



**Winston Way Academy**

The best in everyone™

Part of United Learning

# Winston Way Academy

## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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Date of last review	June 2025	Review period	2 years
Date of next review	June 2027	Owner	EYFS Lead
Type of policy	Statutory	Approval	LGB

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 All children should be given the opportunity to experience the very best possible start to their education. At Winston Way Academy, we are committed to providing a high-quality early years' education which gives children a secure and confident start to their school life and nurtures a life-long love of learning.
- 1.2 The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. In our school, the EYFS applies to children attending Reception and Nursery.
- 1.3 We are fully committed to the purpose and aims of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2024) that clearly states:

*'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe, and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.'*

## 2. Statutory framework and other guidance

- 2.1 This policy complies with the guidance contained within
  - Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (updated in 2024)
  - Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2014)
  - Assessment and reporting arrangements (updated in 2025)

## 3. Links to other policies and practice

- 3.1 The EYFS Policy should be read in conjunction with the following areas of School policy:
  - Teaching and Learning Policy
  - Assessment, Data and Tracking Policy
  - SEND Policy
  - Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
  - Curriculum Vision and Overview
  - Code of Conduct
  - Healthy and Safety Policy
  - First Aid and Medical Care Policy
  - Intimate Care Policy

## 4. Aims

- 4.1 Our Early Years Foundation Stage aims to:
  - Provide a happy, caring, secure and stimulating environment for all children.
  - Encourage confidence, independence and a desire to learn.
  - Focus on the development of every child as an individual, valuing and building on their previous experiences and responding to their individual needs.
  - Work in partnership with parents and carers.

- Develop in children an enquiring mind and an enthusiasm for learning.
- Provide strong foundations for later learning.
- Develop children's understanding of social skills, values and codes of behaviour necessary for life.

## 5. EYFS Principles

5.1 The statutory framework is based on 4 guiding principles and these themes help shape the Early Years Foundation Stage Policy:

- A Unique Child
- Positive relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development (Children Learn and develop at different rates)

## 6. A Unique Child

6.1 At Winston Way Academy, 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 and set high expectations for all children.

## Inclusion

6.2 We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children are treated fairly, regardless of race, religion, gender, nationality, culture, abilities or social circumstances. All children and their families are valued within our school.

6.3 In our Nursery and Reception classes, we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences, interests, needs and stages of development when planning for their learning.

6.4 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 values.
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs.
- Differentiating for all children's needs to ensure progression in their learning and development.
- 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.
- Ensuring all learning opportunities, experiences and resources are inclusive and enable children to learn together.
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

- Working closely with parents/carers, other professional adults such as speech therapists and specialist teachers as part of the learning process.
- 6.5 It is important to us that all children in our school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits. 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.
- 6.6 Our SEND Policy provides more information about how we meet the needs of all the children including children with SEND.

## 7. Positive Relationships

- 7.1 We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. Positive relationships are a vital part of motivating learning. We aim to develop caring, respectful, trusting and professional relationships with the children and their families.

### Parents as Partners

- 7.2 At Winston Way Academy, we recognise the importance of establishing positive relationships with parents, as highlighted by the EYFS Framework. We understand that an effective partnership between school and home will have a positive impact on children's learning and development.
- 7.3 Parents and carers are children's first and foremost enduring educators and we are committed to working in close partnership with them in order to enable each child to achieve his/her potential. Young children are eager learners and all adults have an important role in sustaining that eagerness. We highly value the contribution that parents and carers make and seek to maintain an effective partnership between home and school by:
- Demonstrating that we value and respect the role of the parents/carers as the first educators by listening to accounts of their child's development and any concerns and aspirations they have.
  - Providing opportunities for regular conversations, discussions, meetings and chats with parents and carers about their child.
  - Ensuring that parents and carers are provided with detailed information prior to admissions enabling them to feel confident about the transition process.
  - Calling the parents of all EYFS children in their home setting prior to their starting school to allow practitioners and parents to discuss children's circumstances, interests, skills and needs, introduce teachers/key workers.
  - Inviting all EYFS parents to an induction teams meeting during the term before their child starts school.
  - Demonstrating that we value linguistic diversity and provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning.
  - Welcoming parents and carers into the classroom to share their expertise and enrich the learning opportunities provided.
  - Ensuring parents and carers are kept well informed about the curriculum and school life via letters, leaflets, and school website.

- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress and allowing access to their child's exercise books.
  - Providing opportunities for parents to add comments and observations relating to their child's achievements in the class dojo.
  - Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between children, school and parents/carers, e.g. sports day, trips, themed activity days, class assemblies etc.
  - Other partnerships including Stay and Play, stay and read, workshops etc.
  - Sharing information regarding a child's progress and achievements and how parents and carers can support the next stage of learning through workshops, formal meetings, leaflets and reports.
- 7.4 All staff involved in the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with children, interacting positively with them and taking the time to listen to them. At Winston Way Academy, we have a Key Worker system where each child is assigned a Key Person from one of our teachers or early years' practitioners. A key working approach provides the child with a special adult to enable him/her to develop a secure attachment, the opportunity for the practitioner to develop a supportive relationship with the parents/carers as well as helping to track and share the child's progress and development through their class dojo, ensuring that every child's learning is tailored to meet their individual needs.

## 8. Enabling Environments

- 8.1 We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.
- 8.2 The EYFS learning environment is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The environment is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. Our Nursery and Reception classes have access to an outdoor space daily. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children the opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access indoors and outdoors that help the children to develop and learn across all seven areas of learning.

### Learning through Purposeful Play

- 8.3 At Winston Way Academy, we recognise the importance of play for young children. It is an essential and rich part of their learning process. Play is a powerful motivator, providing multiple ways for children to learn a variety of different skills and concepts.

*'The EYFS is about what children learn, as well as how they learn. Effective practice is a mix of different approaches. Children learn through play, by adults modelling, by observing each other and through adult-guided learning.'* (1.16 Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2024)

- 8.4 Well-planned play, both indoors and outdoors, provides key opportunities for young children to learn with enjoyment and challenge. We recognise the importance of the adult support and a secure environment in the role of effective high-quality play.
- 8.5 Effective high-quality play opportunities involve:
- Planning and resourcing a challenging environment
  - Supporting, extending and developing children's learning through purposefully planned play activities
  - Extending and supporting child-initiated play
  - Extending and developing children's language and communication in their play
- 8.6 The secure environment and adult support in play enables children to:
- Explore, develop and represent learning experiences that help them to make sense of the world
  - Practice and build up ideas, concepts and skills
  - Be alone, be alongside others or cooperate as they talk or rehearse their feelings
  - Take reasonable risks, make and learn from mistakes
  - Think creatively and imaginatively
  - Communicate with others as they investigate or solve problem
- 8.7 At Winston Way Academy, we acknowledge that young children learn best when they are active. We understand that active learning involves other people, objects and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods. Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence, they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning. Children are given opportunities to be creative through all areas of learning. Adults support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas, asking open questions, providing feedback and scaffolding.

## 9. Learning and Development

- 9.1 We recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are all important and interconnected.
- 9.2 Our policy on learning and teaching defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school.

### Characteristics of Effective Learning

- 9.3 *'In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners must reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and adjust their practice appropriately.'* (1.18 Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2024)
- 9.4 The 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; and
- Creating and thinking critically- children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

## The Early Years Curriculum

- 9.5 The Early Learning Goals are the knowledge, skills and understanding which young children should have acquired by the time they reach the age of five. The statutory early learning goals outline the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS. The curriculum is carefully planned to ensure progression and continuity of skills in seven areas of learning. These areas of learning depend on each other to support a rounded approach to early years' development. All the areas will be delivered through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

*"ELGs should support practitioners to make a holistic, best-fit judgement about a child's development at the end of the EYFS, and their readiness for year 1" (1.9 EYFS statutory Framework 2024)*

**There are three prime areas:**

**Communication and Language Development:** involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations. The development and use of communication and language is at the heart of young children's learning and opportunities will be provided for children to use their skills in a range of situations and for a range of purposes, and be supported in developing the confidence and disposition to do so.

**Physical Development:** involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food. Young children's physical development is inseparable from all other aspects of development because they learn through being active and interactive. They use all their senses to learn about the world around them and make connections between new information and what they already know.

**Personal, Social and Emotional Development:** involves supporting children to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary. Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently.

**There are also four specific areas through which the prime areas are strengthened and applied:**

**Literacy Development:** involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters



and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest. We will endeavour to promote a love of reading and writing through providing an environment rich in print and possibilities for communication.

**Mathematics:** involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems, numerical patterns; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures. Experiencing concepts in a practical context and linking experiences to everyday life is crucial in the early stages of development. The children will be provided with opportunities to practice and extend their skills in these areas and to gain confidence and competence in their use.

**Understanding the World:** involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment. In this area of learning, children are developing the crucial knowledge, skills and understanding that help them to make sense of the world. This forms the foundation for later work in science, history, geography, technology and computing.

**Expressive Arts and Design:** involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology. Being creative enables children to make connections between one area of learning and another and so extend their understanding.

## Curriculum Overview

- 9.6 In order for our pupils to receive a broad and balanced curriculum that prepares them for the next stage of their learning, we develop core knowledge and subject-specific skills throughout their journey with us. Our curriculum is designed in order for pupils to achieve mastery of skills in English and Maths and therefore to be able to flourish in all areas of the curriculum. We recognise the discrete nature of the skills required for different disciplines of learning and ‘map backwards’ in each curriculum area from ‘readiness for University’ back to EYFS. For example, pupils will learn what it means to ‘be a scientist’ and the necessary skills and knowledge from Reception onwards. Our curriculum adopts an ‘interleaving’ approach, where key concepts are revisited and built upon in a timely fashion. Summative assessments are cumulative and take into account the interleaving curriculum.
- 9.7 Our Curriculum Vision and Overview entails the aspects of our curriculum.

## Planning

- 9.8 Yearly and half-termly planning is based around curriculum themes and core reading texts. Planning incorporates a balance between adult led and child-initiated activities and experiences, taking account of children’s individual needs, stages of development and interests. Planning incorporates all areas of learning and development and puts the principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage into practice.



*“In planning and guiding what children learn, practitioners must reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and adjust their practice appropriately. 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.” (1.18 Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework: October 2024)*

- 9.9 Planning always follows the same pattern – observe, analyse and use the information about the children to plan for the next steps in their learning. Through careful planning we aim to:
- Provide a carefully structured curriculum, building on and extending children’s knowledge, experiences, interests, stages of development and skills.
  - Provide a wide range of well planned, purposeful, challenging activities that utilise the children’s interests, needs and previous knowledge.
  - Support and develop children’s involvement and concentration in order for them to learn effectively.
  - Present activities in many ways and use a range of teaching strategies.
  - Develop self-esteem and confidence in their ability to learn.
  - Provide a safe and secure learning environment, where each child is valued.
  - Monitor children’s progress, identifying areas of development/ next steps and taking action to provide support.
  - Provide educational visits to support children’s learning.
  - Give opportunities for self-assessment and reflection.

### Assessment and Recording

- 9.10 Children are assessed thoroughly upon entering our Nursery and Reception classes. This on-entry baseline assessment is compiled during the children’s first term at Winston Way Academy. It includes a range of formal and informal observations and assessments.
- 9.11 We make regular assessments of children’s learning and use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS involves dialogues, marking work and observations. These observations are recorded in the children’s individuals tracking sheets. They also contain information provided by parents, carers and other professionals.

*‘Ongoing assessment (also known as formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process. It involves practitioners understanding children’s interests and what they know and can do, and then shaping teaching and learning experiences for each child reflecting that knowledge. In their interactions with children, practitioners should make and act on their own day-to-day observations about children’s progress and observations that parents and carers share. However, there is no requirement to keep written records in relation to this.’ (2.5 Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework 2024)*

- 9.12 Staff ensure that they:
- Make systematic observations and assessments of each child’s

- achievements, interests and learning styles.
  - Use these observations and assessments to identify learning priorities, next steps, interests and plan relevant and motivating learning experiences for each child.
  - Match their observations to the expectations of the Development Matters and Early Learning Goals.
  - Assessment does not entail prolonged breaks from interaction with children and is high quality, rather than entailing excessive paperwork.
- 9.13 We use the Development Matters and the Early Learning Goals to assess the children in the Foundation Stage. In each learning area, the Development Matters and Early Learning Goals define the expectations for most children. Practitioners plot the individual progress of each child as they grow and develop and as the child progresses through the school the staff will make judgements based on their observations and knowledge of the child in all seven areas of learning.
- 9.14 During the Reception year, the children are assessed against the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. This is also informed by the observations, assessments, discussions with parents/carers and other professionals and each child's level of development is recorded against the 17 strands derived from the Early Learning Goals.
- 9.15 During the year, there are formal opportunities to feedback information to parents and carers through parent/carer consultations in the Autumn and Spring Terms. Parents and carers are vital partners in the assessment process. Towards the end of the academic year, a written report covering the seven areas of learning will be given to parents and carers indicating whether children are meeting expected levels of development (at 'expected' levels) or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging').
- 9.16 Our Assessment, Data and Tracking Policy provides more information about the assessment, data and tracking procedures at Winston Way Academy.

### Reception to Year 1 Transition

- 9.17 At Winston Way Academy, Reception practitioners prepare children for more formal learning and the National Curriculum in Year 1. More information about our transition process is included in our transition guidance.

## 10. Safeguarding and Welfare Arrangements

- 10.1 *'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.'* (3.1 statutory Framework for EYFS 2024)
- 10.2 At Winston Way Academy, we recognise our responsibility for promoting the welfare of our youngest children:
  - All adults with access to our children will receive a DBS check and as part of the induction process will have discussed and signed a school code of conduct.
  - All staff employed by Winston Way Academy receive a thorough induction training to help them understand their roles, responsibilities and key information about how things work at Winston Way Academy.

- All staff employed by Winston Way Academy will undertake regular Child Protection training and are expected to follow the school's policy in following up a cause for concern.
- Staffing will be organised to ensure the safety of the children and to ensure staff/child ratios are always followed.
- All staff will be trained to the level appropriate to responsibility.
- First aid will only be administered by trained personnel. Procedures are in place to inform parents/carers of accidents involving their child.
- Procedures are in place to ensure security of children and the safe release of children into the care of individuals named by the parent/carer.
- As part of the process to achieve healthy school status, we consistently focus on emotional well-being, healthy eating and physical activity. Good health will be promoted, and appropriate action will be taken when children are ill.
- Routines are in place to support children's growing understanding of personal hygiene
- Children's behaviour is managed effectively through the use of a whole school behaviour system, which is adapted to the stage and development of individual needs.
- Risk assessments will be undertaken and reviewed regularly.
- Indoor and outdoor premises, furniture and equipment will be regularly checked and repaired, washed etc. as required.
- Records, policies and procedures required for the safe efficient management of the setting will be maintained.
- Policy documents will be available for parents and carers.