



The John Wesley Church of England and Methodist Aided Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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Flourishing in F.A.I.T.H. (Family, All Included, Thriving & Healthy)

At The John Wesley Church of England & Methodist Primary School, our vision of life without limits in all its fullness puts our children and families at the centre of everything. In our inclusive and unique community with two distinctively Christian foundations, every experience enables all to flourish as individuals and to thrive as God intended; mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually.

The school welcomes everyone to its family and upholds the principles and teachings of the Christian faith. We provide a secure, caring learning environment, which supports and encourages all to fulfil their potential.

The John Wesley is a Church of England and Methodist Voluntary Aided Primary School and our Christian values are at the heart of everything we do.

- ❖ **Koinonia**
- ❖ **Love**
- ❖ **Compassion**
- ❖ **Wisdom**
- ❖ **Forgiveness**
- ❖ **Service**

These are underpinned by our learning values:

- ❖ **Promoting curiosity** – asking questions, delving deeper and analysing
- ❖ **Developing communication** – listening, empathy and relationship-building
- ❖ **'Prove it' opportunities** – problem solving, decision making and exploration
- ❖ **Sharing views and opinions** – visual, spoken and written
- ❖ **Encouraging creativity** – innovation, imagination and spirituality

Our whole school vision is built upon and guided by these. Every school policy is written with this in mind and implemented in way that reflects our vision of our children being able to '**Flourishing in F.A.I.T.H**' (Family, All Included, Thriving & Healthy)' and as Jesus gave his disciples a vision of a life that is full of possibilities and dreams yet to be met, we encourage our children to live their life in all its fullness.

EYFS POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

At John Wesley CEM Primary School, our aim is to provide a secure and caring Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) learning environment in which all children feel eager and motivated to learn. It is one which seeks to promote the developing skills, concepts, confidence and independence of the individual child. We aim to provide effective provision which will enable children to achieve to their full potential.

2. RATIONALE

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A unique child – developing resilient, capable, confident and self-assured individuals
- Positive relationships – supporting the children in becoming strong and independent
- Enabling environments – where opportunities and experiences respond to the individual needs of the child by developing a strong partnership between practitioners, parents/carers and the child
- Learning and developing – an acknowledgement that children learn in different ways and at different rates

These four guiding themes work together in an holistic manner to underpin our high quality delivery of the EYFS Curriculum.

Equally, as practitioners, we adhere to and value the principles of the Statutory Framework and the revised EYFS Guidance and aim to provide children with the opportunities to:

- Use their senses as a means of exploring the world
- Resolve conflicts, both intellectually and socially
- Learn through direct experience
- Develop confidence in their own ability to make sense of the world
- Extend skills/abilities by testing them out in a range of situations
- Initiate, carry out and review their own projects
- Draw on a range of resources to achieve their intentions, developing a flexible and open-ended approach to problems
- Take risks and learn from mistakes
- Progress by building on existing knowledge and understanding
- Express ideas and feelings
- Enjoy fun and laughter with others
- Recreate what they have felt and experienced

3. THE EARLY YEARS GUIDANCE FOR THE FOUNDATION STAGE

EYFS framework provides the curriculum for all practitioners working with children from birth to the end of Reception year or until the early learning goals are completed. This guidance is inclusive of all practitioners working within the foundation stage.

At The John Wesley CEM Primary School, we greatly value the important role that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

The EYFS is for children from birth to five years of age. The final year of the EYFS is referred to as the Reception year. All children begin school with a variety of experiences and learning. It is the privilege of the practitioners working in Reception to take on the opportunity of building upon that prior learning and experience. This is done through a holistic approach to learning, ensuring that parents and all school staff work effectively together to support children's learning and development.

4. ADMISSIONS.

We take pride in our comprehensive admissions procedures. We begin our admission timetable each September and induction programme from the time families find out they are joining our school, allowing prospective families up to a year to develop a working partnership with staff before the children are admitted to school.

5. TRANSFER INFORMATION

Close links have been made with the local pre-schools. The Early Years team visit feeder nurseries, pre-schools and playgroups during the term before the children start school. They meet the new children and liaise with their teachers and key workers gaining invaluable insight into the needs of the children and families who are to become part of The John Wesley CEM Primary School.

The nursery, pre-school and playgroup teachers ask for parents' permission to discuss individual children with the Headteacher, SENCo and new class teachers so that Special Educational Needs provision and records can be shared.

The outgoing teachers and carers may also meet with the new class teacher to discuss the Record of Transfer for each child. This ensures progression and continuity in learning throughout the child's Foundation Stage. This information is used to inform planning for the next steps in the child's learning and the first entries in the Foundation Stage data recording system.

6. PARENTS AS PARTNERS

We recognise that parents are the child's first and most enduring educators. When parents and practitioners work together in early years settings, the results have a positive impact on the child's development. A successful partnership needs to be a two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise.

We develop this by:

- outlining the Reception curriculum to parents during the new parents' meetings, to enable them to understand the value of supporting their child's learning at home
- home visits before the children start school
- sending home class newsletters regularly throughout the year
- operating an "open door" policy, whereby parents can come and discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner
- sharing progress at school and encouraging parents to comment in their child's 'Golden Moments' books
- inviting parents to help in other classes in the school
- encouraging parents to listen to their child read each night and to comment on reading progress in a home/school contact book
- encouraging relevant learning tasks to be continued at home ensuring that experiences at home are used to develop learning in school
- providing an annual written report to parents in July summarising the child's progress against the early learning goals and EYFS assessment scales and giving an outline of their child's Characteristics of Effective Learning

7. HEALTH, WELLBEING AND SAFETY

We aim to provide a happy, stimulating environment where the children's wellbeing and safety is paramount; incorporating good quality care and consistency.

It is the class teacher's role to ensure that all new entrants are made aware of important issues such as fire drills, first aid and safety rules. Extra assistance may be needed for some children but all practitioners should always seek to promote developing the children's independence. Many issues will be approached through the topic activities during the Reception year.

8. LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Play-based activities are at the heart of learning in the Foundation Stage. As the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage (QCA 22000 p20) states: 'Learning for young children is a rewarding and enjoyable experience in which they explore, investigate, discover, create, practice, rehearse, repeat, revise and

consolidate their developing knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes. During the Foundation Stage many of these aspects of learning are brought together effectively through play and talking’.

We believe that well-planned play is the key to how young children learn. Providing children with opportunities to take part in a variety of play-based activities is at the core of our teaching.

The seven areas of learning and development are:

Three Prime Areas:

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

Four Specific Areas:

- *Literacy
- *Mathematics
- *Understanding the World
- *Expressive Art and Design

At The John Wesley CEM Primary School, we believe all seven areas are of equal importance and fully ensure that the three prime areas are embedded in the four specific areas. All the areas are delivered through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Our aim is to provide a stimulating, secure and safe learning environment both in the classroom and outdoors, where all seven areas of Foundation Stage Curriculum are provided for. Children will be encouraged to actively explore the world around them, developing their creativity, independence, thinking skills and ability to solve problems across the curriculum. Movement is essential to learning for young children. Through a range of play-based curriculum activities in the outside area, children explore and develop further skills that will include coordination, language development, problem solving, social skills, investigation and observation. As children acquire these skills, their sense of well-being and self-confidence increases.

The curriculum is planned to provide a balance between the following:

- **Child Initiated Activities:** where the child makes choices from within the learning environment to meet his/her own outcomes for learning. Skilful adult interaction supports and extends play to enable the child to make progress.
- **Adult Initiated Activities:** experiences where the practitioner provides the resources to stimulate and consolidate learning. These experiences may not always require the direct involvement of an adult.
- **Adult Directed Activities:** experiences which are planned and supported by practitioners and which aim to meet specific learning outcomes.

9. PLANNING

We aim to provide children with a broad and balanced curriculum that is carefully matched to their needs. When planning the curriculum for the Foundation Stage, practitioners will take into account the different strategies for teaching and learning.

There are seven areas of learning and development of which three are **prime areas** and four are **specific areas**.

Prime areas are fundamental, work together and move through to support development in all other areas. The prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

Specific areas include essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society. The specific areas are:

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

Through careful assessments and observations, including information provided by parents and other settings, children's development levels are assessed. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas. However, if a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents and/or carers and agree how to support the child. This may also include a discussion with the SENCo in order to access Special Educational Needs support.

The guidance also identifies 'stages of learning' which state the knowledge, skills and attitudes children need to achieve the Early Learning Goals.

Individual children may be working at different levels within each of the seven areas of development.

As effective early years practitioners we aim to plan a broad and balanced range of play activities which are suited and carefully matched to the needs of the children in the setting. The EYFS curriculum guidance is used to support our planning.

At The John CEM Primary Wesley School, each term a theme (topic) is chosen which tries to reflect the children's interests. A balance of adult initiated and adult directed activities are often linked to these themes. A long-term plan has been drawn up to consider the environment (indoors and outside) the routine and the theme related activities. Each medium-term plan covers one theme and is separated into the seven areas of learning within the Foundation Stage. This specifies the Early Learning Goal activity, resources, key vocabulary and assessment opportunities. This has been designed to be a working document and evaluations made at the end of each block of work may result in plans being updated or modified.

Short terms plans cover weekly activities. This is where objectives become more focussed and differentiated. The language that is to be promoted is specified along with the role of the adult.

Much of the timetable is allocated to child-initiated activities. This time is central to an early year setting as it allows children to develop many skills when supported effectively by practitioners. The way in which this cycle of plan-do-review is organised develops over the year. Children are supported by adults in the setting making their

choices and understanding the rules and routines of the setting. By the end of Reception year, the children will be confident in selecting their own resources within the environment. The adults will work alongside the children, interacting, questioning, responding to questions. All the activities and routines planned aim to reflect the Principles for Early Education as stated in the Foundation Stage Guidance.

English and Maths activities occur across the week. The children receive whole class English and Maths input. In addition, children receive phonics teaching. English and Maths activities are practical and linked to the theme plans for the term.

10. INCLUSIVE PRACTICE

We ensure that all children have equality of opportunity and freedom from discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, culture, class or disability. All resources are carefully selected to reflect positive images of all groups. Our planning aims to foster an appreciation of each other's cultures and beliefs along with the promotion of a healthy and positive self-image. All practitioners will aim to avoid stereotypical language, actions and situations.

Strong ongoing communication and relationships with our feeder nurseries/pre-school settings ensures continuity of strategies to support those children with a greater diversity of needs e.g. speech and language programmes already in place and continued use of Makaton signs and symbols, we also use Cued Articulation alongside our teaching of phonics and Communication in Print to aid children visually.

11. ASSESSMENT, OBSERVING, RECORDING AND MONITORING

At The John Wesley CEM Primary School, we undertake assessment for learning. We analyse and review what we know about each child's development and learning and then make informed decisions about the child's progress. This enables us to plan the next steps to meet their development and learning needs. All practitioners who interact with the child contribute to the assessment process.

Within the Reception class we use two types of assessment:

- **Formative assessment:** This type of assessment informs everyday planning and is based on continual observational assessment of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles. Formative assessment may take the form of anecdotal observations, focused observations and other focused assessments e.g. sound/number, annotated examples of work, photographs, video and information from parents. Each child has an individual Learning Journey, Maths book and a Golden Moments Book in which this evidence is stored. We plan for observational assessment when undertaking our medium and short-term planning. A regular report is sent to parents and parents are invited to attend parent consultations.
- **Summative assessment:** At the end of the Reception year, the EYFS Profile is completed which provides information of a child's knowledge, understanding and their progress. The Profile reflects the on-going observations and

assessments which have been made during the year. Evaluations are made in each of the 7 areas of learning, assessing against the early learning goals criteria. Each child will be assessed as either 'meeting expected levels', or not yet reaching expected levels (emerging) in each of the 7 areas of learning.

At The John Wesley CEM Primary School, observation is regarded as a powerful tool for assessment. Practitioners meet regularly to plan and discuss observations made in the setting. These observations are used to plan the next steps in each individual child's development.

Practitioners may use their observations to target a specific child, group or activity. During child-initiated activity sessions, practitioners will observe a specific child and will be focussed on that child's individual development. These observations will take place daily and staff will keep a record to ensure every child will be observed regularly. Observations evolve over the year focussing on the child's achievement in relation to stages of learning or early learning goals. These observations will be recorded in the teacher's recording system. Other observations and assessments occur during the adult-initiated or adult-directed activities. Practitioners will also note down any other incidental observations that may be significant to particular children's development.

At John Wesley CEM Primary School, we support children in using the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning. These 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.

(Taken from statutory framework for the EYFS)

12. SELF-EVALUATION OF THE FOUNDATION STAGE

At the end of the year, Early Years staff complete a self-evaluation of the year, to celebrate areas of strength and development. An action plan is then formulated specifically for the EYFS team which becomes part of the School Improvement Plan.

13. RECEPTION CLASS TO KEY STAGE 1 TRANSITION

Reception and Year 1 work together to make the transition from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 as smooth as possible. At The John Wesley CEM Primary School:

- children are encouraged to develop independence when dressing and undressing and when organising their personal belongings throughout the Reception year
- Reception practitioners plan for more structured activities to be undertaken during the summer terms, encouraging less dependence on adult support
- Reception children meet Year 1 teacher regularly during the Reception year for shared learning with Year 1 children
- EYFS Profiles are passed on to Year 1 teachers

- an EYFS Profile/Characteristics of Effective Learning is passed on to the Year 1 teachers
- Reception and Year 1 teachers meet to discuss individual needs of children in July
- Reception children visit their new Year 1 classes and teachers for several transition sessions in July
- the 'Supersonic Phonic Friends' approach to phonics and spelling is continued throughout Year 1 and 2

14. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The Foundation Stage curriculum is inclusive and facilitates the needs of all children regardless of their age, size, mobility, gender, ethnicity and ability. (This is linked to the school's policies for Equal Opportunities and SEND).

15. HEALTH AND SAFETY

Practitioners are mindful of elements and ensure the children are appropriately dressed and protected. Parents are informed of their responsibilities regarding learning in the outside environment and the provision of appropriate footwear, clothing and sun-creams.

The John Wesley CEM Primary School is fully aware of the responsibility to ensure safe access to the outside and that equipment is regularly maintained. Risk assessments are carried out in accordance with guidelines and the outside area is checked before use to ensure safety.

There are clear expectations of positive behaviour. A code of practice for the appropriate use of the environment is negotiated and agreed by adults and children and revisited through the year.

Adults are mindful of the school's Health and Safety policy for the moving of equipment.

Adults are encouraged to be vigilant and aware of possible hazards which could affect the children's security and safety.