

Witherley C.E. Primary School



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Approved: May 2026

Next review: May 2028

Witherley CE Primary School

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Introduction and legal requirements

At Witherley C.E. Primary School, our Early Years provision reflects our Christian values of belonging, perseverance, and joy in learning. We value the importance of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in providing a secure foundation for future learning and development.

This policy aligns with the Ofsted Early Years Inspection Toolkit (2025) and the EYFS Statutory Framework (November 2024), which emphasise inclusive, evidence-informed practice observed through everyday interactions and professional dialogue.

We aim to ensure that each child has a happy and positive start to school life, developing the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

Following the EYFS framework guidance we seek to provide:

A secure foundation – through learning and development opportunities which are carefully planned around the needs and interests of the children which are reviewed and assessed regularly.

A partnership – working between EYFS staff and parents or carers

Quality and consistency – to ensure that every child makes good progress

Equality and opportunity – to ensure that every child is included and supported

This policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies including but not limited to our Keeping Children Safe in Education policy, ICT Acceptable Use and the Medication Procedures policy.

Roles and responsibilities

The school governing body have overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy.

The EYFS lead in conjunction with the headteacher has responsibility for ensuring the day to day implementation and management of this policy.

Aims

- To ensure every child achieves, belongs, and thrives through inclusive, play-based learning that reflects our Christian values.
- To provide a successful transition from pre-school settings into the EYFS class for pupils and parents.
- To make the child's first experience of school happy, positive, and fun, establishing a solid foundation for a love of learning.

- To ensure that all children are kept healthy and safe.
- To lay the foundations which underpin learning throughout the school.
- To encourage parents to become partners in their child's education.
- To provide a curriculum firmly based on active learning, meeting individual needs through indoor and outdoor environments.
- To foster social skills, cooperation, and respect.
- To prepare children for a seamless transition into Key Stage 1.

Our EYFS setting is guided by the *Birth to 5 Matters 2021* four guiding principles and the Ofsted Toolkit (2025) evaluation areas:

A unique child – every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

Positive relationships – children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships

Enabling environments – children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between the school and parents/carers

Learning and Development – children learn and develop at different rates

At Witherley we put these four guiding principles into practise by:

- Providing a broad and balanced curriculum across the seven areas of learning.
- Promoting equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- Working in partnership with parents and carers.
- Prioritising language development for all children.
- Planning engaging learning experiences based on individual needs through careful observation and assessment.
- Providing a safe and secure environment indoors and outdoors.

Learning and Development

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum that promotes learning and development.

Our curriculum builds knowledge and skills through play, exploration, and sustained shared thinking. Practitioners confidently explain how learning sequences develop over time and how progress is evidenced through observation and professional dialogue.

Teaching reflects intent, implementation, and impact, ensuring learning is meaningful, inclusive, and joyful.

Our curriculum that is based on the needs and stages of development of the children in our care. We achieve this through partnership with parents. This partnership promotes the learning and development of the children to ensure they are ready for their next stage of education.

The EYFS Curriculum consists of seven areas of learning and development. All areas are interconnected.

The three prime areas, which are the building blocks to support good development and happy, confident learners, are:

- **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.
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development** - involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.
- **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 its effects on the body, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

These are strengthened and applied in the four specific areas

- **Literacy** - involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children are given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.
- **Mathematics** - involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, problem solving using addition and subtraction; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.
- **Understanding of 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.
- **Expressive Arts & 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.

Activities reflect current themes, children's interests, and individual circumstances, providing challenging, engaging, and enjoyable experiences through adult-led and child-initiated activity.

These three characteristics of effective learning and teaching guide the activities that are planned:

Playing and exploring – the children investigate and experience things

Active learning – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and celebrate their achievements.

Creating and critical thinking – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

The EYFS teacher will discuss any cause for concern in a child's progress with the child's parents (see our school SEND policy).

The learning environment and outdoor space

Our classroom is organised so that the children can explore and learn in a safe environment. The areas are arranged to develop independence, giving opportunities for our children to initiate their own activities with planned progression throughout the year. The resources are available every day and enhancements are added which link to our half termly curriculum themes and planning.

The children have daily access to our enclosed outdoor area. Our outdoor activities and resources are available daily unless severe weather would make outdoor learning unsafe or inappropriate.

We have 2 toilets, towels, water proof all in ones and spare clothes if needed.

Equal Opportunities

We believe that it is important to treat pupils as individuals regardless of race, gender, ability or other differences. We aim to provide equal opportunities throughout every aspect of school life.

Assessment

Assessment is continuous and informs professional dialogue about children's progress.

The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) takes place within the first six weeks of school, assessing early maths, literacy, and communication skills.

Formative assessment supports understanding of attainment, interests, and learning styles, informing planning and early identification of additional needs.

Progress is recognised through formative assessment, observation and shared celebration.

Parents are kept informed through meetings, reports, and daily communication.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is embedded in daily routines. All staff are alert, responsive, and proactive in ensuring children's welfare, guided by statutory requirements and our Child Protection and Keeping Children Safe in Education policies.

Any safeguarding or welfare issues will be dealt with in line with our Child Protection and Keeping Children Safe in Education policy.

Healthy and safety

We take all necessary steps to keep children safe and well.

Leadership ensures staff well-being and reflective practice are integral to maintaining safe, high-quality provision.

First aid, medication procedures, and accident reporting follow school policy.

Children have access to fruit and drinks throughout the day and eat at the snack table under supervision.

Parent involvement

Parents are valued partners in professional dialogue about their child's progress and well-being.

They are invited to bring their child into class each morning and to communicate freely with staff.

We engage through meetings, Class Dojo, reading records, and informal conversations.

Parents complete permission, medical, and About Me forms to support understanding of each child's character and needs.

Transition to school

Transition arrangements reflect our commitment to inclusion and continuity of learning.

Parents attend induction meetings and home visits.

Children visit the classroom before starting school and have a phased entry in the first week.

EYFS and Key Stage 1 teachers meet to discuss development and ensure a smooth transition into key stage 1.

Children with additional needs receive tailored support and extra visits to build confidence and relationships.