

Widey Court Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy



<i>Policy reviewed on:</i>	<i>September 2026</i>
<i>Date of next Review:</i>	<i>January 2027</i>
<i>Who reviewed this policy:</i>	<i>Ellie Dingley (EYFS lead)</i>

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Foundation year at school. At Widey Court Primary School, children join the Foundation class in the year that they turn five. We complete an extensive induction programme that helps with the transition into school for both parents and children. We receive information from preschools, nurseries and child minders.

Content:

The EYFS framework looks at each child holistically by exploring Prime and Specific areas of development:

- **Communication and Language**
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**
- **Physical Development**
- **Literacy**
- **Mathematics**
- **Understanding the World**
- **Expressive Arts and Design**

We take a holistic approach to each child's development and provide opportunities for them to grow and develop in all of the areas above. By looking at these areas, we are able to obtain a true insight into learning behaviours and ensure each child is supported individually to meet their developmental needs.

In practice:

The EYFS curriculum is based upon **four overarching principles**:

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning, and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**.
- Children learn in an **enabling environment** with teaching and support from adults who respond to their individual interests and needed to help build their learning over time.
- The understanding that all children **develop and learn** at different rates, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Please find detailed ways that we meet the above criteria within our Foundation Stage unit at Widey Court Primary School below.

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 Dojos/celebration/ sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion/Special Educational Needs (SEND)

All children and their families are valued at Widey Court Primary School. 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 and the schools Special Needs Coordinator is called upon for further information and advice. Appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the SEND.

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 e.g. BAME story books.
- 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 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 Widey Court 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 2021 pg 21.

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.
- 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 within indoor and outdoor provision.
- 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.

Equal Opportunities (see separate policy)

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, age, 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 society.

We teach equality through our 9 protected characteristics which are introduced within the Foundation year in our PSHE curriculum, Jigsaw.

Health and Safety (see separate policy)

At Widey Court 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 2021, at Widey Court we ensure that;

- Training is provided for staff where the administration of medicine requires medical or technical knowledge.
- Medicines are only administered to a child where written permission for that particular medicine has been obtained from the child's parent and/or carer.
- A written record is kept when a child is given medicine.
- Fresh drinking water is available at all times.
- Children's' dietary needs are recorded and acted upon when required. Our school kitchen staff offer a variety of alternate choices if requested.
- A first aid box is accessible at all times and a record of accidents and injuries is kept.
- Many members of staff are first aid trained (at least one in each Foundation class) and a paediatric first aid trained member of staff is on site.
- A health and safety policy and procedures which cover identifying, reporting and dealing with accidents, hazards and faulty equipment.
- A fire and emergency evacuation procedure and policy.
- All children are observed whilst eating at snack and lunchtimes. The children are taught about safe eating and drinking.
- All staff are trained in Oral Hygiene from the Big Brush Club. Children will brush their teeth once a day with their own toothbrush which is colour and picture coded for each child. Staff clean the tables and racks daily and store them in a cupboard. Toothbrushes are replenished every term.

Positive Relationships

"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." (EYFS Framework 2021)

At Widey Court Primary School 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:

- A well-planned and constructive induction programme which is communicated to parents as early as the beginning of May.
- The induction programme involves stay and play sessions, welcome meetings, transition afternoons, classroom tour videos and home visits to help develop the relationships with our new families as soon as we can.
- In the September, children are eased into school by having two weeks with part-time hours to support them in becoming comfortable within their new environment before starting full-time in the third week.
- There is a formal meeting for parents three times 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.
- Arranging activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: class assemblies, school visits, volunteering opportunities.

Tapestry

To ensure parents and carers are aware of their children's learning and development within school, we use an online learning journal called Tapestry.

'Tapestry builds a very special record of a child's experiences, development and learning journey through their early years and primary education. Using photos, videos, and diary entries, a teacher or early years educator, along with the child's parents or carers, and the child themselves if they're ready, 'weaves' the story of the child and how they are growing and developing. ' (Tapestry 2023)

It is a downloadable app that provides updates of your child's learning throughout their school days. At Widey Court, we use Tapestry to add weekly objectives, WOW moments, home learning activities and even sharing what the children have got up too at home!

Enabling Environments

'You enter their play, taking the objective that you want them to achieve and steer it into the play.' (Alistair Bryce-Clegg, 2017)

We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident, secure and challenged. At Widey Court, we use objective led planning to observe, assess and provide next steps.

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 the learning. In practice, the children's play activities are based around a Literacy and Maths objective per week where the adults are able to follow the children's interests and meet the objective through the children's play. We teach from our whole year coverage plan which is progressive, ensuring all children's needs are met. Our environment is set up to ensure that there is a balance of child and adult led activities by ensuring the resources are open-ended.

As well as the classroom environment, the children at Widey Court have daily access to a purpose built outside space that is set up with discrete areas of learning. We value the importance of outdoor learning and ensure that our provision is planned for children to access the outside world.

'Every child has the right to be:
– *Outside, in the fresh air.*
– *Connecting with nature.*
– *Experiencing all weathers and seasons.'*
(The Muddy Puddle Teacher, 2022)

One of our specific areas of learning within our curriculum is 'Understanding the World' where the children explore changes within their environment by looking at the weather, seasons and growth. Throughout the year, the children will learn about life cycles and will engage in lots of practical activities, planting their own vegetables and plants.

At Widey Court, the children also have access to a forest school area which they use throughout their time at the school.

Screen time within our environment

The new guidance from September 2026, has put in place a screen time restriction for all EYFS settings. Here at Widey, we will be ensuring children only access screen time for learning purposes. We use the interactive white board for our phonics sessions and some maths sessions. We will be adhering to the guidance as read below:

'Evidence shows that screens can have a big impact on children and their development in the early years. Screen use should be avoided for under 2s and limited to up to an hour a day for children aged 2 to 5. You should take a precautionary approach to using screens in your setting by limiting screen use for children and only use it carefully and intentionally,

for specific learning and development aims. This guidance covers managing screens, appropriate content for young children's brains and advice for working collaboratively with parents and carers on this topic.

Restricting time children spend on screens at home and in early years settings supports healthy child development, which requires sufficient sleep, play, real-world interaction and responsive adult engagement.' (DFE, 2026)

Learning and Development

Teachers, teaching assistants and higher-level teaching assistants provide the curriculum in the Foundation classes of up to a class size of 30 children.

We follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (2021) where we plan our curriculum to meet the Early Learning Goals at the end of the academic year. We plan topics that also begin to prepare children for Year 1.

At Widey Court, we support children in using the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning.

These are;

- **Playing and Exploring**
- **Active Learning**
- **Creating and Thinking Critically**

Through careful assessments and observations, including information provided by parents and other settings, children's development levels are assessed at the beginning of their Reception Year, this is called the baseline assessment. At Widey Court, we follow the RBA baseline assessment which assesses basic communication and language, Literacy and Maths. The adults then complete more of a holistic assessment during the transition weeks that we have planned in within our induction programme.

Staff will discuss with parents and families if they have any concerns regarding their child's learning and development. We have regular parent meetings throughout the year to discuss this. This discussion will stem towards a plan for the child's next steps and teachers will provide any additional resources to the family if needed. This may also include a discussion with the Special Needs Coordinator in order to access any Special Educational Needs support.

"Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Play is used as an essential part children's development, building their confidence as they learn to

explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. There is an on-going judgement to be made by practitioners about the balance between activities led by children, and activities led or guided by adults. Practitioners must respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. As children grow older, and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1."

(Statutory Framework for EYFS 2021)

Transition into school

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

1. **Stay and Play sessions** – These sessions are held within the school for your child to come and play in their new environment and meet all of the Foundation team.
2. **Welcome meeting** - Parents are invited to a welcome meeting to meet the head teacher, deputy head and our Foundation team. Parents will receive a pack with information about class allocation, house teams and general useful information about life at Widey Court. This is a great opportunity for parents to ask any questions.

3. **Home visits** –A teacher and teaching assistant from our Foundation team will visit you and your child in your home environment to get to know more information before they start our school.
4. **School transition afternoons** - The children are invited to two separate visits to their Foundation class. During these visits the parents/carers will be invited to a curriculum talk with representatives from the PTFA, Governors, School kitchen and relevant members of the local community.
5. **September:** When your child starts school in September, they will be part time until 12.30 during the first week and then in full time 8.40-3.15 in the second week.

Additional visits and support

Members of staff including the Foundation team and SENDCo from Widey Court may make visits to feeder settings. The number of visits will depend on the child's needs and how much information gathering is required in order to support the child's transition. Children requiring extra support will have additional visits regardless of their setting. Often these children will have been identified as requiring additional support. We create transition booklets for those children who have a special educational need or if they are anxious about starting school if requested by parents/carers.

From Foundation **Class to Key** **Stage 1**

During the final term in Foundation, 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.

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 Foundation and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning need and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1.

Please also see:

Teaching and Learning Policy

Behaviour Policy

Safe Guarding and Child Protection Policy

SEND Policy

Assessment Policy