

DUNTON & WRESTLINGWORTH CHURCH OF ENGLAND (VC) LOWER SCHOOLS

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Documents Linked to this Policy:
Child Protection Policy and Procedures
Health and Safety Policy
Online Safety Policy
Assessment Policy

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Aims

- To give each child a happy, positive and fun start to their school life in which they can establish solid foundations on which to expand and foster a deep love of learning;
- To offer each child a wide range of new and exciting experiences and give them the opportunity to consolidate, explore and test them out along with their own, individual experiences;
- To enable each child, through encouragement and high expectations, to develop, to the full, socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally.
- To offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited opportunity for development;
- To encourage children to develop independence within a caring, secure and friendly atmosphere;
- To support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing;
- To help each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and developing the confidence to work towards personal goals.

The Curriculum

Our Reception classes deliver the curriculum using the Development Matters document which is available from the school office or to download from our school website at <https://www.duntonwrestlingworthschool.com/our-schools/eyfs-curriculum/>.

The following policy details the specifics of our setting.

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and 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 (EYFS Statutory Framework 2017). These three areas, the prime areas, are:

Communication and Language

- Listening and Attention
- Understanding
- Speaking

Physical Development –

- Moving and Handling
- Self-care

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- Making relationships,
- Managing feelings and behaviour
- Self-confidence and self-awareness

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We also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

Literacy

- Reading
- Writing

Mathematics

- Numbers
- Shape, Space and Measures

Understanding the World –

- People and communities,
- The world
- Technology

Expressive Arts and Design –

- Exploring and using media and materials
- Being Imaginative

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS curriculum also includes the Characteristics of Effective Learning. The Reception teachers plan activities within the classrooms with these in mind. The Characteristics highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them.

The three characteristics 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

Teaching and Learning

We ensure there is a balance of adult led and child initiated activities across the day. Although much of the time is spent with children self-selecting tasks, the interaction between the adult and child is essential as the adult's response to children builds understanding and therefore guides new learning. The adult's role is to continually model, demonstrate and question what the child is doing. In some cases the adult will ask a child to complete a task or game with them while at other times they will, when invited, participate in a child's self chosen activity extending it where possible. During the Summer term in Reception the children will experience more adult directed tasks as they prepare for their transition to year 1.

Learning through Play

Learning through play is an important part of our Early Years classrooms. We believe children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them. Using children's interests as a starting point, we provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning to help them make sense of the world. They have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own. They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experience at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests and inspire those around them.

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The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. We believe it is important that adults take an active role in child initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating and extending their play. Getting the balance right between child initiated play and adult led activities is very important to us.

Teaching

We include direct, carefully planned, adult led experiences for children in the form of structured adult led teaching and adult led group activities. These are particularly important in helping children to learn specific skills and knowledge and it is often through children's play that we see how much of this learning children have understood and taken on.

Each day we follow a timetable with set routines in place. We set aside times each day when the children come together to be taught in the more traditional sense, gathered together on the carpet as a class. In these slots we focus on our topic work, maths, literacy, phonics, and stories. These sessions help to develop vital habits of learning: learning as a group, listening to the teacher, taking turns to answer, sitting still etc.

Reading and story play an important part of the day. We want to make sure our children have a love of books and will leave the EYFS with a bank of stories they know well, both traditional and modern classics. We make sure there is time for whole class story at the end of the day but also that there are many opportunities to enjoy books at other times.

Every child is given their own book bag and has a designated day when they will choose a library book to take home and share with their family. They begin to bring home books from the reading book bands, when we feel that it is appropriate for the individual child. This is usually during the first half term.

Planning

We believe many children need to be given a starting point to learn new things and find topics are a great way to fire the imagination. The topics we use are flexible to ensure we follow the children's interests, school themes and local or national events e.g. the Olympics. Every half term staff plan the next topic, and activities that will enhance the children's learning. A topic plan is sent home every half term to enable parents to support their children's learning.

Staff plan in more detail on a weekly basis using daily notes, observations and interactions with children to inform where the learning journey should move to. Although class teachers are responsible for writing plans, the EYFS plan as a team, with Teachers, Nursery Nurses and Support Staff all attending planning meetings and having an input.

Visits and visitors

We recognise that visits help stimulate or consolidate learning and throughout the school year we aim for the children to go on at least two whole day visits in a school year. Other smaller visits may be planned to support topic work. The part that visits and visitors play in the curriculum is given great emphasis. For safety reasons we say no to younger siblings coming along on school trips. Visitors can also really enhance a topic and where possible we like to have 'experts' coming in to talk to the children. We also ask parents if they are able (and brave enough!) to share knowledge or a skill, be it cooking, how to bath a baby, painting mehndi patterns on hands or playing guitar.

Classroom organisation

The learning environments (both indoors and outdoors) are set up in a way to provide children with experiences and activities in all seven areas of learning. Resources are clearly labelled and easily

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accessible to encourage the children to use them independently. Children are encouraged to use the available resources in all areas of the environment, enabling them to be creative in their learning. They always have access to mark making materials, maths equipment, creative resources, a range of books, role play, construction and small world as well as other resources relevant to their learning. A variety of activities are planned for and set up each day.

The outdoor area is an important part of the classroom with many children choosing to learn outside for much of the day. We try to ensure that the range of activities outside reflects the different curriculum areas, for example setting up quiet spaces for a maths game, reading and for construction. There are also opportunities for physical activity such as climbing, running, cycling and other active games. The children have further opportunities for physical play during break time and P.E. Children have named coat pegs and we encourage children to take responsibility for keeping their clothes, book bag and work safely in one place!

Assessment

Assessment is an essential part of the learning and development of children in the EYFS. It involves practitioners observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. This information is then used to shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations. We use the electronic assessment package 2 Build a Profile which enables us to take photos and record observations which then form the child's learning journey. Observations are emailed to parents every half term and there is an opportunity for parents to contribute to their child's learning journey both electronically and by communicating events and achievements to the EYFS staff.

On entry to Reception we carry out baseline assessments for each child. Throughout the year the class teacher attends our half termly whole school progress meetings with assessment data showing each child's development across the seven areas of learning. At the end of Reception the class teacher assesses each child against the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG) and comments on whether their development within each ELG is either 'emerging', 'expected' or 'exceeding'. This information is also communicated to parents and carers in the Reception child's end of year report and this can be discussed by appointment if required.

Role of staff and key worker

The class teacher is the named key worker for each child in the setting. Their role is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs and to help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with their parents. All adults within the Early Years setting actively seek to form positive respectful relationships with the children in their care. The formation of healthy relationships between adults and children is essential in enabling children's well-being now and their future successes. There are rare occasions when significant adults cannot be in the class and we aim to be consistent in who covers these absences.

Partnership with parents and carers

We believe that parents and carers are a child's first educator and therefore work very closely to ensure they are involved in what we do with their child at school. We want parents to feel they can speak to us about their child at any time and feel comfortable in our setting.

We hold an information meeting for parents before the children start school and operate an open door policy throughout the school year. In addition there are parents evenings in October and February.

When a child gains a place at our schools we invite them to attend a sessions at the school in June and July alongside

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all other children who will be starting. We give each family an 'All About Me' activity to complete with their child over the summer and this is shared in their first few weeks at school.

During the first few days of the new school year we have home visits, where we can get to know the children and parents better and they can ask any questions they may have.

Health & Safety and Safeguarding

Please see our school Child Protection, Online Safety and Health and Safety Policies.