

The logo for Ellen Wilkinson Primary School is a circular emblem with three concentric rings. The innermost ring is dark blue and contains the school's name in white, handwritten-style text. The middle ring is yellow, and the outermost ring is dark blue. This logo is centered at the top of the page.

Ellen
Wilkinson
Primary
School

A large, faded version of the school's logo is centered in the background of the page, behind the title and the table.

Early Years Policy

Policy Creation & Review

Author(s)	Sue Ferguson
Last review date	January 2020
Ratified by Governing Body	January 2020
Previous Review Date(s)	<i>Has previously been part of whole school policies</i>
Next Review Date	January 2021

Mission statement

At Ellen Wilkinson Primary School we aim to provide every child with the skills to become a happy, independent and curious lifelong learner. Our priority is that our provision provides a rich learning environment through high levels of active learning and engagement of learning through play, using a range of skill based activities.

School Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- All pupils whatever their race, gender, age or ability, feel valued and supported to achieve their best and can access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life.
- We promote positive learning behaviors and attitudes and create a safe and effective learning environment, where all children and staff promote and demonstrate the British Values and show a mutual respect for one another.
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress from their starting points, no child gets left behind and all children reach high standards of attainment.
- Close partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers to raise standards of the quality of education and promote a healthy home school partnership.

Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the 2017 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

The statutory framework clearly sets out the parameters of expectations and this is used as our long term planning.

Introduction to the structure of the EYFS

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to all children from birth to the end of the Reception Year. At Ellen Wilkinson Primary School, we provide educational provision for 3 year olds in Nursery with children attending part time sessions of 3 hours every day, equating to their universal 15 hour funded hours each week. Our Nursery structure is sessional with a morning or afternoon attendance. Some children have more than a year in the Nursery, dependent on the year of birth, and the rest of the children join us at the start of their Reception year at the age of four. The admittance into Reception is decided by the Local Authority through an application process and is independent to the admissions policy of the school Nursery. EWPS Nursery children who are likely to be starting Reception the following September, are given guidance and information on how to apply for a Reception place early in the Autumn term. The Reception year marks the end of the foundation stage and all children are assessed against the EYFS statutory framework and this information is submitted to the Local Authority in the Summer Term.

At Ellen Wilkinson Primary School we have:

- Two Nursery classes per day; one in the morning and one in the afternoon, with one class teacher and two Nursery Nurses.
- Two Reception classes; each with one class teacher and one Support Staff/Nursery Nurse.
- All areas have continual access to the outdoor learning environment.
- The leadership and management duties of the EYFS are carried out by the Senior Leadership Team.

The EYFS is based upon four fundamental principles:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

A Unique Child

“Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;”

At EWPS we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in different ways and at varying rates. Children’s attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebrations of work and achievements to encourage children to have a positive attitude to learning. We want to develop an ‘I can do it’ attitude in all children. Inclusion - We value the diversity of individuals within the school and believe that every child matters. All children at EWPS are treated fairly regardless of race, gender, religion or abilities. All families are valued within our school. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. We do this by taking account of our children’s range of life experiences when we are planning for their learning. In the Early Years Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations matched to the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage.

We do this through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children’s knowledge, experience and interests developing their self-esteem and confidence;
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children’s learning needs;
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them learn effectively;
- Offering a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Employing resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- Planning challenging activities to meet the needs of both boys and girls, of children with special educational needs, of children who are more able, of children with disabilities, of children from all social and cultural backgrounds, of children from different ethnic groups, and of those from diverse linguistic backgrounds;
- Monitoring children’s progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.
- Working closely with parents, carers and other professionals and outside agencies to enhance the lives of children whom may require additional support.

Positive Relationships

“Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships;”

At EWPS we recognise that children learn to be strong, confident and independent from being in secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners - We recognise that parents/carers are children's first and most educators in the home and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played and their future role, in educating the children.

We do this through:

- Talking to parents/carers about their child, before their child starts school, through inviting the parents into school prior to their child's start as well as carrying out homevisits.
- Providing information about the school and what to expect in the EYFS.
- Encouraging parents to talk to the EYFS staff and school staff generally if there are any concerns. We discuss our open door policy with the parents during home visits and regularly remind parents which adults they can talk to.
- Providing a written report on the children's progress in the Summer Term.
- Inviting Nursery and Reception parents to a 'Stay and Play' session four times a year where the adults working with their child will talk about the progress they have made.
- Inviting Nursery and Reception parents to 'Busy Book' sessions at the end of each quarter, in order to allow children to articulate and explore their prior learning with their parents. This also gives us an opportunity to promote the parent voice in our setting and in the children's Busy Books.
- Offering workshops throughout the year to demonstrate how they can support their child's learning at home.
- Using 'Star of the Week' certificates in Reception so that good achievement can be celebrated at home as well as at school.
- Communicating through the children's Home School communication books for all parents to report on reading outcomes, daily comments, and behaviour.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At our School both the teachers and Support Staff act as a key person to an assigned group of children.

Enabling Environments

"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;"

At EWPS we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development, where the children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision. The environment is 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 age related expectations of each cohort. We encourage child initiated activities and adapt our continuous provision accordingly. We enhance our provision through objects/resources, prompts, conversation and questioning.

Our Curriculum

Our Early Years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2017 statutory framework of the EYFS.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and interconnected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

The specific areas are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Achievement of these prime and specific areas of learning is through the characteristics of effective learning:

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically

Planning

The planning within the EYFS includes medium term plans and short term plans. These plans are reviewed and evaluated annually and changed to suit the cohort and allow for changes to meet the needs and interest of the children.

The medium term plans happen quarterly through the year and these lead on from a big statement or a big question in which to explore further through the curriculum. There is also detailed planning for the Continuous Provision areas in the classrooms. (Sand, water, dough, mark making/ writing, mathematics, construction, small world and the workshop area) These plans are used by the teachers as a guide for weekly planning; enabling them to plan for enhanced provision in areas of learning according to the needs of the children. Play-based learning is paramount and children have opportunities to direct their own learning with planned opportunities provided by staff.

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning and reflects the individual's interests, passions and abilities. Teachers use the model of 'teaching in the moment' as they use high quality questioning and interactions when playing alongside children. This offers the adults an opportunity to move a child's skill and teaching on in that moment to expand on their knowledge and this is recorded as a next step.

We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We endeavour the children to experience concepts and ideas and ensure we make them as real and as memorable as possible, for children to be able to utilise their learning in that moment and beyond. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning. We ensure that resources and spaces are safe to use and checked regularly.

We use the development statements in Development Matters (DfE 2012) as our long term plan, and to identify next steps for each child to deepen, challenge and extend their learning. During planning sessions, discussion takes place to ensure activities allow for Characteristics of effective learning to be demonstrated and embedded. Planning is based on children's interests. These are subject to change according to cohort interests. Activities based on skills may be led by adult facilitators in the classrooms. These adult led activities let learning happen through creative opportunities, a supportive environment and a sound pedagogical understanding. The resources are provided to create rich learning opportunities through a range of highly structured, adult led, child led or child initiated learning. Child-initiated activities may be instigated when the child brings something to the setting or demonstrates a thought process using resources from the setting, this might lead to the enhancement of provision of resources, stories and pictures to support this interest. A whole class focus is linked to activities within the EYFS setting. These are adapted continuously to meet the needs of the unique child. Attention to children's adaptation of activities is encouraged and creates extended learning opportunities. Children are encouraged to challenge themselves through self-selecting tasks and activities. The activities offer opportunities for extended learning and are structured to develop their learning. Planning takes into account children with individual needs in line with the SEND policy.

SEND Provision

At EWPS our SEND Policy outlines how we develop and further opportunities to enhance the skills of our pupils with additional needs. Through high quality practice children are provided opportunities of exploring and deepening their skills both within the classroom and through the provision of specific projects and activities. *See SEND policy.*

Assessment

On-going formative assessment is at the heart of our effective early years practice. We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. The capture of evidence through observations and books forms the EYFSP (Early Years Foundation Stage Profile) which summarises pupils' progress towards the Early Learning Goals.

Assessment in the EYFS is in the form of photographic observations on our digital app Evidence Me and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. This is also shared with parents. From September 2019 we have used the DfE baseline for Reception using the NFER baseline assessment. We use the online assessment tracker system of 'eyfstracker' to capture our summative data and this occurs 4 times a year. The initial 'On Entry' assessment is captured in the first few weeks of school. This assessment will inform us the cohort's emotional needs, as well as academic attainment at point of entry. This information is analysed by the EYFS team as well as being shared with SLT. Teachers are supported through the year to set end of year targets for their children and thereafter keep track of all children through pupil progress meetings with SLT. Children who may require additional support are recorded on to an action plan and all children with known additional needs are recorded on to a B-Tracker. It is the responsibility of class teachers to ensure all children's learning is monitored and all gaps are closed through supportive interventions.

We ensure our end of EYFS assessments are reliable through:

- Our knowledge of the child gained through observation and interaction
- Our environment enables the child to flourish to their full capacity
- Our assessments ensure a range of contributors e.g. parents, teachers and support staff

- Moderation across the EYFS team, our pre-school, local schools and the Local Authority

Parents and carers are given the opportunity to meet with their child's teacher three times a year in a formal meeting and receive a written report on their child's achievements at the end of the summer term along with their Early Learning Goal achievements at the end of Reception. During these parent Evening sessions, parents and carers are invited in to see children's work, and staff work in tandem with parents to look at current points of development and set targets for what will be looked at to be achieved next for the coming term. More informally, we meet with parents throughout the school year as and when necessary to discuss their child's particular needs.

Transition at EWPS

We recognise that transition can be a stressful time for young children and as a result of this; we have a staggered approach to starting school in both Nursery and Reception. This ensures that children have time to settle into their new surroundings and practitioners get to know the children well.

At EWPS we have created good links with our main feeder nurseries and pre-school establishments in our local area.

To ensure the best possible transition we:

- Value the parent as the first educator of their child
- Make contact via phone with every feeder pre-school within our new intake to discuss essential information on every child
- Visit as many pre-schools and homes as possible to meet children in a familiar setting
- Share important information about our school during new-parents meeting (July)
- Use written information sent by pre-schools/nurseries to inform early planning
- Hold a series of 'welcome/taster' sessions for parents and children in June and July
- Share information in a transition meeting with key adults for children with additional needs
- Meet with every parent and child before beginning school to share important information from home and school
- Stagger entry of whole cohort in September; over 3 weeks for Reception children and over 1 week for nursery children, to enable calm, focused and more individualised start to school. Nursery can at times have points of entry in January where class sizes are not yet full and children's date of birth does not allow them to start until January.

Working with parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. The progress check and EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Each child is assigned a key person in Nursery, who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. Teachers are usually responsible for the developmental progress in Reception with the support of support staff. The key person supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

This is done by:

- Parent meetings with the teachers and staff three times a year
- Busy Book weeks to discuss children's learning and achievements
- Stay and Play sessions four times a year to promote quality first teaching tools and ideas so parents can support their child at home

- Key workshops throughout the year to help parents support their child at home
- Event days such as World Books day and other celebratory festivals to encourage children to learn about other stories, cultures and traditions from our parents.
- Home school learning projects used to support development and learning taught in class, by creating an original masterpiece with parents at home.

Safeguarding and Welfare Procedures

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

