

*'Growing together,  
Learning forever'*



**Woodstone Community  
Primary School  
Early Years Foundation  
Stage Policy**

Date: July 2023

Date for review: July 2026

### **Our vision for our Reception Class**

We pride ourselves on giving our children the very best start to their education through high-quality, child-centred Early Years Foundation Stage provision. Our EYFS is based around three core principles; play, nurture and curiosity.

Our aims for our Reception Class are:

- ✓ To give each child a happy, nurturing and positive start to their school life during which they can establish solid foundations to expand and foster a deep love of learning
- ✓ To foster a love of learning and encourage children's curiosity through a wide range of new and engaging experiences
- ✓ To enable each child to develop to their full potential, socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally through encouragement, nurture, scaffolding and high expectations
- ✓ To encourage children to develop independence within a sensitive, secure and friendly atmosphere
- ✓ To support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation, sharing and turn taking
- ✓ To help each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and developing their confidence to work towards personal goals
- ✓ To foster a love of reading and begin to develop child's life-long passion for stories and books

### **School Values**

At Woodstone, we have five school values which underpin every aspect of school life and which we expect all stakeholders, including parents, staff, Governors and children to adhere to. These are:

- We are proud of our school
- We support each other
- We keep each other informed
- We try our best
- We listen to different opinions

Our Reception class is an integral part of our school and each element of our Early Years provision incorporates all five of our school values.

### **The Power of Play**

We recognise that play is vital for children's wellbeing, academic and personal development and for this reason, play is the pillar on which our Early Years curriculum is built. Our children are immersed in stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning to help them make sense of the world. We aim to stimulate their curiosity, nurture their holistic development and create solid foundations for learning throughout the primary years and beyond. Through play, the children have opportunities to think creatively alongside other children, practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experiences at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests and inspire those around them. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and solve. They are able to express thoughts and feelings to an interested and sympathetic audience. They are able to try new and

challenging experiences in a safe and controlled environment. Learning through play is facilitated by the adults in the classroom, whose primary role is to deepen and extend the children's learning opportunities by enhancing the play the children are engaging in.

### **The Curriculum and planning**

Our Early Years curriculum encompasses all areas of learning outlined within the EYFS statutory framework. Our topics throughout the Reception year are chosen to stimulate the children and open doors to the learner's understanding about the world around them. Topics are planned in order to provide a broad and balanced range of activities, skills, experiences and learning opportunities all of which are underpinned by the Characteristics of Effective Learning; positive relationships, enabling environments and the unique child and help the children to work towards the EYFS Early Learning Goals. Learning experiences in the EYFS feed into the Year One curriculum and beyond, ensuring the children are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Our EYFS curriculum is delivered using a thematic approach. The children will explore six main topics over the course of the year - each topic lasts for one half term and, whilst some areas of the curriculum, such as Maths, lend themselves more to specific teaching in a discreet manner, the majority of the children's learning experiences will be based around one theme. This allows the children to deepen their understanding of particular concepts and ideas, make meaningful links between learning and to apply their understanding to 'real life' concepts.

Whilst we have an overall year plan for our topics these are flexible enough to ensure we also follow the children's interests, school themes and local or national events. This ensures our curriculum remains engaging, up to date and relevant to our children.

Theme-days, visits and visitors are all planned in to enhance the learning experiences of the pupils and to allow them to apply their learning to different contexts. We plan up to three class visits during the school year relating to our different topics. These can range from a visit to the theatre to see a pantomime, to the local area to do a traffic survey or further afield to visit the zoo or a farm. We also have a number of visitors into school such as local police, firefighters etc.

Our Maths sessions are taught discreetly and introduce and consolidate Number and areas of Shape, Space and Measure. We follow the White Rose scheme of learning which is adapted to meet the needs of the class, promote fluency and problem solving and ensure the children have the opportunity to apply their mathematical understanding in different 'real life' contexts.

### **Phonics and early reading**

One of our core aims is to foster a life-long love of reading and for this reason, reading and stories form an important part of the curriculum, the timetabling of the day and the organisation of the classroom. We want to make sure our children develop a love of books and leave Reception with a bank of stories they know well. Our children have access to quiet reading areas in both the indoor and outdoor provision and these are regularly updated to ensure a rich, engaging book selection spanning a wide range of genres. Each

topic is based around a text, which has been carefully selected to ensure it is engaging, enjoyable and memorable for the children. The children have two 'story time' sessions each day where the whole class comes together to enjoy a book, which is selected by the children or by the adults.

Our daily phonics sessions follow the Monster Phonics scheme and children are taught, assessed and moved on according to progress. The scheme promotes a mastery approach with same-day intervention happening for children who need additional support. Monster Phonics is used as a whole school approach to Phonics and children will continue their Monster Phonics journey as they go into Years 1 and 2. Monster Phonics also supports our handwriting sessions and weekly lessons are planned to support children with forming their letters correctly. Fine and gross motor control activities are also incorporated into the daily timetable for all children to support with developing the strength, co-ordination and control they need with their handwriting.

Every child takes home a Monster Phonics book for them to read which matches their Phonics stage, a book to share with an adult at home and a library book which the children are able to change each week. In school all children take part in two group reading sessions every week as well as an individual read to practise their reading and understanding of books. The children also have a library session each week, where they can select their library book to take home, explore the library and enjoy listening to stories.

### **Organisation of the day**

Our timetable has been carefully designed to allow for an appropriate balance between 'carpet sessions', where the whole class comes together for a more 'formal' taught session and opportunities for the children to learn around the classroom. During this time, the children have access to a wide range of learning opportunities covering all of the areas of the Early Years framework. These activities promote the children's curiosity, give opportunities to consolidate learning and develop the children's communication, team work, resilience and problem-solving skills. At times, children will also engage in small group activities with an adult to support the learning that has happened during the carpet sessions. The teacher plans in detail on a weekly basis using daily notes and interactions with children and staff to inform where the learning journey should move to. Although the class teacher is responsible for writing plans, support staff have an input wherever possible.

### **Partnership with parents/carers**

We believe that parents/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 aim to create an atmosphere where parents/carers feel they can speak to us about their child at any time and feel comfortable in our setting.

All parents and carers of prospective pupils are invited to induction meetings in the summer term before entry to school. This is an opportunity to meet staff and get a broader understanding of both how the classroom works and the over-arching ethos of the school. It also provides a time for parents/carers to talk about any concerns or worries they may have at the time as well as pass on vital information about individual pupils that may be important to know.

When a child gains a place at Woodstone they attend at least 3 visits to the school in the summer term (prior to them starting) alongside all the other children who will be starting (we call these 'stay and play' sessions). We carry out visits to all the pre-school settings and meet with parents of a new starters on a 1-1 basis, enabling staff to begin to establish a relationship with the child and the parents and help towards a smooth transition. Over the first few days at school we encourage parents and carers to leave their children at the door or stay for a short time to ensure the transition to the school goes smoothly. The door to the classroom is opened at 8:45am with the 'official' day starting at 8:55am.

We have formal parents' evenings in the Autumn and Spring terms and a statutory end of year report for parents/carers is sent out in the final Summer term. However, we have an open door policy and encourage parents and carers to come and speak to staff when they are at all concerned or need to ask a question at a convenient time for both parties. This means any problems can be dealt with in a timely manner.

### **The Working Environment**

Our Reception class has its own designated classroom and cloakroom. It has clearly defined areas with clearly labelled resources to ensure children can access them easily. The classroom has a Writing area, Maths area, book corner, construction/small world play opportunities, a creative area, role-play corner and carpeted teaching area. The classroom set-up will change throughout the year and in response to the children's interests or to suit a particular topic.

Each child has their own labelled peg in their cloakroom area. All children also have a personal drawer in which to keep their own things. We encourage children to take responsibility for keeping their clothes, book bag and work safe and to know where everything is.

The EYFS team takes responsibility for organising the classroom and ensuring this is kept tidy and fit for purpose.

### **Agreed expectations for the classroom environment**

The whole environment should be bright and attractive to the eye and display the following aspects:

- Phonics charts displayed in a place and height suitable for children to see and access clearly.
- High frequency words for reference purposes.
- Numbers and values 0 to 5 (extended to 10 and then 20 as the year progresses)
- Display of lower case alphabet letters.
- Signs and labels displayed for designated areas or banded zones.
- Calendar and birthday charts.
- Class rules.
- Reward charts easily accessible for children to add their own points/smiley faces.
- An interactive display which children can refer to. This may be around a topic e.g. nature table
- Role-play - One good quality role-play opportunity changed each half term.

- A designated reading corner/ quiet place.
- Class drinks/snack bar.

### **Learning Journeys**

To ensure we have evidence of a child's progress in EYFS we use a range of strategies and observations all of which come together in their individual 'Learning Journeys'. They are collection of children's work, photos and observations which ultimately create a picture of the individual child. The Learning Journey consists of individual observations, post-it notes, photos and examples of the child's work. It reflects the child's learning as a whole, and so will include contributions from parents and other significant adults, as well as examples of home learning. Each child's Learning Journey will show progress across the whole curriculum throughout the year. Each child also has a Literacy book, a Phonics book and a Maths book. This helps to keep children's work for these subjects together and shows a child's direct progress and journey clearly.

### **Agreed expectations regarding Pupils Learning Journeys - Marking, assessment and updating tracking data:**

- Learning Journeys are works in progress and as such should be updated and added to on an ongoing basis.
- All work whether independent or adult led should be annotated and dated when added in line with the whole school marking policy
- Children will also have a Phonics book, English book and Maths book where work, photographs and observations for the relevant subjects will be added
- EYFS tracking data will be updated each half term.
- Data will be assessed and analysed with the teaching staff involved to give quality assurance and consistency in levelling.

On entry to the year we carry out a detailed 'baseline' assessment alongside observations on each child. These judgments are used to measure progress across the Reception year and throughout the primary phase.

On a daily basis we make observations on Post It notes or other proforma recording what we observe and giving suggestions for next steps which can then be planned for. We carry out structured assessments to find out specific knowledge, for example the children's understanding of sounds taught during phonics. At the end of the Reception year the class teacher assesses each child against the Early Learning Goals to form the Foundation Stage Profile.

### **Outdoor Provision**

The outdoor environment is a vital part of the classroom with many children choosing to learn outside for parts of the day. Our outdoor area is open and available throughout all our learning time sessions with access for all children using a band system. Outdoor provision is an integral part of our learning and the Reception Class are able to access the outdoor area directly from their classroom.

We ensure the range of activities outside reflects the different curriculum areas, for example setting up space for a maths game, reading or for construction. The area provides

space for role-play, creative activities, investigation and nature play, Maths and outdoor mark making as well as Physical Development opportunities. There is a focus on independent and investigative learning across all areas of the curriculum. Physical activity will include climbing, running, cycling and other active games being key.

Breaktime and Lunchtime play takes place on the back playground alongside the children from Key Stage One and includes a woodland area and climbing equipment (weather permitting).

### **Role of Staff**

Our children have three significant adults within their classroom. The class teacher is responsible for the pupils in their class. We also have two full time teaching assistants who are based in the class and work closely with the class teacher. These adults will become the children's familiar adults and it is a natural response for these children to turn to these adults first. Some children may show a preference for a particular adult if upset and we happily embrace this. The EYFS Lead (class teacher) has responsibility for the overall smooth running of the phase. They collate and analyse data and assess progress.

At lunchtime the children join other children in the dining hall. Dinner time staff are responsible for the children while having their lunches and during lunchtime play. They report back any incidents to the Reception Class staff as necessary.

### **Inclusion**

We have a responsibility to ensure positive attitudes to diversity and difference. We can support each child's needs by:

- Removing or helping to overcome barriers where these already exist
- Being alert to the early signs of needs that could later lead to difficulties and responding quickly and appropriately, involving other agencies as required
- Stretching and challenging all children

Please refer to the school's Equality Information and Objectives as well as our SEND policy for more information.

### **Safeguarding**

Keeping children safe is our highest priority. Please refer to the school's Child Protection policy.