

Walbottle Village Primary School



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy 2025

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Vision and Aims

At Walbottle Village Primary School we aim to give all children in our care the best possible start to their future. Through a creative, broad and balanced curriculum based around the children's own interests, together with a safe and stimulating setting, we aim to create a happy environment with enjoyable experiences where children can express their individuality and become great independent learners.

In partnership with parents and carers we enable the children to begin the process of becoming active learners for life.

We endeavour to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. We aim to give children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

Walbottle Village curriculum intent

Through our curriculum, Walbottle aims to develop effective communicators and confident learners who are resilient and recognise they are unique. Our progressive and purposeful programme of study gives opportunity for children to be independent, creative, critical thinkers as they develop knowledge and transferable skills. We will support our children to form positive relationships and to be respectful, kind and compassionate.

What is EYFS?

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year.

At Walbottle Village Primary school we offer both part time and full time Nursery places. We offer Rising 3 places where children can join the term after their 3rd birthday. We therefore have new intakes of Nursery children in the Autumn, Spring and Summer term.

All Nursery children must attend morning sessions 8.45am-11.45am. From September 2020 we extended our 30 free hour provision and we now offer 30 free hours to all of our Nursery children. Parents can decide which afternoons they would like their child to attend, from one afternoon to the full week. Full Nursery day hours are 8.45am-3.05pm.

Children can join our Reception class the September following their 4th birthday.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- **A Unique Child** - Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- **Positive Relationships** - Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- **Enabling Environments** - Children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from strong partnerships between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- **Learning and Developing** - An acknowledgement that children learn in different ways and at different rates.

A Unique Child

We recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as rewards and prizes, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion/Special Educational Needs (SEN)

All children and their families are valued at Walbottle Village. Children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all provisions available. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. Assessments take into account contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential special educational needs is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage. Children may then be referred to specialist support, such as the speech and language team.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- A carefully planned curriculum that builds upon and extends children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develops 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 to learn effectively;
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

Welfare

It is important to us that all children in our school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all our children.

"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."

At Walbottle Village we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2025. We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare and safeguarding of children.
- promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- Promote oral health
- manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment are safe and suitable for purpose
- ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

Positive Relationships

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

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators 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:

- An information evening for parents in June where they receive the Nursery/ Reception Information booklet and the School Prospectus which highlights school

start and finish times, uniform and informs the parents of the schools vision and aims.

- Asking parents to complete an admissions form and a medical form
- Asking parents to sign permission slips for visits out of school, photographs of their child for assessment purposes.
- Encouraging parents to talk to their child's teacher if there are concerns.
- Inviting parents to attend informal meetings providing information about other areas of the curriculum, e.g. Early Reading, Maths and Phonics.
- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school, usually through Home Visits.
- Ensuring children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during transition sessions.
- There is a formal meeting for parents twice a year at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.
- Organising a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents / carers: Open afternoons, Class assemblies, Sports Day etc;
- Using "Tapestry", our online learning journals, to share learning both at school and at home.
- Written contact through reading diaries as well as the acknowledgement that parents can ring school to contact staff.
- The children have the opportunity to spend time in their new setting before starting school during 'stay and play" sessions held throughout the year and transfer mornings.
- Offering parents / carers regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our Early Years Unit.

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, the EYFS teachers act as 'Key Person' to all children in EYFS, supported by the other practitioners.

Enabling Environments

We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where 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. Provision is enhanced weekly and often daily depending on learning objectives and children's interests.

Effective learning builds and extends upon prior learning and follows children's interests. Effective planning is informed by observations of the children to ensure we follow their current interests and experiences. These observations are recorded in the children's individual learning journeys.

Play based learning is paramount and children direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities provided by staff. Staff will enhance play and extend as needed to further individual learning.

The Areas of Learning and Development

There are seven areas of learning and development of which three are "prime areas," and four "specific areas." All areas are important and inter-connected, the prime areas are particularly important for laying the foundations for learning. In Nursery the main focus is strongly upon these Prime Areas, which are the basis for successful learning in the other four specific areas.

The Prime Areas are;

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

The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

The Specific Areas are;

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

If a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents and/or carers and agree how to support the child.

Our curriculum

As a Primary Writing Project school we offer a curriculum that is rich in language with reading and core texts at the heart of it, that support children's vocabulary development.

Nursery and Reception follow our curriculum overview of half termly themes based on our core books. These overviews include suggested key vocabulary, skills, knowledge and experiences to ensure progression and challenge. Overviews are flexible and will take account of children's development, interests and contexts of each cohort.

We have an inclusive curriculum. Every child can access our curriculum with varying degrees of adult support. We aim to scaffold up rather than giving children a watered-down curriculum.

Assessment

Through careful assessments and observations, including information provided by parents and other settings, children's development levels are assessed.

One of the most powerful forms of assessment takes place in the here and now. This is when we notice something important about a child's learning and respond to help them build on their learning. Most assessment is formative, so that it quickly helps us to make a difference to children's learning. Assessment serves the children's learning and curriculum.

However we also need to have an overview of children's progress so that we can take further actions where needed.

We assess the children on entry and at the end of each school term. In Reception the children also carry out the statutory Reception baseline within the first 6 weeks of starting School. We assess if each child is on track or not on track for each area of learning. Those children who are on track will be accessing our curriculum and provision and making good progress. Where children move on quickly our emphasis is on deepening their learning rather than introducing new skills and concepts. Those children who are not on track are those who are needing additional support to access the curriculum and provision. These children will be added to our intervention plan and supported accordingly.

When planning and guiding children's activities we reflect on the different ways that children learn using the following Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning:

- **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.

These characteristics of learning are identified and shared with parent/carers and the class teacher in Year 1.

Equal Opportunities

All members of the school are treated as individuals. We aim to meet the needs of all, taking account of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, special educational needs, disability, and social circumstances. All staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect cultural diversity and the need to prepare pupils for life in a diverse and multi-faith society.

Health and Safety

At Walbottle Village Primary School there are clear procedures for assessing risk which includes procedures for keeping children safe during outings and for any aspects of the environment or provision that may require a further risk assessment.

In line with the EYFS statutory framework 2025, at Walbottle Village we undertake;

- A whole school medicines policy ensuring that there are systems in place to ensure that medicines and the systems for obtaining information about a child's needs for medication are kept up to date. Medicines will not be administered unless they have been prescribed by a doctor. Training is provided for staff where the administration of medicine requires medical or technical knowledge.
- Fresh drinking water is available at all times.
- Children's' dietary needs are recorded and acted upon when required.
- Milk and fruit are available at snack time.
- A first aider is accessible at all times and a record of accidents and injuries is kept.
- A fire and emergency evacuation procedure and policy
- A safeguarding policy stating how mobile phones and cameras are to be used and stored securely whilst children are in the setting. Cameras that are used in school must not be used for staff own personal use.

The Learning Environment

The Early Years Unit is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active or take things more quietly. The classroom covers all learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The Early Years Unit has its own large enclosed outdoor area. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children the ability to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all areas of learning.

Rising 3's

Intimate care

Any child in nappies needs an intimate care plan. These will be handed out to parents prior to the children starting Nursery and need to be returned before starting school. If intimate care plans are not returned, staff will be unable to change children.

Once children are settled staff will discuss with the parents about their child's toileting needs and support the parents with this.

Transition for Rising 3's

Week 1 children will do 8.45am-10.15am

Week 2 children will attend 8.45am-11.45am

Week 3 children can start full time 8.45am-3.05pm

Some children may need a longer transition period. If this is the case staff will discuss with parents what this will look like to best suit the needs of each child.

Curriculum for Rising 3's

For children joining in the spring and summer term staff will be focussing on developing and strengthening prime area skills.

During play these children will have the same access to the provision as the rest of the class but staff will be supporting and assessing against differentiated check points (birth to 5 matters).

Check points from birth to 5 matters will be used on entry and at the end of each term to highlight any Rising 3 children who are in need of additional support.

Transition from Pre-school /Feeder settings

During the summer term prior to a child's entry into Foundation Stage, the following procedures have been put into place to ensure successful transition

- The children are invited to transition mornings to allow them to adjust to their new setting.
- Members of staff from Walbottle Village make links to feeder settings. The number of meetings/visits will depend on the child's needs and how much information gathering is required in order to support the child's transition.
- During the last few weeks of summer term Telephone consultations are carried out for all new Reception children where parents and staff can talk about each

child's interests, needs and answer any questions. Nursery children have home visits.

- Nursery children have a gradual intake to help them settle into their sessions. This includes staying for mini-sessions initially which will gradually increase to full mornings/days over the first 2 weeks.
- In Reception the children attend for 3 hours a day for the first couple days before attending full time.
- If any child is struggling with the transition staff will discuss individual plans with parents to best support the child.

As children enter our setting we carry out baseline assessments to indicate where each child is working.

From Reception Class to Key Stage 1

During the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1.

The Profile includes on-going observation, all relevant records held by the setting, discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

Each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals. The profile indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development or if they are not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging').

Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This informs the dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1.

Mrs Rachel Reilly
Early Years Lead

September 2025