



Westbrook Old Hall
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Westbrook Old Hall Primary School

Early Years Policy

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Statement of Intent

At Westbrook Old Hall, we ensure that our children establish solid foundations on which they can build for their future learning journey. This ensures that they continue to flourish throughout their school years and beyond. The EYFS prepares children for learning in Key Stage 1 and the KS1 National Curriculum. We greatly value the importance of the early years foundation stage (EYFS) in providing a secure foundation for future learning and development.

This policy has been developed in conjunction with the relevant DfE guidance and legislation to ensure that each child has a happy and positive start to their school life in which they can build a foundation for a love of learning.

We ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. We promote teaching and learning to ensure children's readiness for the next stage of their education and give children a broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

We seek to provide:

- quality and consistency, so that every child makes good progress, and no child gets left behind
- a secure foundation through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each child and are assessed and reviewed regularly
- partnership working between practitioners and parents
- equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported

1. Legal Framework

This policy has been developed and written with due regard to all relevant legislation and guidance in place at the time, and will be reviewed and updated, annually, and in line with any changes in the law.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

The **Governing Board** is responsible for:

- ensuring there is a policy in place to safeguard children that includes an explanation of the action to be taken when there are safeguarding concerns about a child, the use of mobile phones and cameras, and staff safeguarding training requirements. These issues are addressed in part in this policy and in further detail in the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Photography Policy
- ensuring there is a policy in place in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff (including supply staff) or a volunteer. These issues are addressed in the school's Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy
- monitoring the implementation of this policy
- ensuring that this policy does not discriminate on any grounds
- handling complaints regarding this policy, as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy

The **EYFS lead**, in conjunction with **the Headteacher**, has responsibility for the day-to-day implementation and management of this policy.

Staff, including teachers, support staff, supply staff and volunteers, are responsible for:

- familiarising themselves with, and following, this policy
- remaining alert to any issues of concern in children

3. Aims

- To give each child a happy, positive and fun start to their school life in which they can establish solid foundations on which to expand and foster a deep love of learning.
- To offer each child a wide range of new and exciting experiences and give them the opportunity to consolidate, explore and test them out along with their own, individual experiences.
- To enable each child, through encouragement and high expectations, to develop, to the full, socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally.
- To offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited opportunity for development.
- To encourage children to develop independence within a loving, secure and friendly atmosphere.
- To support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing.
- To help each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and developing the confidence to work towards personal goals.
- To support children in becoming confident, resourceful learners that are able to take risks within their learning.

4. The Curriculum

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- 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

To put these principles into practice, we:

- provide a balanced curriculum which takes children's different stages of development into account
- promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice
- work in partnership with parents
- plan challenging learning experiences, based on individual needs, which are informed by observation and assessment
- implement a key person approach to develop close relationships with children
- provide a safe and secure learning environment

At Westbrook Old Hall, we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all of our children, thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning and well-being.

Reception follows the curriculum as outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) document. This clearly defines what we teach. This document can be found at: [Early years foundation stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework - GOV.UK](#)

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are seen as important and interconnected, but three areas are seen as particularly important for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, for building their capacity to learn and form relationships and thrive (DfE 2014: 1.3). They support children's learning in all other areas, and they are known as the prime areas.

Prime Areas

Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) - providing opportunities for each child to become a valued member of their class and the school with a positive self-image and high self-esteem. Enable the children to learn how to co-operate and work harmoniously alongside and with each other and to listen to each other.

Communication and Language (CAL) - opportunities for all children to talk and communicate in a widening range of situations, to respond to adults and each other, to practise and extend the range of vocabulary and communication skills they use and to listen carefully.

Physical Development (PD) - opportunities for all children to develop and practise their fine and gross motor skills, and to increase their understanding of how their bodies work and what they need to do to be healthy and safe.

Specific Areas

Literacy - opportunities for all children to explore, enjoy, learn about and use words in a broad range of contexts and to experience a rich variety of books to develop a life-long love of reading, which also enables them to understand what they have listened to or read independently along developing their skill of reading familiar printed words. Literacy also gives children the building blocks to become skilled at writing and composition of short sentences that they then can read back to others.

Mathematics - opportunities for all children to develop their understanding of numbers to 10, spatial reasoning skills through measurement, pattern, shape and space in a broad range of contexts in which they can explore, enjoy, learn, practise and talk about what they notice and not to be afraid to make mistakes.

Understanding the World (UW) - opportunities for all children to make sense of their physical world and their community. To explore and find out about their environment and people and places that have significance in their lives.

Expressive Arts and Design (EAD) - opportunities for all children to explore and share their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of art, design and technology, music, movement, dance and imaginative and role play activities.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning. The Reception teachers plan activities within the Reception classrooms with these in mind. They highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them.

The three characteristics 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
- Creating and Thinking Critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

Teaching strategies

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) at Westbrook Old Hall Primary School gives children the opportunity to experience the very best possible start to their education.

Reception builds on what the children have already experienced at their Nursery settings. Literacy skills are taught daily, with specific emphasis on phonics. The children learn to read and write using a phonic approach. The Little Wandle Letters and Sounds revised programme is used as a teaching and intervention tool which aligns with the National Strategy for Letters and Sounds.

Mathematics is also taught daily in a fun and practical way. Concepts are built upon through progression of skills, based on 'Development Matters' and using the whole school scheme of learning 'White Rose'. This is aligned to the Early Learning Goals in the Early Years Framework.

Each day our children will have learning opportunities, through purposeful play, in each of the 7 EYFS areas of learning. In practice, most activities will develop a number of different skills and knowledge. For example, in role-play activities children could be learning to play with others whilst developing their language or story telling skills or during modelling with construction children could be learning positional language, to count, spatial awareness skills and motor control.

Each week, the children are encouraged to complete challenges around the classroom, which are linked to their learning that week. Some activities will be adult-led, whilst others will be independent activities chosen by the child. We provide opportunities for learning indoors and outdoors whatever the weather.

Purpose of topic planning and a Unique Child centred approach

We have two broad themes each half-term which are linked to our key text. In each half-term children's learning activities will be linked to these themes. However, these will be influenced by children's interests and their ideas for the activities. This overview broadly outlines the themes for teaching and learning in each half term. The teaching and learning which takes place will reflect the children's interests and needs so this overview is seen as a guide rather than as a scheme of work. Each theme is flexible in time length.

At Westbrook Old Hall Primary School, we believe that every child is unique and have their own unique interests and ideas. Pupil's own ideas and interests help lead learning within our EYFS. We endeavour to ensure that each child has their interests planned for on a number of occasions across the year. E.g. A child may display a keen interest in the weather, in particular the wind, they may be observed exploring the wind through trying to make a piece of paper attached to string fly in the air. This exploratory play would lead towards an enquiry-based investigation into the effects of the wind on different sized, shaped and weighted objects and materials. We may even share some 'wind' themed poems and stories to develop the pupil's skills in communication and language. Literacy based on first hand experiences is always most effective. We could even make kites!

Another example which could lead to a couple of weeks' worth of planning that would engage a large number of pupils, especially boys, may be an interest observed in cars, dinosaurs, diggers or fire engines! The possibilities with using children's ideas are endless. This method of teaching and learning ensures that children are interested, motivated and excited about learning! Each theme would last as long as the children's interest allows and would be skilfully planned to include all 7 areas of learning.

Enabling environment

At Westbrook Old Hall, we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. The role of both the indoor and outdoor environment in learning/organisation of learning provides opportunities for child-initiated activities. We provide stimulating resources which are accessible and open-ended so they can be used, moved and combined in a variety of ways. The EYFS learning environment is carefully planned to ensure all areas are used to enable learning for every child. The children have the choice of where they choose to learn. All activities are based upon current assessment, and all have a main learning intention that can be accessed with and without adult support. Our basic provision is linked to the current needs of the cohort, providing a range of reading, writing and mathematical opportunities in all areas. We encourage child-initiated activities

and adapt our continuous provision accordingly, enhancing our provision through objects, prompts, conversation and careful questioning.

Learning and ethos

At Westbrook Old Hall Primary School, Children learn practical and social skills and are taught to understand health and safety issues. Children are supported to engage with and appreciate their natural world, to use the natural resources it offers and the endless opportunities it provides to become self-confident and self-efficient learners. Pupils are encouraged and supported to become resourceful, resilient and reflective learners. They develop good relationships with each other and learn respect for everyone and everything that they engage with. Pupils are also encouraged to take risks within their learning.

Classroom Organisation

The Reception classroom is organised to reflect the 7 areas within the Early Years Framework. This ensures that the children are accessing all areas throughout the day- whether it is an assigned challenge or exploring through play. The areas with clearly labelled resources to ensure children can access them easily. The outdoor area is an important part of the classroom with many children choosing to learn outside for much of the day. We try to ensure that the range of activities outside reflects the different curriculum areas, for example setting up quiet spaces for a maths game, reading and for construction. Each child has their own labelled peg and tray which they can access daily.

Baseline Assessment

All children are assessed within their first 6 weeks of starting school, to give the class teacher a 'baseline' as to where the children are performing. Baseline Assessment is carried out through the Standards and Testing Agency and focuses on Communication and Language and Number. The class teacher will also gather evidence through observation, interaction and teacher judgement from the other areas of learning to give a wider picture of the children starting school.

Assessments

Assessment is an essential part of the learning and development of children in the EYFS. It involves practitioners observing and talking to the children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations through future planning. To ensure we have evidence of a child's progress in the EYFS we use a range of strategies, predominantly based upon observation, discussion, questioning and evidence of children's independent learning, all of which come together in their individual portfolio, known as a Learning Journey. We also use the on-line tool 'Seesaw', which allows us to take photographs, annotate and link to the relevant areas of learning. This tool also allows parents to be an integral part of the child's journey. The Learning Journey is given to parents when their child enters Year 1 or leaves our setting. Practitioners also consider observations shared by parents and/or carers and information from other settings.

Each child's progress is also recorded against 17 assessment scales derived from the ELGs (Early Learning Goals) At the end of the EYFS, 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 results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers.

Parent Partnership

We believe that parents and carers are a child's first educator and therefore work very closely to ensure they are involved in what we do with their child at school. We want parents to feel they can speak to us about their child at any time and feel comfortable in our setting. As well as the Reception visit days, we offer learning workshops throughout the year giving parents the opportunity to come into school and observe/support their child in phonics, reading, maths and writing. We operate an open-door policy and prioritise developing strong and positive relationships with all parents.

Parents are invited to a Welcome Meeting once their child has received a place at Westbrook Old Hall, and then the children with their parents are invited to a stay and play session in July. This is an opportunity for children to become familiar with the environment, meet key adults and start to build friendships. Within this session the parents have an opportunity to chat with staff about their child and their interests/needs.

5. Health and Safety

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. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance, which can be found here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68c024cb8c6d992f23edd79c/Early_years_foundation_stage_statutory_framework_-_for_group_and_school-based_providers.pdf

School also has a Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy which is implemented across the whole of the school and a Health and Safety Policy.

It is important to note that members of staff do not use their mobile phones or personal handset devices in the classroom during directed time and are prohibited from taking photographs with their personal handsets. Members of staff do, however, use school iPads/Pods/Cameras to take photographs as evidence to support the regular observation assessment cycle in the EYFS. These photographs are used in children's portfolios, in class displays, uploaded to Seesaw and on the school website. All parents are asked to state if they give permission for their child's image to be used on the school website through the paperwork in their initial starter packs.

We are a healthy school, and our children receive free fruit from a government initiative, which children eat during for their mid-morning snack. All children are offered a free school dinner each day as part of the Universal Hot Dinners Government Initiative.

A first-aid box is located in a designated cupboard in the classroom.

Only medicine prescribed to a child by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist will be administered. The school's Administering Medication Policy outlines the procedures for administering medicines.

Any accident or injury involving a child will be reported to their parents on the day it occurs, and any first-aid treatment administered to a child will also be reported to their parents.

Accidents and injuries will be recorded on the 'we are every' system. All staff have access to this system.

The headteacher will report any serious accident, illness, injury, or death of a child whilst in the school's care to Ofsted as soon as is reasonably practicable, but within 14 days of the incident occurring. Local child protection agencies will also be notified.

The school has a Fire Evacuation Plan in place.

Any food or drink provided to children is healthy, balanced and nutritious as outlined in the Whole-School Food Policy. The headteacher will notify Ofsted of any incidents of food poisoning affecting two or more children within 14 days of the incident. Information about any dietary requirements, preferences, food allergies and any special health requirements a child has will be recorded. Fresh drinking water is available at all times.

Smoking is not permitted on the school premises.

The Health and Safety Policy outlines the full health and safety policies and procedures.

6. Safeguarding and Welfare

All necessary steps are taken to keep the children in our care safe and well.

Any safeguarding or welfare issues will be dealt with in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, and all members of staff in the EYFS are required to read this policy as part of their induction training.

The DSL is Mrs Kathryn Quigley

The deputy DSL is Mrs Louise Johnson

The DSL is responsible for safeguarding children and liaising with local children's services as appropriate. The deputy DSLs will undertake the duties of the DSL in their absence, but overall responsibility for safeguarding will remain with the DSL. The DSL and deputy DSLs will undertake child protection training as required.

Staff will receive safeguarding training that enables them to understand the safeguarding policy and procedures, have up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues, and recognise signs of potential abuse and neglect.

7. Mobile Phones and Devices

Use of device by staff members

Staff members must not use personal mobile phones, devices or cameras when children are present. Staff may use mobile phones on school premises outside of working hours when no children are present. Staff may use mobile phones in the staffroom during breaks and non-contact time. Mobile phones should be safely stored and in silent mode whilst children are present.

Staff may take mobile phones on trips, but they must only be used in emergencies and should not be used when children are present. Staff may use their professional judgement around mobile phone use.

Use of mobile phones by parents, visitors and contractors

Posters are used around the school to indicate that it's a mobile free zone.

Parents, visitors and contractors are not permitted to take photographs or record videos without prior permission. Parents may take photographs and videos only containing their own child during school events. Parents may take group photographs at school events but only with the informed consent of the parents of the children involved.

The school strongly advises against the publication of any photographs or videos taken at the school or school events on social media. Staff must report all concerns about parents, visitors and contractors to the DSL, following the procedures outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Use of the school's mobile phones and cameras

Staff are provided with a school device to ensure that only school devices are used to take photographs and videos. School devices must only be used for work related matters.

School devices must have passcode protection. School devices, with the consent of the child's parent/guardian, can be used to take photographs.

Staff must not take photographs of bruising or injuries for child protection reasons. Instead, recording concerns forms and body maps are used to record observations relating to child protection concerns using school's electronic safeguarding reporting tool, CPOMs.

School devices must not be taken off school premises without prior written permission from the headteacher.

Where staff members have concerns over material on a school device, they must report all concerns to the DSL, following the procedures outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

8. Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed annually by the governing board and the headteacher. Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

All members of staff directly involved with the EYFS are required to familiarise themselves with all processes and procedures outlined in this policy as part of their induction.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is shown in the header of this document.