



Warwick Bridge School

Early Years and Foundation Stage Policy

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EY) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. For the purpose of this policy 'Early Years' refers to children in their first years at school (Nursery and Reception). At Warwick Bridge School the aim of the EY is to help young children achieve the Early Learning Goals depicted in the Development Matters Document.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based upon four themes:

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

This policy explains how our practice is underpinned by these four themes.

A Unique Child

At Warwick Bridge Primary School we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We understand 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 celebration and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school. All children at Warwick Bridge Primary School are treated fairly whatever their race, gender, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school. In our school we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning. In the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop 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

Positive Relationships

At Warwick Bridge Primary School 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

Workshops with parents will take place at Warwick Bridge School we recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value being partners with them in their child's education through:

- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school through an informal meeting at school outlining the EY Curriculum, to help them to be able to support their child's learning at home
- Offering opportunities for parents to help in school and to accompany children on school visits and events as well as 'stay and play' sessions, where appropriate
- Providing curriculum content letters and weekly newsletters to families sharing the learning that is taking place at school
- Operating an open door policy for parents with any queries
- Sharing the children's progress in areas of development regularly, through the use of Tapestry. We also value the on-going contributions from parents on Tapestry.
- Encouraging parents/guardians to listen to their child read each night and to comment on progress in a home-school reading diary
- Providing an annual written report to parents/guardians in the summer term summarising the child's progress against the early learning goals

Key Person

All staff involved with the EY aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At Warwick Bridge School the key person is either the class teacher or the teaching assistant. Their role is to meet the needs of each child in their care and respond sensitively to their feelings, talking to the parents and working in partnership with them. Attachment provides a sense of security so that children can become confident, independent and capable young learners. The Foundation Stage staff meet with pre-school providers when possible to discuss each individual child and their transition process into school.

EY to Year 1 Transition

At Warwick Bridge School staff from both phases work together to make the transition from the Early Years to Year 1 as smooth as possible.

- Children are encouraged to develop independence when dressing and undressing
- More structured activities are undertaken towards the end of the EY
- Learning profiles and assessment data are shared with Year 1 staff
- Individual children's needs are discussed and planned for
- Children visit their new classrooms and teachers in July

Enabling Environments

At Warwick Bridge we do not make a distinction between work and play. We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Through observation we assess the children's interests, stages of development and learning needs, before planning challenging, achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

The Learning Environment

"A rich and varied environment supports children's learning and development. It gives them the confidence to explore and learn in a safe, yet challenging, indoor and outdoor spaces"

(Early Years Foundation Stage, department for Children, Schools and Families 2007)

The Nursery and Reception classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. All classrooms are clearly labelled and set up to encourage the children to be independent learners. Children are taught and encouraged to select and locate resources independently. All classes are attractive, welcoming and stimulating which encourages children to explore, investigate and learn through first hand experiences. We plan activities and resources both inside and outside, enabling the children to develop in all the areas of learning. Each week we aim to encourage the weeks learning intentions by adding/changing the environment/areas.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

In accordance with all schools, each child will be assessed in their first few weeks at school to identify if the child is at national average attainment. Through observation, staff will assess their attainment in the three prime areas and the four specific areas against the early learning goals.

The planning within the EY is based on the Development Matters statements from the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. These plans are flexible so that teachers can respond to the needs, achievements and interests of the children. This will be indicated on weekly planning. This fostering of the children's interests develops a high level of motivation for the children's learning. We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal observations in both the indoors and outdoors learning environments. These observations, along with photographs and samples of work, are recorded on Tapestry and in workbooks. At the end of the reception year in school, the child's progress is recorded electronically on to the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile.

Each child's level of development is recorded against the 17 Early Learning Goals and the results shared with parents and the Local Authority and the Year 1 team.

Learning and Development

At Warwick Bridge Primary School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and have their own learning styles. There are seven areas of learning and development that must

shape educational provision in Early Years settings. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are often inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

Prime Areas:

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

Staff will also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

Specific Areas:

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

Teaching and Learning Style

We recognise that features of effective teaching and learning in the EY are:

- The partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement
- The understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching
- The range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication
- The carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EY
- The provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities
- The encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence
- The support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment
- The identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations
- There is a balance of child-initiated learning and adult-led activities

Play

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They have the opportunity to express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations. We deliver learning for all of the areas through, purposeful play and learning experiences, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. We believe it is important for adults to support children's learning through play, by becoming involved and through modelling and planned interventions.

Active Learning

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Creativity and Critical Thinking

Children should be given an opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

Monitoring and Review

The Head Teacher, EY Leader and Subject Leaders carry out monitoring of the EY through observation and discussion as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

Welfare

It is important to us that all children in the 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 children. (See Whole School Safeguarding Children Policy)
At Warwick Bridge Primary School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage. We understand that we are required to:

- Promote the welfare of children
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill
- 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 is 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.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

EY Safeguarding

- All staff are trained and updated on safeguarding procedures and best practice.
- Staff/child ratios are adhered to at all times.
- Refer to Safeguarding and Child protection Policy for full details.

Policy written and adopted by Warwick Bridge staff **July 2023**

Ratified by Governing Body

Date to be reviewed **July 2026**

Signed:.....

Head Teacher

Signed:.....

Chair of Curriculum Committee

Signed:.....

Chair of Governors

Date:.....