

Woodside Academy



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Agreed by the Governing Body: January 2026

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) covers children from birth to the end of the academic year in which they turn five. Our EYFS Policy follows the statutory EYFS Framework and meets the requirements of our funding agreement and articles of association. We use the statutory framework, Development Matters guidance and practitioner expertise to observe, plan and teach effectively in the early years. Our curriculum is broad and balanced, delivered through engaging environments, purposeful teaching and opportunities that reflect children's interests.

Intent

Our EYFS provision aims to:

- Provide a happy, positive and nurturing first experience of school.
- Foster curiosity, independence, resilience and confidence.
- Promote emotional well-being and secure relationships.
- Work in partnership with parents, recognising them as primary educators.
- Support every child to reach their full potential from their starting points.
- Prepare children for the Key Stage 1 curriculum through strong foundations in the prime and specific areas of learning.

Implementation - Teaching and Learning

EYFS teaching:

- Follows a carefully sequenced curriculum designed to support good progress and secure the Early Learning Goals (ELGs).
- Provides a balance of adult-led and child-initiated learning.
- Builds the Characteristics of Effective Learning.
- Uses a multi-sensory, play-based approach.
- Responds to children's different learning styles, rates of development and emotional needs.
- Maintains high expectations for behaviour and attainment.
- Prioritises emotional well-being and time outdoors.

Learning in Practice

Children learn best when they:

- Collaborate and learn from one another.
- Access resources independently.
- Explore using their senses.
- Set challenges for themselves.
- Develop perseverance and positive attitudes to learning.

Transitions from home to Nursery and from F1 (Nursery) to F2 (Reception) are carefully planned to ensure continuity.

Play

Play is central to learning. Through play children explore, test ideas, practise skills, problem solve, build resilience, express emotions and make sense of their experiences. We provide rich opportunities for imaginative, social and exploratory play indoors and outdoors.

Inclusion

We are committed to meeting the needs of all children by:

- Setting high yet realistic expectations for all learners.
- Planning for a range of learning needs, abilities and backgrounds.
- Providing an inclusive, safe and supportive environment.
- Using diverse, non-stereotyped resources.
- Monitoring progress and providing targeted support where needed.
- Working collaboratively with families, the SENDCo and external professionals.
- Creating balanced classes across the cohort and respecting parent preferences regarding twins/multiple births.

Curriculum

Our curriculum is based on the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). This helps children build the essential skills they need as they grow and learn. The curriculum covers two main groups of learning areas:

Prime Areas – these are the foundations for all learning:

- Communication and Language – developing speaking, listening and understanding.
- Physical Development – building strength, coordination and learning healthy habits.
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development – helping children develop confidence, independence, and positive relationships.

Specific Areas – these build on the prime areas as children grow:

- Literacy – enjoying books, stories, early writing and phonics.
- Mathematics – exploring numbers, shapes, patterns and problem-solving.
- Understanding the World – learning about people, places, nature and technology.
- Expressive Arts and Design – being creative through art, music, movement and imaginative play.

How we plan learning:

- Long-term planning: We use EYFS guidance (Development Matters and the Early Learning Goals) to ensure children experience a broad, balanced curriculum throughout the year.
- Medium-term planning: Each term we plan learning themes and opportunities based on children's developmental needs.
- Weekly planning: We adapt activities based on the children's current interests, strengths and next steps to keep learning engaging and meaningful.

Assessment

Assessment is ongoing and informs planning.

- Baseline assessments are completed in the first half term of F1 and F2.
- Observations, examples of work and photographs form continuous formative assessment.
- Summative assessments are recorded half termly on our tracking sheets to identify progress and gaps.
- Records follow children from F1 to F2 and into Year 1.
- Parents receive regular updates, termly meetings and an annual written report.

Reflection and Evaluation

We continually review and improve our practice through:

- Regular audits and surveys.
- Reflection based on the EYFS Intent–Implementation–Impact model.
- Evaluation of curriculum quality, behaviour, attitudes, personal development and leadership.

Partnership with Parents/Carers

We value strong partnerships and ensure a two-way flow of information through:

- Induction meetings and transition visits.
- Opportunities for parents to join classroom activities.
- Formal and informal discussions about progress.
- Parent workshops and surveys.
- Open communication with teaching staff.

Environment and Resources

We provide an “enabling environment” indoors and outdoors, designed to:

- Encourage exploration, independence and challenge.
- Reflect diversity and inclusion.
- Support learning in all weathers.
- Balance child-initiated and adult-led activity.

Impact

Our EYFS provision leads to:

- A high proportion of children achieving GLD by the end of Reception.
- Strong Characteristics of Effective Learning.
- Increased independence and confidence.
- Inclusive provision where all children feel valued.
- High levels of well-being and involvement.
- Strong foundations for lifelong learning and citizenship.
- Positive parental satisfaction and engagement.

Safeguarding and Welfare

Children learn best when they feel safe, healthy and supported. In line with Section 3 of the Statutory EYFS Framework, we ensure:

- Effective safeguarding procedures.
- Suitable staff and safe recruitment practices.
- Promotion of good health and behaviour.
- Maintenance of required policies, records and risk assessments.