



Wetherby School

Early Years Foundation Stage (Reception) Policy

Contents

- **Rationale**
- **Aims**
- **Learning and Development**
- **Planning**
- **Staffing and Organisation**
- **Assessment, Recording and Monitoring**
- **Learning through play**
- **Liaison with nursery settings and induction to Wetherby**
- **Home/school links; partnership with parents**
- **Equal Opportunities**
- **Inclusion**
- **Safeguarding children**
- **The Prevent Duty**
- **Fundamental British Values**
- **Health and Safety**
- **Medical Matters**
- **Complaints procedure**
- **School Policies**
- **EYFS Policy Monitoring and Review**

Rationale

“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.”

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, Department for Education, (September 2021)

Early childhood is the foundation upon which children build the rest of their lives. It provides a framework for care, learning and development. At Wetherby, we believe that all children should be given the opportunity to experience the best possible start to their education to set in place solid foundations which will enable them to flourish throughout their school life and into adulthood. It is, therefore, vital to consider the Early Years as preparation not only for the next stage of the education process, but for life.

Wetherby School is exempt from the learning and development requirements of the EYFS. This allows us the freedom to exercise our own professional judgement in implementing the Reception curriculum with teaching and learning strategies that are best suited to the individual needs of boys at Wetherby. Our curriculum has been tailored to the individual needs and strengths of our children, taking the best of the EYFS curriculum and challenging children at all levels through a bespoke integrated curriculum unique to the boys at Wetherby. Children at Wetherby will be provided with the experience that will support them in reaching developmental goals at the appropriate time.

All children begin school life with a variety of experiences and learning. It is the privilege of practitioners working in the Reception setting to take on the task of building upon and extending this prior learning and experience. This is done through a holistic approach to learning. High quality, well-resourced, integrated early education all contribute to a positive development in all areas of learning.

These areas of learning consist of three prime areas:

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

And four specific areas of learning, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied:

Literacy

- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

It is our aim that staff, parents and carers work together to establish a supportive and communicative relationship in supporting children’s learning and development.

Wetherby School will meet the EYFS requirements for 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. Through meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements at Wetherby School we are able to create a purposeful and high-quality environment which is welcoming, safe and stimulating, where boys are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

Aims

It is every child's right to grow up in a safe, healthy environment, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution to the world around them and, ultimately, achieving economic well-being. At Wetherby, the overarching aim of the EYFS is to help the children to achieve the five outcomes.

Falling under the umbrella of the Alpha Plus groups of schools, the "*Gold Standard*" education for the Early Years Foundation Stage is achieved through;

- **Clear educational goals**
- **Sustained shared thinking**
- **Meeting every child's needs**
- **Warm responsive relationships between adults and children**
- **Parents supported and involved in their children's learning**
- **High quality learning environments**

At Wetherby, our aim is that children are exposed to a wealth of learning opportunities and experiences within a welcoming, positive and motivating learning environment. Our pupils enter a friendly, safe and communicative setting and learn in stimulating classrooms and communal areas where achievements are displayed and where activities and resources are differentiated, varied and accessible.

Our comprehensive planning process will allow us to specify clear learning objectives within the Reception year group, encompassing and developing all areas of the children's learning and development. We are critical and responsive to our evaluations in order to ensure that our goals are challenging yet achievable. Furthermore, through our planning and evaluation processes, we will continue to promote the sharing of ideas, practises and outcomes in order to enrich the children's individual experiences and opportunities at school.

At Wetherby, we regard the core EYFS principal of "learning through experience" as a true opportunity to promote individualised learning within a class context. This is achieved not only through our own close interaction with the children but also through well-planned activities which enable us to observe and respond to the needs, interests, and achievements of our pupils. As such, the concept of a "unique child" is, at Wetherby, intrinsically linked with the positive and nurturing relationships that staff aim to develop with the children. We recognise and encourage parents' roles as co-educators and we aim to promote an open, informative, and supportive relationship with parents, starting from a parent's first contact with the school. We ensure regular communication through written and verbal feedback. Information is also relayed through an introductory social evening, a curriculum presentation and parents' evenings.

Consequently, the Gold Standard for the delivery of the Reception programme encompasses every aspect of planning, delivery, observation, and evaluation, ensuring that every boy achieves his full potential and enjoys a rich and rewarding experience in his Reception year at Wetherby.

Learning and Development

Wetherby School's exemption from the learning and development requirements of the EYFS allows us the freedom to exercise our own professional judgement in implementing the Reception curriculum with teaching and learning strategies that are best suited to the individual needs of boys at Wetherby. The curriculum for Reception pupils is based on three general areas and the four specific areas of learning. Our curriculum is brought further to life through for the boys through integrated curriculum, bringing in all subjects together to create enriching learning opportunities for all the boys at Wetherby.

The three prime areas of learning are:

➤ Learning for Life (Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education – PSHEE)

We provide experiences and support to enable children to develop a positive sense of themselves and of others. We support children's emotional well-being, helping them to know themselves and their environment. We also aim to help the boys develop foundation tools, to form healthy relationships with their peers and others, and adopt a positive disposition towards learning. We plan a range of activities and share stories to support the development of the boys' growth mindset.

➤ Physical Development (games, gym and dough disco)

We encourage the physical development of the children through offering opportunities for them to learn through being active and interactive, improving their skills of coordination, control, manipulation, and movement. We encourage use of all their senses to learn about the world around them and to make connections between new information and what they already know. Furthermore, we support children in developing an understanding of the importance of making healthy choices in relation to food.

➤ Communication and Language

We support children's learning and competence in; communicating, speaking, and listening, being read to, and beginning to read and write. We also develop the boys' speaking and listening skills so that they can communicate in a range of situations and for a variety of purposes.

The four specific areas of learning are:

➤ English (Phonics, Reading, Writing and Handwriting)

We support children's learning in reading and writing through the understanding and use of phonics. The children learn to read and understand simple written sentences, using phonic knowledge to decode words and read them aloud. They also learn to write words, captions and sentences using phonic knowledge to spell words in ways which match their spoken sounds.

➤ **Mathematics**

We support children in developing their understanding of mathematics, including number and numerical patterns, in a broad range of contexts in which they can explore, enjoy, learn, practise, and talk about their developing understanding. We create opportunities for these skills to be practised, to give children confidence and competence in their use. We develop reasoning skills through fun practical lessons enabling the boys to develop their problem-solving skills.

➤ **Integrated Curriculum (Science, History and Geography)**

In supporting children's development of the crucial knowledge, skills and understanding that help them to make sense of the world we offer opportunities for them to: encounter new creatures, people, and objects; undertake practical 'experiments'; and work with a range of materials to support the development of understanding and growth of knowledge. Each term there will be a new theme and, where possible, we use the themes to enhance the other subjects within our curriculum and make links to a piece of children's literature, thus making the learning purposeful to the boys and ensuring connections are made to prior learning.

➤ **Expressive Arts and Design (Art, Music, Computing and Drama)**

We extend children's creativity by supporting their curiosity, exploration, and play, providing them with opportunities to explore and share their thoughts, ideas and feelings, for example through a variety of art, music, movement, imaginative and role-play activities, design and technology and multi-media.

In supporting the development of children's ICT skills and understanding we provide opportunities for them to use a range of technological and ICT based tools to support their learning, both on programmable tools, interactive whiteboards and through extending their confidence and competence in completing basic function and programmes on a computer, and other electronic devices, on an individual basis.

At Wetherby we believe that these areas of learning and development are of equal importance and are inter-dependent in promoting the development of a rounded child, providing them with the environment to be imaginative, creative, expressive and an individual. We are also mindful of the school's position as a pre-preparatory school, preparing children for the transition to Year 1 and ultimately for the 7+ and 8+ prep school entrance procedure. It is our aim that this preparation and development across all areas of learning are delivered through planned and purposeful activities.

Planning

Effective planning is the key to ensuring that our children's learning is exciting, varied, and progressive. This allows us to build upon children's existing learning and experience. Our planning shows how our learning and developmental goals will be put into practice, is informed by our observations and interactions with the children and aims to develop all aspects of children's learning and development, considering their interests and supporting them at all stages. We aim to take into account the children's interests as much as possible and to choose topic areas that are stimulating, practical, relevant and developmentally appropriate for them.

Planning at Wetherby is a collaborative process between all practitioners who work with the children. There are three stages to the planning process:

- **Long term planning**

We have developed a framework which gives structure and coherence to the curriculum. Topics are carefully planned for the six half-term blocks and the learning objectives are distributed throughout the year to ensure breadth and balance of delivery of these objectives.

Integrated Curriculum Themes

Autumn Term – “To Infinity and Beyond” (Superheroes)

- All About Me
- People Who Help Us (in Wetherby, in the local community, and historically)
- Light, Darkness, the Moon, and Movement
- Barnaby Bear investigates the seven continents

Spring Term – “You’re Going to Hear Me Roar” (Dinosaurs)

- Dinosaurs
- Naming and describing animals, including their young
- Observations of changes in trees and plants
- Barnaby Bear investigates the UK

Summer Term – “I’m the King of the Castle!” (Knights and Castles)

- Objects and Materials
- Knights
- Castles
- Wetherby’s local area
- Simple map reading of the local school environment
- Paddington Bear explores London and Notting Hill

- **Medium term planning**

Medium term planning incorporates more specific areas of the curriculum in greater detail for each half-term. We identify links between areas of learning and development and ICT/computing opportunities. Learning objectives, assessment opportunities and activities and experiences in each area of learning and development are identified.

- **Short term planning**

As part of the short-term planning process, we identify learning objectives, activities, differentiation and deployment of staff and resources where appropriate on a weekly and day-to-day basis. We have developed this to increase the flexibility of teaching and learning in response to children’s interests and for revision and modification, informed by on-going observational assessment.

Staffing and Organisation

Reception can be found at 19 Pembridge Villas along with Little Wetherby, our nursery. There are four Reception classes at Wetherby; each with 23 children. We have ten full time

members of staff in Reception, including two members of SMT. As a result of this, we aim to maintain a ratio of 1:11 or less at all times in the school day. The children have opportunities for structured and practical, play-based activities in the Reception timetable

Practitioners and support staff enjoy a very communicative, team-based approach to planning, organisation, preparation and assessment. We strive to constantly update our skills, knowledge and understanding and, as such, all practitioners are encouraged to attend courses and participate in regular and varied school INSETS in order to propagate new initiatives, ideas and teaching methods amongst colleagues. We strive to liaise closely with main feeder nurseries throughout the transition to Reception and throughout the Reception year.

Assessment, Recording and Monitoring

At Wetherby we undertake assessment for learning. We consider and constantly evaluate what we know about each child's development and learning and make informed decisions about the child's learning and appropriate next steps. This enables us to meet both development and learning needs. All practitioners who interact with the child contribute to the assessment process.

- **Formative Assessment**

We undertake PIPs assessments (*Performance Indicators in Primary Schools*) at the beginning (baseline) and end of the Reception year. In addition to this, our monitoring, observation and tracking of children's attainment against our own tailored goals are recorded through curriculum specific "workbooks" (for English, mathematics, and topic areas) These provide useful markers both in terms of evidencing attainment but also in identifying potential areas of concern. Parents can look at any of these books at any point in the year and all are sent home at the end of the academic year.

- **Summative Assessment**

We use a range of monitoring and assessment techniques to track and record progress of individual boys as they move through the school. Assessment is undertaken across all curriculum areas over the academic year. These assessments are in line with other year group assessment procedures across the school. The monitoring and assessing of children's work forms an important part of the planning for each child's individual development. At the end of the summer term, parents attend a meeting with their teacher to discuss their child's achievements and are provided with a formal report. Teachers indicate whether children are meeting levels of development, or if they are exceeding expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). This is all supported by the aforementioned means of evidencing.

- **Providing support**

Comprehensive, yet empathetic, communication with parents is of paramount importance to us with regard to assessment and monitoring and, alongside the parents, we aim to devise a personal programme of support for those children who require it. As well as utilising our learning support team including speech and language therapists, we may also support the parents in seeking more information on their child's difficulties from an outside agency, such as an educational psychologist or occupational therapist, should they so wish. Staff working with the child aim to establish a "team" of support for that child in conjunction with support staff within or outside school and parents to carry out recommended activities or strategies.

In addition to the above practises, data and all relevant information pertaining to the children is discussed with next teachers prior to entry into Year 1. This is a crucial part of easing the transition to Year 1 and of enabling children to achieve any learning goals that they may not have already before accessing the KS1 curriculum.

Learning through play

“Play is essential for children’s development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults.”

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, Department for Education, (September 2021)

We believe that it is important for adults to support children’s learning through play, by getting involved in the play themselves. Children are given the opportunity to explore and discover within a safe and supportive environment.

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them to make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. The children 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. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled or safe situations. The children are involved with both group and individual play, some initiated by adults, some by the children. They learn through being active learners, working with a wide range of resources.

Liaison with nursery settings and introduction to Wetherby

At Wetherby we have established close links with many of the main feeder nurseries, including The Minors, Rolfe’s, Strawberry Fields and Acorn. We also have our own nursery, Little Wetherby, which feeds into Reception. In the instance of our main feeder nurseries, the Reception and pre-school teachers, where possible, meet to discuss induction issues such as grouping of children, learning support issues and to share any other information that may assist in settling a child into their new school environment. We are continually looking at ways to integrate the activities of the nursery and Reception class.

Historically, during the summer term, nursery children who will be starting school in September make a visit to their Reception class. At present, a “Welcome to Wetherby” postcard is sent to the boys’ houses, and video calls with the Heads of Reception, and class teachers and assistants are organised. Where possible, we group parents and carers into groups of threes to allow them the opportunity to meet the class teacher and Headmaster and to spend time in their son’s new classroom. They are given a parent-child questionnaire to be completed and returned to school, designed to give us as much information about the new children, their preferences, interests and any concerns that they may have. This enables us to make the children’s transition from nursery to school as smooth as possible.

In this regard, nursery reports are also sent to Wetherby by half term of the summer term and distributed to class teachers to inform them about the new intake.

During the summer term, parents of children starting in September are invited to a virtual “Welcome Evening” where they can get to know the Reception team, as well as hearing the Headmaster and other members of the Senior Management Team speak. In the first week of the autumn term, parents are then invited to a virtual “curriculum evening”; a presentation providing information on the Reception year, school routines, expectations in terms of behaviour and independence, partnerships with parents and carers and general housekeeping issues. Parents will receive an information pack containing an EYFS Guide for Parents, a copy of our Reading Policy, a learning support information leaflet and a parent handbook.

Home/school links; partnership with parents

At Wetherby we strive to create a very comprehensive approach to our relationship with children and their parents/carers from our very first interactions with them. Making them feel part of the school community before they arrive is a key step. We want to get to know the children before they start school, through meeting them and speaking to parents, carers and nursery schools.

Outlined below are some of the means through which we aim to develop strong partnerships with parents and carers;

- Welcome evening in the summer term prior to their child starting at Wetherby
- Virtual curriculum evening at the start of the autumn term to inform parents and carers on school life and to enable them to understand the value of supporting children’s learning at home
- Welcome postcard sent from the Reception staff during the Summer holidays prior to the academic year beginning in September
- Encouraging parents/carers to complete the Wetherby welcome questionnaire
- Organising transition meetings as detailed above
- Email contact with parents; promoting efficient sharing of practical information
- Sharing progress at school through regular dialogue between the Reception staff and parent/carers, through end of the day drop-off conversations and phone calls.
- Ensuring that a member of SMT is always present both in the morning and afternoon to address any incidental conversations with parents
- Inviting parents to complete a Reception parental questionnaire in the spring term
- Encouraging parents/carers to listen to their child read each night or to engage relevant child-led learning activities at home such as “*Oxford Reading Owls*” or holiday journals
- Discussing individual progress and targets with parents/carers at parents’ evenings (held termly and informed by the attainment profile)
- Providing a bi-annual written report to parents/carers in December and July summarising the child’s progress

This strong and friendly relationship with parents sets a very positive tone for our relationship with the children. They see that parents and teachers know each other and work as a team. We actively encourage the introduction of aspects of home life into school, such as good news and achievements; children, therefore, do not see a major distinction between home and school life and are thrilled with our interest in their outside activities and being able to share them with their peers. Similarly, photographic recording of activities and sharing these with parents develops a greater appreciation of what happens in school and prompts meaningful

conversations about school life at home, including recordings of church led assemblies, such as Mother and Father's Day Celebrations. We recognise the role of parents and carers as co-educators of children and, from the outset of the Reception year, we aim to establish meaningful and honest relationships with children, parents and carers through the sharing of information and experiences.

Equal Opportunities

At Wetherby we aim to provide all pupils, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability, equal access to all aspects of school life and work to ensure that every child is valued fully as an individual. Practitioners, as role models, are aware of the influence of adults in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical ideas. Children are encouraged and assisted in developing positive attitudes towards people of different ethnic groups, cultures, beliefs, gender and ability.

*Please refer to the school Equal Opportunities Policy.

Inclusion and SEND

We believe in early identification and intervention of children with special educational needs and disabilities. They will be given support as appropriate to enable them to access and benefit from the curriculum. This includes children that are more able, and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities. Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) identify targets in specific areas of learning for those children who require additional support, in line with the school's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy.

The class teacher discusses these targets with the child and his/her parents/carers. Progress is monitored and reviewed every term. The Heads of Reception may be present at these meetings if necessary. The Head of Learning Support is responsible for providing additional information and advice to practitioners and parents, and for arranging external intervention and support where necessary.

*Please refer to the school SENDA and Inclusion and Disability Policies.

Safeguarding Children

Wetherby School has a Safeguarding Policy which can be found on the school website or a copy can be requested from the school office.

* Please refer to the school Safeguarding Policy.

The Prevent Duty

As part of Wetherby School's ongoing safeguarding and child protection duties, we are fully behind the Government's Prevent Duty. Please refer to our Safeguarding Policy for further information.

Fundamental British Values

Wetherby actively promotes the Department for Education's five-part definition of British values:

- **Democracy**
- **The rule of law**
- **Individual liberty**
- **Mutual respect**
- **Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs**

These fundamental British Values are reinforced in every aspect of school life: in classrooms and corridors, in interactions between staff and pupils, on the playground and in communication with parents. Our curriculum also aims to include the teaching of the Fundamental British Values whenever possible.

Please refer to the document: Promoting Fundamental British Values at Wetherby School.

Health and Safety

We regularly update and review our risk assessments on classrooms, communal areas, outdoor areas and equipment and toys used by children in the EYFS in order to identify minimise potential hazards. Risk assessment documentation is displayed in each Reception classroom and communal areas.

*Please refer to our school Risk Assessment Policy. Additional reference should also be made to the EYFS Educational Visits and Journeys Policy, which works in conjunction with the whole school Educational Visits and Journeys Policy.

Medical Matters

Please also keep your child at home if he is ill or infectious and please phone the school office by 9am on every day that he is ill and will not be attending school. Any child who is ill will struggle with the demands of the school day and may possibly infect others. If a child has been diagnosed with an infectious disease, please follow your doctor's instructions with regard to his return to school. Please also inform the school in order that other children can be monitored for similar symptoms.

If your child has a medical condition that necessitates regular access to medication please provide us with full and current medical information in order to ensure that we can provide appropriately for their needs, or to look after them in the event of an accident. We would be very grateful if you could ensure that you have filled in the health questionnaire form prior to your son's first term at school and that they are updated as necessary. We will work with you in making arrangements that work best for your child.

Should your child need to be given medicine during the school day you are required to fill in and sign a Medication Form in the school office. Without this consent we are unable to administer medicine to your child. The School Office will then administer the correct dosage when necessary.

Where possible, all EYFS staff are fully trained paediatric first aiders. First aid boxes are situated on every level in the school including the playground and are taken to games lessons and on trips. We will always contact you immediately if your child suffers anything more than a trivial injury, or if we have any concerns about his health. We will inform you at the end of the school day if your child has a minor accident, bump or graze at school during the day. Should your son have a bump to the head a phone call will always be made.

*Please refer to the school Medication Policy, available on our website and in the school office.

Complaints Procedure

We strive to make Wetherby a safe, nurturing and stimulating environment for your child. We hope that you will not feel the need to complain and that any difficulty can be efficiently and sensitively handled before it reaches this stage. However, the school's complaints procedure (which applies equally to the EYFS) is available on our school website or can be sent to you by request.

Parents of children in the EYFS are entitled to make a complaint directly to Ofsted and / or to the Independent Schools' Inspectorate (ISI). Parents with children over five are entitled to complain to the ISI.

Ofsted:

Telephone number: 0300 123 1231

Education: 0300 123 4234

Emergency number: 0300 123 4666

E-mail: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

Address: Complaints, Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester. M1 2WD.

ISI:

Telephone Number: 020 7600 0100

Email: info@isi.net

Website: <https://www.isi.net/contact>

Address: ISI, Complaints, Cap House, 9-12 Long Lane, London, EC1A 9HA

School Policies

To ensure that the school operates efficiently and effectively, we have a comprehensive range of policies, procedures and guidelines. These are available on our school website: www.wetherbyschool.co.uk

They are also available in the school office or on request from:

Miss Pryer laura.pryer@wetherbyschool.co.uk or

Mrs Butler nicola.butler@wetherbyschool.co.uk

EYFS (Reception) Policy Monitoring and Review

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored and evaluated by the Deputy Head, the Assistant Heads and the Heads of Reception and will be reviewed on an annual basis.

This policy will be reviewed annually