able to be independent. Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff and families work in partnership to give the right support to an individual child.

Behaviour Policy

At the beginning of each term, rules are discussed at the pupils' level of understanding to promote a good standard of behaviour. The pupils are encouraged to think about their own behaviour and the subsequent effects. They are rewarded for their efforts and achievements by praise, encouragement, stickers and value cards. Verbal praise and encouragement are seen as instrumental in maintaining good behaviour.

Where there is misbehaviour pupils are encouraged to think about their behaviour so that they understand why it was unacceptable, and given guidance about making better choices in the future. Pupils are encouraged to say sorry and put things right. Removing a child from an activity or situation, giving them the opportunity to reflect and talking to them on an individual basis are used where appropriate.

Sickness and Injury

If children are too unwell to stay at school, then their families are immediately contacted to collect them. If a child sustains a head injury, even if it's just a bump, our policy is to phone the families to inform them in advance of collection as to the nature of the head injury and if it requires any further treatment. Accident forms are completed thoroughly and copies are given to families on request.

Attendance

Although education is not compulsory until the child is 5 years old, it is of the utmost importance for all children in the EYFS to attend every day. It can disturb their learning if they are taken out for long periods of time, e.g. holiday during term time. If a child misses a lot of school, then they are missing out on a lot of learning opportunities. In the EYFS it is really important that friendships are nurtured and that children lay the foundation of learning ready to start year 1. If the child is not able to do this, they can become distressed as they have to make new friends and catch up on learning that their peers have already learned. Once they turn 5 years old then education is compulsory. Therefore, if 5 or more days are registered as unauthorised absence this will incur a fine. If absence persists the case will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer.

Absences can be authorised for religious events, medical appointments or exceptional family circumstances. Holidays must be booked in allotted holiday time and not during term time. Any holidays will be registered as unauthorised during the school period.

Collections from School

We recognise that it is not always possible for those with parental responsibility to collect their child from school. In such circumstances, we have clear procedures for the collection of children from school.

We ask that families give the school notice that an alternative person will be collecting their child. This can be done in advance by completing a regular pick up form (this information is kept on file and it is the families responsibility to update the school of any changes); by telephoning the school during the day or by informing a member of staff in advance.

We require a person with parental responsibility to inform us each time an alternative person is due to collect their child. For each child's safety and security, we do not accept families giving universal permission for a person or persons to collect their child on their behalf. If someone other than a person with parental responsibility arrives to collect a child without the school being informed, the school will telephone someone with parental responsibility to check that it is acceptable to release their child.

In the rare event that a parent is not contactable, a member of the Senior Leadership Team will make the decision to release the child to the alternative person or not. This decision will be made by taking the following information into account:

- Whether the alternative person is known to the child.
- Whether the alternative person is known to the school.
- Whether the alternative person has collected the child before.
- Whether the alternative person is recorded in the contacts for the given child.