

EYFS

September 2015

The Willows



Primary School

Explore - Dream - Discover

Introduction

The quality of children's early learning experiences is very significant as it essentially provides the basis for a love of learning that will underpin all future achievement.

The Foundation Stage is important both for providing children with developmental opportunities and preparing them for later schooling.

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from three years of age to the end of the reception year. At The Willows children can join our nursery class in the September following their third birthday. They move into reception in the September of the school year in which they are five.

Aims

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based upon four themes and at The Willows we aim to build upon each child's individual strengths and knowledge by:

- Remembering that each child is **A Unique Child**. We welcome and value each child as an individual, ensuring that no child is excluded or disadvantaged and supporting and providing for those with Special Educational Needs.
- Developing **Positive Relationships** with all adults and other children in the setting. Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- Promoting **Enabling Environments**. We aim to create an environment which is warm, caring, engaging, challenging and relevant to the children's cultures and communities.
- Facilitating effective **Learning and Development**. We aim to foster the characteristics of effective early learning including; playing and exploring, active learning and creating and thinking critically.

Parents as Partners

Effective and meaningful partnerships between parents and educators are the best guarantees of children's successful learning.

The curriculum provided at school can only be part of the child's learning experiences. Therefore good links between parents and school are essential and highly valued by The Willows Primary School. We encourage parents to take an active part in their child's education by:

- Informing them of the learning activities/topics to be covered through newsletters specific to the children in Foundation Stage.
- Displaying current learning topics and activities on the school website.
- Inviting parents into the classroom to see their child in the learning environment.
- Organising a range of activities throughout the year which encourage collaboration between child, school and parents. These are often linked to our topic learning. Brainbuilder activities will be sent home every other week.
- Encouraging parents to share new things that their child may have done or learnt at home. This information is then placed in Special Books and counts towards the child's assessment evidence. These are called 'WOW' moments.

We aim to develop parental trust and support by:

- Listening to and respecting parents.
- Ensuring parents always feel welcome in school and are received well by both staff and children.
- Communicating on a daily basis through personal contact thus giving them an opportunity to discuss any issues on a regular and informal basis.
- Providing parents with a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school term.
- Returning a signed copy of the home-school agreement.

Organisation of the Foundation Stage

The foundation stage is split into one nursery and three reception classes, each led by a Qualified Teacher. Each reception class has a full time Early Years Practitioner working alongside the teacher. All Nursery children have an allocated keyworker. In Nursery the Early Years Practitioner groups have a maximum of 15 children in each. Continuity and progression throughout the age phase is ensured through the following means:

- The Foundation Stage Leader has an overview of Nursery & Reception provision and planning.
- Training and development of skills is undertaken by the whole team.
- Planning is done jointly by all Foundation Stage staff who meet as a team to plan interesting and engaging activities following the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.
- Planning, Assessment and Record Keeping documents are in an agreed format.
- Transition from Nursery to Reception is planned jointly, with children who are new to reception being specifically planned for to ensure a positive beginning.

At The Willows we also ensure smooth transitions by liaising closely with other settings and Early Years providers during the summer term.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is taught according to the statements identified in the 'Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage'. The curriculum develops skills and understandings in small steps in order to work towards the achievement of the seventeen Early Learning Goals.

The curriculum promotes, supports and develops learning in the following seven key areas:

Three prime areas

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Physical Development

Communication and Language

Four specific areas

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the World

Expressive Arts and Design

Planning

Our planning documents are designed to ensure that children get a wide breadth of experience across the seven curriculum areas and that learning activities are specifically related to learning outcomes. Planning also reflects the need for a variety of teacher directed and child initiated experiences. Where possible, we make sure that the children themselves are involved in the planning of their activities and that their individual interests are taken into account.

The Planning objectives within the Foundation Stage are from the Development Matters Statements from the Early Years Foundation Stage document. We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal observations.

'Wow' days and trips are planned to support learning in topics each term or half term.

Long Term Planning takes the form of a Long Term Overview which splits the school year into six half termly topics. These topics enable the children to have a wide and varied basis for their learning activities.

Medium Term

Medium Term Planning is completed to ensure that all of the seven areas of learning are covered each term.

Short Term

Short term planning consists of:

- Indoor and outdoor weekly plans which highlight daily activities, their learning intentions and differentiation.
- Differentiated weekly lesson plans outlining daily, differentiated class activities for English, Maths and Phonics (learning letters and sounds)
- A targeted intervention/extension plan for practitioners to focus on individual work with children to extend their learning as much as possible.

Assessment and Recording

Assessment is used to assess children's individual areas of strength and areas needing further development. Assessment informs future planning. All staff record children's progress across the seven areas of learning, progress is closely monitored so that activities can be planned to address the needs and interests of the children. Our assessment tool is a record of an individual child's development and progress in all areas of the EYFS curriculum throughout their time in Foundation Stage and if necessary is carried on into KS1. It is begun immediately a child enters the Nursery, or continued from a previous setting. As a school we review and update profiles at the end of each half term in order to track progress and target teaching and resources appropriately.

Reception use '2build a profile' to assess individual children. Most assessments are ongoing and this information is entered on Ipads. These are available for parents to look at during parents' evenings.

Reporting to Parents

Teachers and Parents of Foundation Stage children are in daily contact and are therefore able to discuss progress/concerns/targets on a regular and informal basis. In addition to this, the following procedures also apply.

- In the Autumn and Spring Terms, parents are invited to parent's evenings and are given the opportunity to make comments about their child's progress.
- In the Summer Term, parents are invited to make an appointment to discuss their child's progress throughout the year. Parents are given a full written report and are able to discuss their child's progress towards the Early Learning Goals.

Parents are invited to coffee mornings where they can meet other parents, staff and ask any questions about their child's education in Early years.

End of Reception data is reported to the LEA and is also available to parents. Where a child is identified as having Special Educational Needs, parents are invited to regular meetings where they are informed of their child's progress.

Inclusion

At The Willows we believe that all children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We set realistic but challenging expectations to help children reach their potential.

We aim to make learning an enjoyable experience for all children irrespective of gender, ethnic grouping, social background, Special needs or disability.