

# WESTGATE PRIMARY SCHOOL



**EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY**

**WRITTEN JUNE 2014**

SIGNED .....

DATE: .....

HEADTEACHER

SIGNED .....

DATE: .....

CHAIR OF GOVERNORS

### **Mission statement**

*At Westgate Primary School we strive for excellence in education by providing a safe, secure, caring environment, where all are valued and respected as individuals, enabling them to reach their full potential, whilst growing in their knowledge and understanding.*

**“Effective practice in the Early Years requires committed, enthusiastic and reflective practitioners, with breadth and depth of knowledge, skills and understanding”.**  
**(KEEP Primary National Strategy)**

### **Philosophy**

At Westgate Primary School, we believe that early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. It is not just a preparation for the next stage – it is vitally important in itself.

### **Introduction**

Early Years within this document refers to children in the final year of the Foundation Stage, more commonly known as the Reception Year. The School admits 30 children each year.

### **Requirements**

The ‘Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage’ refers to children from Birth to the end of Reception class. It sets out a series of Early Learning Goals for children to work towards by the time they reach the end of EYFS at the age of 5+.

Whilst the expectation is that most children will achieve the Early Learning Goals at the end of the reception year, younger children will be provided with experiences which will support them in reaching the goals at the appropriate time. We endeavour to ensure that children “learn and develop well and kept healthy and safe.” We aim to support children in their learning through “teaching and experiences that give children the broad range of skills that provide the right foundation for good progress through school and in life.” (Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2012)

Children are required by law to attend full time school from the term after their fifth birthday. At Westgate Primary School we have 1 admission point during the year which is in September.

### **The Environment**

We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident and secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision.

Effective learning builds and extends upon prior learning and following children’s interest. Effective planning is informed by observations of the children to ensure we follow their current interests and experiences. These observations are recorded in the children’s individual learning journeys. Play based learning is paramount and children direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities provided by staff. Staff will enhance play and extend as needed to further individual learning and ensure each curriculum area is met.

### **The Curriculum**

The Early Years education we offer our children is based on the four principles that:-

- Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments.
- Children develop and learn in different ways.

The curriculum of the Foundation Stage underpins all future learning and is based on ongoing observations and assessments in three prime areas of learning:-

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

and four specific areas

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

At Westgate Primary School: **“Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity.”** (Statutory Framework for EYFS 2012)

Planning and guided children's activities will reflect on the different ways that children learn and are evident in their practice. At Westgate Primary School we support children in using the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning. These are;

- **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; and
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

(Taken from statutory framework for the EYFS 2012)

### **Approach to learning**

The general features of good practice in the education of young children in our care are:

- the provision of a happy and welcoming setting where all children feel secure and valued;
- the provision of an exciting and stimulating environment where children will be motivated with a desire to learn;
- opportunities for the children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and skills and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities, enabling them to develop into confident and independent learners;
- encouragement of children to play an active role in their learning, to question, discuss and listen to other points of view, in the knowledge that their opinions are valued;
- the commitment to outdoor learning giving them the opportunity to learn through active play and exploration;
- encouragement for the children to develop creative thinking, curiosity and successful acquisition of skills;
- the development and support of the children's social and emotional aspects of learning;
- recognition and celebration of the cultural diversity that makes our School and our community a rich and interesting place to work and play;
- the promotion of a personalised approach to learning, ensuring all children are supported at a level and pace that enables them to realise their full potential;
- the inclusion of all children and access to the whole curriculum;
- the adoption of a variety of teaching styles, appropriate to the needs of the children and the curriculum;
- involved in practical activity, enquiry and purposeful play;
- to build on what the children already know;
- partnership between parents/carers and teachers in supporting the education of the children, encouraging a team approach which involves home and school working together
- good relations between our School and the 'settings' that the children experience prior to joining our School and the transition into year 1;
- to further love of learning, enquiring minds and the ability to discuss, adapt and negotiate.
- well planned play and purposeful activity with challenge and enjoyment, (both in and out of doors,) provide a wealth of opportunities for teaching and learning.
- a well planned, organised environment, where learners are be able to explore, question, test, observe, experiment, plan, make decisions for themselves, and participate in activities

### **Quality of teaching**

Effective teaching takes place where:

- staff have a clear understanding of how children learn.
- staff plan, co-operate and work as a team.
- activities are purposeful and clearly planned.
- staff work directly with the children.
- children's play is supported and extended sensitively.
- there is a good use of space, materials and equipment.
- staff are flexible and explore opportunities that occur spontaneously.
- staff have high expectations based on each child's ability.
- children have full access to and use of the inside and outside environment
- there is a balance of self-chosen, adult initiated and directed activities
- staff understand how young children learn and develop, so that they can observe and respond to them.
- progress is monitored throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage, taking action to identify areas of concern and provide necessary support.
- staff provide safe environments to play and explore, teaching children how to keep themselves healthy and safe.
- staff provide a safe environment where children can communicate freely without any concerns.

## **Planning**

- To provide a broad and balanced curriculum.
- To plan according to the learning objectives for the Foundation Stage.
- To have thorough planning as a guide while also being mindful to make the most of opportunities for learning as they arise.

## **Assessment**

Assessments are made to inform staff of the needs of individual pupils and the needs of the class as a whole. This information is used to plan appropriate activities that match specific needs.

\*Monitoring of each child will take place through regular observations, discussion, photographs, record keeping and planned assessments.

\*Informal baseline assessments to gauge individual children's abilities will take place within 2 to 4 weeks of the start of their education.

\*Reception data is updated termly and completed by the end of June and the LA is given a summary of each child's achievement profile. An end of year report summarising the achievements from the Foundation Stage Profile is sent to parents.

\* The staff uses a detailed system in tracking the progress of individual learners, different cohorts and vulnerable groups.

\*The profile data is discussed with Year 1 teachers so that they can continue to support the children to achieve the early learning goals if they have not done so before they can access the KSI curriculum.

## **Inclusion/Special Educational Needs (SEN)**

All children and their families are valued at Westgate Primary School. Children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all provisions available. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. Assessments take into account contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential additional educational needs is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of additional needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage.

### **We meet the needs of all our children through:**

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

## **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 Early Years Foundation Stage 2012)

At Westgate 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 2012. We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare and safeguarding 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.

### **Home/School links**

We recognise that all parents/carers, as their child's first educators, have a vital role to play in their child's education. We aim to establish strong links with them:

- so offer induction meetings during the term prior to their child starting school, and home visits during their child's first term in school.
- Regular curriculum, information meetings and parents' evenings throughout the year, and daily informal chats ensure they are kept informed.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to talk to the class teacher if they have any queries or concerns and we offer the opportunity to do this through a drop in session before school every Friday.
- Parents are encouraged on at least a termly basis to come in to school with their child to go through their 'Learning Journeys' and to add their own comments, to ensure the adults working in the Foundation Stage have a truly rounded understanding of each learner's progress at home as well as at school.
- Organising a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents / carers: Open afternoons, Class assemblies, Sports Day etc;
- Inviting parents / carers to make comments through 'WOW cards' relating to the children's achievements.
- Parents can also contact the School by telephone or make appointments to see staff at a mutually convenient time.
- Newsletters keep parents/carers informed regarding School events/activities.
- The weekly class newsletter informs them of the current focus of learning in all areas of the curriculum.

### **Equal Opportunities**

All members of the school are treated as individuals. We aim to meet the needs of all, taking account of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, special educational needs, disability, and social circumstances. All staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect spiritual, moral, social and cultural diversity and the need to prepare pupils for life in a diverse and multi-faith society.

### **Health and Safety**

At Westgate Primary School children's safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. We have stringent policies, procedures and documents in place to ensure children's safety.

In line with the EYFS statutory framework 2012, at Westgate Primary School we undertake;

- A whole school medicines policy ensuring that there are systems in place to ensure that medicines and the systems for obtaining information about a child's needs for medication are kept up to date. "Medicines will not be administered unless they have been prescribed by a doctor. Training is provided for staff where the administration of medicine requires medical or technical knowledge. Medicines (both prescription and non-prescription) are only administered to a child where written permission for that particular medicine has been obtained from the child's parent and/or carer." At Westgate Primary School a written record is kept each time a medicine is administered to a child and informs the child's parents and/or carers on the same day. (Statutory framework for EYFS 2012)

We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of;

- Fresh drinking water is available at all times.
- Children's dietary needs are recorded and acted upon when required.
- Milk, fruit and toast are available during the morning session.
- A first aider is accessible at all times and a record of accidents and injuries is kept.
- A fire and emergency evacuation procedure and policy
- A safeguarding policy stating how mobile phones and cameras are to be used and stored securely whilst children are in the setting. Cameras that are used in school must not be used for staff own personal use.

### **Transitions**

- A gradual, well supported admission to the Early years allows children to be introduced to the routines of the school at a pace that they are comfortable with and gives the staff the time to sufficiently support children into a new environment, with an understanding that some learner's may require more comforting and socialising as they approach more directed learning situations than they may have experienced before.

- Children are given the opportunity to visit the school for 'stay and play days' at the end of the Summer term to support their transition into school
- The Reception staff meet with children and parents to talk and develop familiarization as well as to understand more about the things that they like to do, in order to try to match the activities provided in the first few days at school with those that the child likes.
- Reception staff visit the children in their Nursery setting before they start school.
- The routine of the school day is introduced gradually, especially those aspects that take the child away from their environment, for example: PE and assembly
- Staying for lunchtime is approached gradually and monitored to ensure that all children feel comfortable and secure. For the first few weeks the children are supported by the Early Years staff in the hall.

### **From Reception Class to Key Stage 1**

- During the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1.
- Each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals. The profile indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are exceeding expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging').
- Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This informs the dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1.

**Review date: June 2016**