



EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE STATEMENT

'All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives, so their experiences in early years have a major impact on the future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning provide the foundation children need to fulfil their potential.'

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage - Department for Education 2024

INTENT

At Valewood we believe that children's earliest experiences underpin their attitudes and achievements, enabling children to fulfil their potential. We place great value on the importance of the EYFS in laying these secure foundations for future learning and development which children build upon for the rest of their lives.

Our Reception Class follows the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. We aim to provide a secure foundations through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each individual child and are assessed and reviewed regularly.

Our Curriculum is based on a combination of learning through child-initiated play; direct teaching and adult supported activities. We believe that 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 early experiences have a major impact on their future life chances. There is a strong family ethos in our school and we work together as a team: parents and carers, children and staff, together, to ensure that every child has the best possible start to their school life. Our Reception Class allows children to discover the excitement of learning; the rewards of achievement and the ability to acquire life skills through the seven areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage, namely:

- Personal Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development
- Communication and Language
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Art and Design

Through high quality Early Years practice, we aim to ensure that children are educated in a welcoming, stimulating and challenging environment which is safe, secure, happy and caring. Our Reception teacher is a Level 3 Forest School Practitioner which further enhances the experiences of our children in Reception through outdoor learning. We are committed to providing children with a breadth of experiences and learning outside the classroom. Our Reception teacher and HLTA are Language Leaders and developing and supporting children's language underpins everything in Reception.

IMPLEMENTATION

1. The seven areas of learning are planned for using Development Matters and the Foundation Stage Profile. The environment and adult led learning are carefully planned around children's interest and abilities.
2. The United Nation's Charter for Children's Rights underpins our EYFS curriculum. We ensure that the best interests of the child are always at the forefront of decision making for the children so that they can achieve to the best of their abilities and make the best start at school.
3. Practitioners observe the way children learn and engage with other people and their environment. The characteristics of learning are observed and supported throughout continuous provision, including playing and exploring, active learning and creating and thinking critically.
4. The class teacher and classroom assistants observe children, work as a team to analyse observations and plan next steps through providing experiences within the learning environment, resources, routines and through scaffolding play.
5. Providing a broad and balanced curriculum with opportunities for children to explore, devise, experiment and investigate through sustained shared thinking and play. The curriculum in our settings takes account of and responds to developmental needs, allowing all children to make progress relative to their starting points.
6. The development of the Prime Areas of Learning; Communication and Language, Personal Social and Emotional Development and Physical Development are of particular importance. Language Leaders provide meaningful and irresistible contexts for communication and adults in the class are conversationalists who model vocabulary and draw conversation from children.
7. Children are provided with a variety of rich learning experiences inside and outside the classroom through continuous provision, enhancements within the environment and via small group adult led learning.
8. Literacy, Phonics, and Mathematics are taught through short lessons, followed by adult led groups and mastery of skills within the environment where children can practise skills they have learned. Adults use open ended questions and, 'I wonder...' to encourage metacognition.
9. Children's learning is documented through SeeSaw observations, writing books and whole class floor books, which the children can look back on and discuss.

IMPACT

The enabling environment will provide children with an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident and secure and challenged. Effective learning builds and extends upon prior learning and follows children's interests.

The positive relationships with the children and their families will ensure that parents and school are working together to develop confident and happy children. Positive relationships will be developed through valuing parents' and carers' contributions, informative transition meetings with parents/carers, transition visits to nurseries and at Valewood. Children will have a key carer who they can develop positive relationships with and help them feel secure and safe. Children's learning experiences and achievements at home will be shared with school through Class Dojo app. Reception staff use SeeSaw and Dojo to share photographs of children's learning and updates about current themes in class so that learning can be continued at home.

Every child is unique. 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 and at varying rates. Practitioners respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interactions. As children grow older, and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1.

Through providing children with positive relationships, an enabling environment and respecting each child as unique, children will become confident learners with good foundations set in the Prime Areas, as well as reading, writing and mathematics. Through developing positive relationships with parents, carers and children, as well as tailoring learning to children's needs and interests, children will develop a love of learning which they will continue to build on as they move through to KS1 and beyond.