

# FOX WOOD SCHOOL



## EARLY YEARS POLICY

Headteacher: Miss Lucinda Duffy

Fox Wood School  
Woolston Learning Village  
Holes Lane  
Woolston  
Warrington  
WA1 4LS

Tel: 01925 811534

Review Date: April 2023



## **Introduction**

This policy has been prepared in accordance with the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) (effective from Sept 2021 – statutory framework). The school's policies and procedures in relation to EYFS are also reflected elsewhere in the school's general policy framework, including, but not limited to the following policies which can be found on the school's website:

- Child Protection Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Safeguarding Policy for Pupils
- Behaviour Policy
- Equality Statement
- Health, Safety & welfare Policy
- Parent Partnership Policy
- SEND Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Total Communication Policy
- Parent Privacy Notice
- Well-being Policy
- Admissions Policy

At Fox Wood School we use the term EYFS to refer to the time from when a pupil enters Reception, to the age of five. Early Years education is the foundation upon which pupils build the rest of their lives and one that encompasses all learning. This policy outlines the nature, principles and practice of Early Years Education at Fox Wood School. The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of those staff leading and teaching pupils up to Reception.

*“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, March 2021**

## **Principles and Aims**

At Fox Wood School we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our pupils. We aim to give them a strong foundation for their future learning. The EYFS sets the standards that all early years' providers must meet to ensure that pupils learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. The EYFS specifies requirements for learning and development and for safeguarding and promoting their welfare.

The EYFS aims to provide:

- quality and consistency in all early years' settings

- a secure foundation through learning and development for all children for good progress through school and life
- partnerships between different practitioners and between parents or carers
- equality of opportunity for all children to ensure all children are included and supported.

We adhere to the Statutory Framework and the four guiding principles which shape practice in EYFS settings:

1. Every child is unique – consistently learning, resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
2. Children learning to be strong and independent through positive relationships
3. Children learn and develop well in enabling environments – experiences respond to individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and partners and/or carers
4. Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates – the framework covers education and care of children in early years provision including SEND pupils

At Fox Wood School we aim to put these principles into practice by doing the following:

- The curriculum should be relevant and carefully structured by practitioners.
- Staff should understand pupils' development.
- Pupils should feel included, secure and confident.
- Early Years experience should build upon what pupils already know and can do.
- No pupil should be excluded or disadvantaged.
- Staff and parents should work together.
- Activities should be well planned and purposeful, with appropriate intervention by staff, using varied approaches and teaching methods.
- The learning environment should be well planned and well organised.
- Access to outdoor and indoor play should be available.
- Each pupil will be encouraged to reach their full potential.
- Above all, effective learning and development for young pupils requires high quality care and education by practitioners.

### **The nature of the Early Years Curriculum**

In order to promote the learning and development of pupils in our care and to ensure they are ready for their school career, we plan an exciting and challenging curriculum. This is planned in accordance with the seven areas of learning and development to ensure the pupils in our care reach the end of their Early Years education ready to benefit fully from the opportunities ahead of them. The areas of learning and development are all important and inter-connected.

The Early Years curriculum is organised into seven Areas of Learning. The prime areas, which are crucial for igniting children's enthusiasm for learning and for building their capacity to learn and form relationships, are:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

The specific areas are:

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

At Fox Wood School we develop curriculum plans using the Statutory Framework based on a series of topics, planned on a two-year cycle, which offer experiences in all areas. Progress is also planned through IEPs which are written and evaluated each term and allow each pupil's abilities and difficulties to be considered and ensures that targets are uniquely differentiated.

Many pupils at Fox Wood School, including those with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) benefit from a structured environment, such as set areas of the classroom for specific activities, 1:1 teaching and a structured timetable which they are informed about by touch cues, objects of reference, photographs or symbols.

### Ready to Learn

At Fox Wood we want to ensure that all of our pupils are able to fulfil their potential and that they are given the opportunities and support needed to achieve this. We feel it is vital to ensure that before the learning day starts, individuals are set up with the right tools to focus and learn new skills. For many of our pupils, their ability to process and respond to sensory information can be difficult and therefore a varied selection of activities are provided in different forms, appropriate to the individual child, to assist them to be 'ready to learn'.

### The Importance of Play

Play is the fundamental way in which young children learn. Playing allows for children to be challenged and behave in different ways. Through play, children are able to develop skills across all of the prime and specific areas of learning, working towards achieving the Early Learning Goals.

The curriculum is delivered through structured play as much as possible. It balances experiences in the 7 areas of learning, although this balance may vary due to the number and ability of pupils. The teaching may be individual, small group or whole group depending upon the nature of the activity.

Teaching and Learning will take place within the classroom and outside areas. Within these areas pupils will participate in a variety of activities, either with an adult and independently.

We aim to develop a sense of belonging, achievement and worth through a positive learning atmosphere where pupils are rewarded for effort and achievements with verbal praise, stickers and certificates. Foundation Stage pupils have links with older pupils within their own class, in assemblies, during lunch time, during outdoor play and whole school activities. Foundation Stage pupils have access to all school resources and are timetabled to use the school library, the hall for

Physical Education, the hydrotherapy pool, the Multi-Sensory room, the Food Technology Room, and the ICT/Library suite on at least a weekly basis. They also have access to Sensory Kingdom and the sensory circuit if required.

We appreciate and use the opportunities offered in the local community by visiting local parks, shops and other amenities including the library.

*“Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult led and child initiated activities”* **Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, Department for Education, March 2021**

### **Assessment, Recording and Reporting/Monitoring and Evaluation**

Assessment plays an important part in helping those involved in EYFS to recognise pupil's progress, understand their needs and plan appropriate activities and support. Here at Fox Wood as part of our ongoing practice we observe and assess pupil's development and learning. This helps us understand levels of achievement, interests and identify learning styles. We encourage all parties to contribute and take part in discussions about progress.

In order to celebrate all of the small steps that pupils at Fox Wood make, Early Years staff have devised a Developmental Framework based upon the Development Matters document that breaks statements down in to achievable progress steps.

We use Evidence for Learning to record the children's progress over the academic year in all areas of learning and development in the EYFS Statutory Framework and the schools own Developmental Framework. Parent's and carers are kept up to date about their child's progress and development and can access their child's online learning journey to see pictures, videos and comments demonstrating progress made in school. Parents are also able to share learning opportunities from home with staff using the portal. Learning is also shared at Parent's Evenings, Annual Reviews and Stay & Play sessions.

When pupils start at Fox Wood, staff have their assessment scores from the previous setting as well as observing and interacting with the pupil in order to enter their starting assessment onto Evidence for Learning. Teachers and teaching assistants work together to during the baseline assessment process to determine starting levels and to devise each pupil's IEP. Individual reports are written and sent home on an annual basis and parents are informed of their child's assessment levels in line with the school's progression framework. Pupil's achievements are recorded on a regular basis and are celebrated weekly during the celebration assembly.

### **EYFS Profile**

At the end of the EYFS, the EYFS profile must be completed for each pupil. This provides a well-rounded picture of each's child's readiness for entering Key Stage 1. This reflects the ongoing observation we carry out, the records we hold and the discussions we have had over the course of the EYFS. Pupil's development is assessed only against the Early Learning Goals (ELG), with each level being assessed as either: emerging, meeting or exceeding. Due to the nature of our

pupils at Fox Wood we do not believe that the profile is appropriate for the majority of our pupils and as such they would be assessed as 'emerging' against the ELG.

### **Inclusion and Equal Opportunities/Equality**

We firmly believe that every child is unique and that we plan a curriculum that meets the needs of the individual child. We want every pupil to be able to take advantage of the opportunities that this setting provides. No pupil is excluded or disadvantaged because of ethnicity, religion, culture, family back ground, disability, gender, home language, special educational needs or ability. More information can be found in our Equality Statement.

### **Parents as partners**

At Fox Wood we recognise the importance of establishing positive relationships with parents and carers, as highlighted in the Statutory Framework. We understand that parents and carers are a child's first and most enduring educators and we value your contribution to their education. A positive partnership between school and home can have an equally positive impact on a child's learning and development.

We encourage parents and carers to take an active role in their child's learning and development and ask that participate with us in as many ways as you can. We encourage regular information sharing to make sure we have the best knowledge available to help support and develop your child. Your invaluable insight into the individuality of your child helps us to ensure that our learning experiences are not only engaging but appropriately challenging as well.

Fox Wood has an open door policy and maintains close links with parents after pupils start school, through home-school diaries, Individual Education Programme review meetings, celebration assemblies, parents' evenings, annual reviews and reports. (See Home School Links policy for further information).

### **Safeguarding and Welfare**

As a provider of the EYFS our duties in relation to the safeguarding and welfare of our pupils is of paramount importance. We have created a welcoming environment that is both safe and stimulating allowing our pupils to learn and grown in confidence.

We have a safeguarding policy framework here at Fox Wood that is referenced at the beginning of this document and these contain stringent policies, procedures and documents that ensure children's safety, including but not limited to safeguarding children, suitability of adults who have contact with children, promoting good health, managing behaviour and maintaining records. Our staff are trained on our policies and procedures and have up-to-date training on matters relating to safeguarding and child protection.

### **Induction and Transition**

This is an important time for our staff to get to know you and your child, their interests and experiences and any individual requirements they may have. Due to the high staffing ratio and small class sizes, the class teacher will be the key worker for each pupil and alongside class staff will ensure that your child's care is tailored to their needs.

Here at Fox Wood we know how difficult it can be to change settings and we ensure that transitions are carefully planned to ensure continuity of learning by working closely with other settings as well as parents and carers.

Prospective pupils usually visit Fox Wood and other schools with their parents during the year before they are due to start Reception. When parents have decided on Fox Wood School, the school receives a copy of the pupil's EHC Plan from Warrington Local Authority (LA). The Foundation Stage staff liaise with the staff at the current placement regarding the new pupil through a series of meetings and attend nursery sessions to observe and interact with him or her. The pupil is then offered transition visits to Fox Wood School in the summer term. These usually include two half day visits and one full day visit, but can differ according to the needs of the individual. Parents and carers are asked to come into school with their child for the half day sessions and to gradually withdraw so that pupils attend the full day sessions unaccompanied. Parents are asked to fill out a "pre school record" (see attached) about their child and have opportunities to discuss practicalities and any concerns with the school Health Adviser, Physiotherapists and Speech and Language Therapists during visits to school.

The previous setting passes on new pupils' information to Fox Wood including likes and dislikes as well as medical notes, IEPs, assessment information etc. We continuously update the information we provide to new parents to ensure that it is as up to date as possible.

### Stay and Play

Throughout the year parents will be invited to join their children during some sessions where staff will set up 'enhanced provision'.

### **Behaviour Management**

At Fox Wood we manage behaviour in an appropriate way and in accordance with Fox Wood's behaviour policy.

### **Record Keeping**

We maintain records and obtain and share information with parents/carers and other professionals to ensure the safety of the children in our care and the efficient management of the setting and to help ensure the needs of all pupils in our care are met.

We comply with Data Protection legislation and GDPR requirements in relation to the retention and sharing of data that we hold. Please see our 'Parent Privacy Notice' for more information.

### **Staff training**



Foundation Stage practitioners are encouraged to attend courses and training on relevant aspects of the Foundation Stage. Courses specific to the FS attended by staff include:

- EYFS briefing
- An Introduction to the Early Years Foundation Stage
- EYFS Primary Music Training
- Early Years Leadership
- The Birth to 3 Matters framework
- Why Play? The Importance of Play in the Foundation Stage
- Prepare to Play
- Drama and Dance in the Early Years.
- Letters and Sounds: Phase 1.
- Early Mark Making

Information gathered at courses is shared with all practitioners and used to inform planning.

### **Monitoring and Review**

It is the responsibility of EYFS staff and all relevant staff involved with EYFS to follow the principles stated in this policy and any linked policy. The senior leadership team will carry out monitoring of the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring process. We will evaluate its effectiveness by taking in to account all relevant parties involved within the EYFS setting and anything which has come to light during observations in the setting. We also carry out curriculum reviews and take account of any national reviews and reports in this area.



# FOX WOOD SCHOOL



## A RECORD ABOUT ME

Pupil's Name: .....

First Day at Fox Wood School: .....

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Partnership with Parents/Carers**

Fox Wood School recognises the need to establish and maintain a positive partnership with parents. This document aims to begin to establish that important link.

Transition to a new school is an important landmark both for the pupil and family. However, settling in to a new environment and meeting new people may be difficult as well as exciting, and we acknowledge the value of parents as the child's first educator. The staff therefore would welcome, on an on-going basis, information that parents are able to share. This information will assist us to fully support your child's learning throughout their time at school.

A successful partnership results in a supportive learning environment, both at home and school, and provides maximum benefits for the child, parents and staff.

We would ask you to fill in as much as you can of this document, and send it to us with your child on his/her first day at Fox Wood, along with the 'Personal Information' form.

1. **AT HOME**

What name do you call your child at home? e.g. is his/her name shortened?

.....

What are the names and ages of any brothers or sisters?

.....

Who else lives in your house?

.....

Other important people in your child's life? E.g. nana, neighbour, friend?

.....

Any pets at home?

.....

What is your child's favourite toy/game/video/TV programme?

.....

## 2. LIKES/DISLIKES

What does your child particularly enjoy doing? eg. watching videos, looking at books, listening to music?

.....

How does he/she show he/she likes an activity?

.....

How does he/she show he/she dislikes an activity?

.....

Might your child be particularly upset by a certain event? E.g. seeing a dog

.....

How does your child respond to an activity he/she has never tried before and is this a usual reaction to all new experiences?

.....

What makes your child laugh/smile?

.....

### 3. COMMUNICATION

How does your child usually gain your attention? E.g. will he/she ask for something, make a certain sound?

.....

What sounds/words/sentences can your child make or say?

.....

If he/she is upset, how does he/she let you know? E.g. go quiet, cry, throw something, tell you

.....

What are his/her favourite songs eg. nursery rhymes, pop songs

.....

For communication does he/she use (please tick all that apply) :

Makaton symbols

☐

Objects of reference

☐

Makaton sign language

☐

Facial expression

☐

Body movements

☐

PECS

☐

Verbal

☐

Is his/her hearing good?

.....

If you say 'no', how does your child respond? E.g. become upset, does not seem to understand, etc.

.....

**Which hand does your child prefer to use when engaging in activities i.e. mark making, using switches?**

.....

**Any other comments:**

.....

.....

.....



#### 4. **SELF-HELP**

How does your child have their fluids? E.g beaker, beaker with lid, mic-key button

.....

Can he/she chew? - does food need to be cut up for your child?

.....

Can he/she finger feed?

.....

Does he/she use a specific sort of plate? E.g rimmed, plate guard

.....

Can he/she hold and use cutlery? Which cutlery?

.....

Do you normally eat together as a family?

.....

Does your child wear nappies?

.....

Will he/she sit on a toilet? - Will he/she use the toilet? - Does he/she request the toilet and how?

.....

.....

Describe how your child dresses themselves or helps with dressing and undressing. (This could include tolerating you dressing them)

.....

.....

Any other comments:

.....

.....

**5. SHARED ACTIVITIES**

What activity really holds your child's attention?

.....

What activities do you and your child do together?

.....

Does he/she like looking at a book with an adult?

.....

Can he/she turn the page?

.....

**Will he/she talk about the book i.e. using  
words/signs/symbols/ reactions?**

.....

How is your child's vision? Do they wear glasses?

.....

Does he/she enjoy physical activities e.g. climbing, walking swimming?

.....

Has he/she ever been swimming? His/her reaction?

.....

Does he/she like to play with other children or alongside them? Or on his/her own?

.....

Any other comments:

.....

.....

.....

## 6. OTHER PROFESSIONALS

Could you please tick and name other professionals who are 'involved' with your child?

GP

☐

Name:

Hospital paediatrician

☐

Name:

Speech therapist

☐

Opthalmist

☐

Physio

☐

Social Worker

☐

Health visitor

☐

Other consultant

☐

Special Needs Nurse

☐

Advisory teacher:

☐

hearing

☐

vision

☐

**Any other professionals? Please give details**

.....  
Do you receive respite care?

.....  
Any other comments:

.....  
.....  
.....

**TO CONCLUDE:**

What skill has your child most recently achieved?

.....

What do you think he/she will particularly enjoy in school?

.....

What are your main concerns for your child at the moment?

.....

Have you carried out any specialised programmes at home to aid your child's development?

.....

.....

**Does your child have any allergies?**

.....

.....

**Does your child have any special dietary requirements?**

Is there anything else that you think we should know?

---

**THANK YOU FOR THE TIME YOU HAVE SPENT ON THE ABOVE QUESTIONS**