



EYFS Policy

Phase of school this policy relates to (*please highlight*)

Early Years	Primary	Secondary	Whole School
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Our Aim

Our approach to teaching, learning and assessment puts child development at the heart of what we do. We believe in the professional trust of our teachers; that their high quality care and intimate knowledge of every child means they make informed judgements which enable children to make progress. Teachers have the time and freedom to interact and observe the children in their care.

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a rich, broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the knowledge and skills for a strong foundation for future learning
- We create a safe, happy, motivating and enjoyable learning environment that enables children to become confident and independent learners
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress to reach their full potential and no child gets left behind
- A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice See SEND Policy for our approach to equality of access and opportunity for all.

Legislation

This policy is based on the [Early Year Foundation Stage Framework 2025](#)

Organisation of the EYFS at Liberty Woodland School

We have one Reception class with space for 20 children. The class is led by a Senior Learning Associate (class teacher) with the support of a Learning Associate (teaching assistant). The EYFS framework recommends a minimum of 1 member of staff for every 13 children during their Reception year (the year in which children are aged 4, turning 5). Children learn through a mix of whole class teaching, small groups, partner work and play as well as 1:1. In the spring and summer term children may be grouped across other year groups (for their core skills in literacy and maths) to ensure teaching is pitched with appropriate challenge. There are also daily opportunities for play and continuous provision to be mixed across the whole primary school. We work with a minimum of two members of staff with the Reception class group, but often with a greater ratio of 1:8 or even 1:6 during core skills sessions.

The Reception environment as well as the curriculum offers children a mix of opportunities to follow their own self-initiated interests as well as being inspired by interests and opportunities initiated or planned for by adults. Adult-directed activities may be planned for in order to give a child or group of children an experience, for example to learn a new skill, a concept or to share (a story, the plan for an outing etc.) In these cases the practitioner has identified the purpose and objectives for the activity. During child-led learning the child is left in control of the process and the

outcomes and, if the adult does intervene, they do so in a sensitive way that enables the child to maintain control of the direction of their play.

The Reception class space is designed with a mix of sheltered and open continuous provision linked to the development of all 7 areas of learning. Beyond this, open access to the 3 acres of the school site, including river, climbing trees, growing tunnels and wildlife pond enhances the learning opportunities for our children.

Curriculum and outdoor learning

We build our curriculum based on the seven Areas of Learning. The three 'prime' areas are regarded as particularly important to develop as a solid foundation from which learning in all other areas can then flourish, for igniting a curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, for building children's capacity to learn and to form relationships with others. From these seven areas of learning there are then 17 Early Learning Goals which form the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile at the end of the Reception year. *It is important to note that the Early Learning Goals do not define the curriculum and we do not narrow our curriculum because of them.*

Through our outdoor approach, we place great emphasis on the interconnectedness of physical and mental wellbeing and see these as intrinsic to a positive learning experience. The open-ended nature of the outdoor environment and risky play opportunities is an invaluable part of childhood. Not only does it increase children's physical and motor skills but it also teaches them about assessing their own limits and how to deal with risks in the future.

We value play highly; play which encourages safe risk-taking, is unhurried, nurturing and language rich.

Our curriculum in Reception is bold, relevant and ambitious. We follow a project based approach to learning in line with the rest of the primary school. We recognise and celebrate the benefits of cross-curricular learning; for creative thinking, problem solving, learning deeply and with real meaning and authenticity.

Our projects:

- **recognise children's interests;** we design and build the project with children's interests at the heart- the starting point is always with the child
- **are backward by design;** we plan for valuable progression in skills as the children work through steps towards their end goal
- **develop skills;** we make connections across all 7 areas of learning with appropriate and ambitious challenge
- **develop an end goal;** the end goal is meaningful to the children because of the real life purpose and is therefore of high interest level. The end goal is intentionally broad to allow for child voice to inform the direction of the learning.
- **encourage development of metacognition;** the open ended goals promote choice, discussion, independent thought and decision making

Partnership with Parents

Working closely with parents and carers is central to the EYFS. Building open and trusting relationships and consulting with parents about children's early experiences, interests, strengths and areas for development as a learner helps practitioners plan effectively as well as enabling parents to support their child's learning and development at home.

Before children start at Liberty Woodland School we:

- invite parents and children together for a stay and play session with the Reception team and to meet SLT
- invite the child for a settling in session (without their parents) in the summer term before they join
- welcome the parents as a community group to meet SLT and each other as a parent body in the summer term before they join
- share with the school about their child's interests, likes, dislikes, things they find hard etc. before they start at the school
- Send the children a video from their new class teacher in the August before they start
- Send a letter and activity to do at home to bring in on their first school day in September

Once children have joined us in Reception we invite parents to:

- engage with the school's online digital platform (Seesaw) to build links between home and school
- attend termly curriculum meetings (led by their child's Senior Learning Associate) to understand more about the school's approach to teaching and learning
- engage with the weekly updates shared on their child's online digital portfolio (Seesaw) which give a summary of learning from that week and ideas to try at home.
- read daily at home with their child
- attend parent/ teacher conferences for their child 3x per year and read their child's report 2x per year
- share their child's learning and experiences from home by uploading to their online digital portfolio (Seesaw)
- take home their child's project book every holiday to share their experiences from home in whatever way they choose (diary writing, drawing, photos etc).

Assessment

Ongoing assessment

Ongoing assessment through observation is an integral part of the learning and development process. Observation is the practice of looking and listening to children to better understand their development, what they enjoy doing and what they are learning through the play and experiences on offer. We observe children to identify:

- interests
- learning styles
- abilities
- who they choose to play and learn with
- where they choose to play and learn

With these observations we can then more accurately plan next steps in their learning. The practitioners working with children in Reception (senior learning associates, learning associates and specialist teachers) are all responsible for capturing significant moments in a child's learning journey which then builds a profile of progress.

Baseline

Over the first half term in Reception practitioners will observe children in their play as well as during focused group work to inform their baseline assessments of children's learning. Teachers will draw on their knowledge of the child and their own professional judgement to inform a baseline assessment summary capturing children's **interests, approaches to learning and play** (Characteristics of Effective Learning- see appendix 1) as well as **identifying any learning and development needs that need to be addressed**.

During the first 4 weeks in Reception children will have short whole class focus sessions in phonics and maths. These, alongside observations of their play and interactions within the environment, will determine the best fit phonics and maths progress group moving forward. Ongoing formative assessment means the progress groups remain fluid and that children are taught in a group that challenges them appropriately whilst matching their progressing knowledge.

Summative Observation Assessment Checkpoints in Reception

Following on from the baseline assessment, there are three summative assessment checkpoints during the school year; in December, April and July. These provide an opportunity to check if children are making the expected progress towards their Early Learning Goals (ELGs- see appendix 2) and are informed by [Development Matters](#) (2023). We acknowledge that progress is not linear, but also that analysis of the data is critical in identifying those children who need additional support or those who are making accelerated progress towards meeting their Early Learning Goals. This information is used to shape the teaching and learning experiences for the children moving forward. Early identification of those children not making expected progress results in careful planning of next steps to support them- whether through additional help, intervention or further assessment of need. For those children identified as making accelerated progress we plan for depth and breadth within their learning opportunities.

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP)

In June each year the EYFS profile is completed for each Reception child. Practitioners will assess each child's level of development against the early learning goals and indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development or if they are not yet reaching expected levels (emerging). The EYFS is submitted to the local authority and shared with parents and Year 1 teachers.

As part of the end of year summary we will also track the children's progress in Maths and Literacy against our Key Areas of Competence skills ladder as part of supporting our transition to Year 1.

Safeguarding and Welfare

We value highly the importance of good physical health and mental wellbeing for all children. This is reflected in our PSED curriculum and daily morning meetings with a focus on physical and mental wellbeing, health and relationships. As part of this we promote good oral health in the early years by talking to children and families about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth

At Liberty Woodland School we adhere to the [EYFS Nutrition Guidance](#) to ensure we offer healthy, varied food to all children whilst also putting steps in place to manage allergies and dietary requirements safely. Snack and meal times are relaxed, social occasions and all members of the teaching team, including the senior leadership team, spend time sharing lunch with the children.

At LWS we reject the use of corporal punishment in any form; all of our school policies and practice reflect this. The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our school Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

When recruiting, Liberty Woodland School obtains professional references from independent and senior sources before appointing any new staff members.

Please see Safeguarding Policy for further details of Safeguarding at Liberty Woodland School.

Appendix 1- Characteristics of Effective teaching and learning

Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- 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

Appendix 2- Early Learning Goals

Communication and Language

ELG 1. Listening, Attention and Understanding.

ELG 2. Speaking

Personal, Social and emotional Development

ELG 3. Self – Regulation

ELG 4. Managing Self

ELG 5. Building Relationships

Physical Development

ELG 6. Gross Motor Skills

ELG 7. Fine Motor Skills

Literacy

ELG 8. Comprehension

ELG 9. Word Reading

ELG 10. Writing

Maths

ELG 11. Number

ELG 12. Numerical patterns

Understanding the World

ELG 13. Past and Present

ELG 14. People, Culture and Communities

ELG 15. The Natural World

Expressive Arts and Design

ELG 16. Creating with Materials

ELG 17. Being Imaginative and Expressive