



William Penn Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to their full potential. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. When parents choose to use early years services, they want to know the provision will keep their children safe and help them to thrive. The Early Years Foundation Stage is the framework that provides that assurance.

Aim of policy:

This policy aims to outline the principles, teaching, learning and assessment that takes place in the EYFS.

Our aims:

At William Penn, we aim to provide a safe, happy and caring environment where all children thrive. We ensure children have access to a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them a range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life. Please refer to the EYFS intent. Our Early Years provision includes up to 16 places for Reception age children. We have 1 spacious room with doors leading out to a large, well-resourced EYFS outside classroom. The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception Year. At William Penn 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.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based upon four themes:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments with Teaching and Support from Adults
- Learning and Development

This policy explains how our practice is underpinned by these four themes.

A Unique Child

At William Penn Primary 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. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), at William Penn Primary School, we believe that it is vital to secure firm foundations that children can continue to build upon throughout their school life. It is our intent that the children who enter our EYFS develop cognitively, physically,

emotionally, verbally and socially whilst embedding a positive attitude to school and learning.

We believe that all children have the right to be valued as an individual and we are passionate in allowing our children to achieve their full, personal potential. At the beginning of each year we begin by looking at the individual needs of our children, through the Reception Baseline Assessments, and by taking into account their different starting points. We then carefully develop our EYFS learning journey which enables our children to follow the path that is suitable for their unique needs and stage of development.

The ability to learn is underpinned by the planning and teaching of basic skills, knowledge, concepts and values that are modelled by our teaching staff. We provide engaging lessons to enhance the learning of the children and the staff work hard so that our children's first experiences of school are happy, positive and feeling secure, enabling them to develop a lifelong love of learning.

The curriculum in Early Years is designed to provide a broad and balanced play-based education that meets the needs of all pupils. It allows them to gain the skills, knowledge and understanding, as they set out on their educational journey, supporting them as they progress from their individual starting points and preparing our children for the next stage of their education. Those children with particular needs, including SEND, are supported appropriately allowing them to be successful.

Daily activities involve child-initiated learning that they explore during continuous provision, known as 'Explore and Learn'. There is also adult-led learning for the whole class, small group activities or one to one support. An indoor and outdoor environment supports their learning through play and enables a wide range of learning opportunities for all children.

Positive Relationships

At William Penn Primary School we recognise that children learn to be strong, confident and independent from being in secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

▪ Parents as Partners

Parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value being partners with them in their child's education through:

- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school.
- Offering both parents and children the opportunity to spend time in the Foundation Stage before starting school.
- Operating an open-door policy for parents with any queries.
- Sharing regularly the children's 'Learning Journey' with parents and valuing the ongoing contributions to this from parents.
- Offering two parent/teacher consultation evenings per year.
- Sending a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of their time in the Foundation stage.
- Developing a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents.

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. The Foundation Stage staff meet with providers to discuss each individual child and their transition process into school.

Enabling Environments

At William Penn Primary 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.

- Observation, Assessment and Planning

Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts reception, staff administer the Statutory Reception Baseline Assessment.

As part of our daily practice, we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform our future plans. We record our observations in a variety of ways. Significant observations of children's achievements are collated in their own personal learning journey, which are shared with parents. In the autumn and spring terms, parents are invited to attend parents evening.

Within the final term of Reception, 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 is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

We provide parents with a report based on their child's development against the areas of learning and the characteristics of their learning. Parents are then given the opportunity to discuss these judgments with the Reception teacher in preparation for Year 1.

- The Learning Environment

The Foundation Stage classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where children can be active, quiet, creative etc. The Foundation Stage has its own outdoor classroom area. The free flow between the inside and the outside has a positive effect on children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for children to explore activities on different scales than when indoors. Children can explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant.

Learning and Development

We achieve our curriculum intent by providing outstanding teaching and dedicated support ensuring high quality learning experiences for all children. The learning at William Penn provides an environment where everyone is cared for, valued and respected.

The learning in our EYFS classroom develops the children's knowledge, skills and understanding through a combination of both purposeful play-based learning and focused teacher led sessions. Pupils learn to share, work independently and play with others.

The curriculum is delivered by following the Statutory EYFS Framework and supported by the non-statutory Development Matters Guidance for planning and delivering activities across the 7 areas of learning. The 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and interconnected. However, 3 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:

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

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

The Specific Areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

We believe that continuous provision (where children are choosing their own learning through 'Explore and Learn' time) within the learning environment encourages independence and consolidation of skills and knowledge previously learnt.

Through enhanced provision the children are encouraged to make choices and initiate their own play, which develops their characteristics of effective learning in order to give the children the skills that they will continue to draw upon throughout their development.

Our learning environments, both inside and outside, are reviewed and adapted regularly to meet the different and developing needs of the children in our care. We recognise the changing needs and interests of our pupils and we are responsive to this, regularly developing the provision provided.

We aim to ensure that these areas are always stimulating and exciting and that, importantly, they are accessible to all children, regardless of where they are on their learning journey. The environments are developed to encourage, challenge and allow them to access the curriculum independently and confidently with the necessary level of support and challenge.

Within our EYFS Curriculum, children are assessed continuously through accurate and effective observations, recorded on Evidence Me application. These provide us an accurate picture of where the children are on their learning journey, but also for individual children's next steps in their learning. They enable the EYFS practitioner, to ensure learning is embedded and consistent and that all children continue to make good to outstanding progress within EYFS.

Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play, children learn at their highest level.

Through play, 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.

Our children demonstrate high levels of engagement in well thought out activities. They develop their speaking and listening skills, which enable them to access more areas of the curriculum and learning, which they then communicate to both adults and peers. They develop knowledge and skills across all areas of the curriculum including literacy, mathematics and physical development using these in different ways and applying them to different areas of learning. Developing a wider sense of the world around them through their activities, our children can then draw on these experiences when interacting with others and link this to new learning to enable further progression. They will talk enthusiastically about their interests and learning with adults and other children.

Our EYFS curriculum enriches the following elements:

- *Core Values and Concepts* - Determining knowledge that adds relevance and creates togetherness – leading to our children practicing becoming a good citizen and instilling British Values alongside our Quaker Values.
- *Active* - Providing richness and depth to inspirational learning in school
- *A child led curriculum*-allowing students to make links between each area of learning.
- *Experiences* - Providing a breadth of opportunity out of school, as well as bringing visitors in school to broaden children's horizons and further develop their exposure of different people.
- *Diversity*- Building cultural awareness & knowledge, celebrating equality and diversity to encourage children to be outward looking, forward thinking and inclusive to all around them.
- *Nursery rhymes and traditional tales* - are planned into our daily life to enrich opportunities to widen children's cultural capital. Vocabulary is explicitly taught in a language-rich learning environment for both breadth and depth to the children's speaking, reading and writing.
- *Purpose* - We believe learning should matter.
- *Giving meaning to our teaching*- Verbalising to children the reasons for the rules and the things we learn, to give their learning journeys a meaning and purpose to their learning.

Inclusion is an underlining element in the Early Years Foundation Stage at William Penn

We value the diversity of individuals within the school. All children at William Penn Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, gender, 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 Foundation Stage, we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children.

Welfare is the highest priority in the Early Years Foundation Stage at William Penn

It is important to us that all children in the 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.

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 William Penn Primary School we:

- 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.

Furthermore, it is essential to create a partnership with parents and carers to encourage independent, happy learners who thrive in school and reach their full potential from their various starting points. Parents are actively involved in their child's learning journey. The parents and teacher both record evidence of progression and the child's learning achievements on an application, called Evidence Me. The in-school records are shared with parents and parents also have their own accounts to share the child's achievements with the school. Helping ensure we prepare children to reach the Early Learning goals at the end of the Foundation Stage and ensure children make at least good progress from their starting points supporting transition into KS1.

Our children develop their characteristics of learning and are able to apply their knowledge to a range of situations, making links, explaining their ideas and demonstrating their understanding. Because of this our children have the confidence to take risks and discuss their successes and failures with adults, drawing on their experiences to improve or adjust what they are doing. From their own starting points, our children make good to excellent progress academically and socially, developing a sense of themselves which prepares and supports them in the transition to Key Stage 1.

Signed:

Date: 11.3.25

Next Review: Spring 2026

