



Early Years Policy

2023-2025

The child Jesus grew and became strong; he was full of wisdom gaining favour with God and people. Luke 2:54



The Wolds Federation Middleton on the Wolds, Beswick and Watton and Bishop
Wilton CE (VC) Primary Schools

The Early Years Foundation Stage Policy 2023-2025

Introduction

Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life. (EYFS Statutory Framework 2021)

Aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

- To provide quality and consistency for all the children. Learning will be through both adult led and child initiated play activities.
- To provide a secure foundation which takes account of, and responds to, the children's developmental needs and allows them to make progress related to their differing abilities. "What the child can do" will be our starting point.
- To provide equality of opportunity to ensure the children have positive experiences of success at their own levels in order to give them confidence and motivation for learning in the future.
- To create a partnership with parents and /or carers to support and enhance the development of the children.

The learning and development requirements cover:

- the areas of learning and development which shape activities and experiences for the children.
- the early learning goals that help children work towards the end of the academic year in which they turn five.
- assessment arrangements for measuring progress and reporting to parents and/or carers.
- the safeguarding and welfare requirements in order to keep the children safe and promote their welfare.

Our overarching principles are:

- every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**;
- children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers;
- **children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates**. We provide education and care for all children, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

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The Curriculum

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) at Middleton, Bishop and Beswick Federation of Schools we aim to provide a broad, balanced, differentiated curriculum which addresses the children's social, emotional, physical, intellectual, moral and cultural development within a safe, secure, stimulating environment. Our Early Years curriculum follows that as outlined in the 2021 statutory framework of the EYFS:

Prime areas:

Communication and language

Physical development

Personal, social and emotional development

Specific areas:

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding of the world

Expressive arts and design

Communication and language: we give 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.

Physical development: we provide opportunities for children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. We help children to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

Personal, social and emotional development: we help 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.

Literacy development: we encourage children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. The bug club phonics programme is followed by all Early Years classes within the federation. Although the bug club programme is followed in the Foundation Stage, the children are taught the Jolly Phonics actions to enhance their learning. Children are given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials in the environment) to ignite their interest.

Mathematical development: we provide 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.

Understanding of the world: we guide 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.

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

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When planning the children's activities we reflect upon the different ways that children learn, these are when they are:

- **playing and exploring** - we observe or play with the children as they investigate and experience things and encourage them to 'have a go'.

- **active learning** - we support the children as they concentrate and encourage them to keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and then praise their achievements.

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

Planning, Recording and Assessment

The long term planning identifies each of the areas of learning in the Development Matters 2021 document. This ensures that all curriculum areas are covered whenever a topic or activity is planned. Medium term planning is guided by the children's current interests and ideas.

Adult led and independent activities for the provision areas are planned on a weekly basis. Children have the opportunity to work in all of the provision areas in the classrooms and outdoor areas. Whole class, group and individual activities are used to develop skills in all areas of the curriculum, as appropriate.

Pupils are assessed against Development matters and the EYFS profile. Baseline assessments are completed on entry to FS1 and FS2. The Foundation Stage Profile is completed for each child in the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five. The profile reflects ongoing observations; all relevant records in the child's learning journey, discussions with parents and/or carers.

In the final term of the Reception year (no later than 30th June), the EYFS profile is completed for each child. This provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded summary of every child's development and learning achievements and readiness for Year 1, it also includes whether they have reached a 'Good Level of Development' (GLD). Children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals (ELG) by the class teacher - who uses practitioners' knowledge and professional judgement of the children to make a 'best fit' judgement.

The children are assessed as achieving a 1 or 2 against each area of the EYFS curriculum:

- 1 = Emerging ELG – not yet meeting the expected levels
- 2 = Expected ELG – meeting the expected levels of development

Information gained through recording and assessment will be shared with parents, other school staff and outside agencies as appropriate. Parents receive a report each term based upon their child's progress in each area of learning. It highlights the child's strengths and next steps in learning. Parents' evenings are held each term. Parents and/or carers can also speak to the staff at any time.

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements

Middleton on the Wolds, Beswick and Watton and Bishop Wilton Schools provide a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment for the Foundation Stage children where they are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

Any areas for concern in a child's life at home or elsewhere are recorded in a 'pastoral care' file and child protection staff informed, see 'safeguarding' policy. In the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff see school's 'Whistle blowing' policy. Staff's personal mobile phones are not used for photographic evidence of children, if own cameras are used staff are to insert the class memory disc which does not leave the school premises, see 'e-safety policy. Mrs. Elizabeth Harros has been designated to take the lead responsibility for safeguarding Foundation Stage children at Middleton on the Wolds, Beswick and Watton and Bishop Wilton Schools.

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Equal Opportunities

Aims

- To ensure that no child is excluded or disadvantaged because of ethnicity, religion, culture, family background, disability, gender, home language, special educational needs or ability.
- To ensure that all the children feel secure, included and valued.
- To establish feelings of respect and trust with all children and their parents or carers.
- To treat each child as an individual and provide equality of opportunity
- To encourage self-confidence and a positive approach to learning in all children.

When planning and altering the provision areas in the class rooms, outdoor areas, displays and equipment, the staff will aim to create an environment that encourages a positive attitude to learning. This will include:

- Keeping the environment free from any discriminatory practice or stereotypical images
- Valuing the local community and environment as a source of learning opportunities
- Using displays, resources and equipment that reflect the community in which the children live as well as the wider world.

The Role of Parents

We believe that parents are a child's first educator. We therefore recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating their child. We do this through:

- optional home visits by the teacher are offered to all parents prior to their child starting school.
- opportunities given to the children to spend time in the setting before starting school;
- offering an 'open door' giving parents every opportunity to talk about their child's progress;
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's key worker if there are any concerns;
- having flexible admission arrangements, and allowing time to discuss each child's circumstances;
- offering a range of activities that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents;

Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the governing body, and will be reviewed in two years, or earlier if necessary.

Date to be reviewed: September 2025