

EYFS @ Woolmore

This statement guides the principles, organisation and provision for learning and teaching in Woolmore's early years classrooms.

In our school we view the foundation years (3-5 year olds) as a basis for all future learning.

How young children learn

"Young children learn by doing. Knowledge is not something that is given to children as though they were empty vessels to be filled. Children acquire knowledge about the physical and social worlds in which they live through playful interaction with objects and people. They are motivated by their own desire to make sense of their world. For children to understand fully and remember what they have learned the information must be meaningful to the child in context of the child's experience and development." (Bredekamp ed. 1990)

Organisation of classes

Our Early Years is divided into nursery and reception classes. As of September 2014 our Nursery provision is currently off site and is an outreach programme operating three days a week with some trips planned for occasional 4th days . There are two Reception classes with capacity for 30 children each, for children aged between 4 and 5 years old.

Our move to the new school build will see the early years provision increase, with 3 reception classes and with capacity for 3 nursery classes.

The Early Years Curriculum

Our Early Years Curriculum is based on the revised Early Years Foundation Stage (2012) and is planned to lead smoothly into the Programmes of study at KS1 in a way in which is relevant and meaningful to all children.

The 7 areas within the early year's curriculum are used to plan for your child's learning and for activities. These 7 areas all contain aspects, which mean there are 17 aspects used for planning and assessment. (The breakdown of these areas and aspects are found below). The professionals teaching and supporting your child will make sure that the activities are suited to your child's unique needs. This is a little bit like a curriculum in primary and secondary schools, but it's suitable for very young children, and it's designed to be really flexible so that staff can follow your child's unique needs and interests.

Children in the EYFS learn by playing and exploring, being active, and through creative and critical thinking which takes place both indoors and outside.

| Area of Learning and Development | Aspect |
|---|---|
| Prime Areas | |
| Personal, Social and Emotional Development | Making relationships |
| | Self-confidence and self-awareness |
| | Managing feelings and behaviour |
| Physical Development | Moving and handling |
| | Health and self-care |
| Communication and Language | Listening and attention |
| | Understanding |
| | Speaking |
| Specific areas | |
| Literacy | Reading |
| | Writing |
| Mathematics | Numbers |
| | Shape, space and measure |
| Understanding the World | People and communities |
| | The world |
| | Technology |
| Expressive Arts and Design | Exploring and using media and materials |
| | Being imaginative |

The learning environment

We value a learning environment both inside and outside the classroom, which is carefully organised to enable children to develop and demonstrate characteristics of effective learning. Children are given free access to the outdoor learning space, whenever it is supervised by a member of staff. Adults support children in playing and exploring, active learning and developing creativity and critical thinking. We value resources that promote possibility thinking and offer limitless opportunities for play and learning. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play that is guided by adults. The child and adult engages in 'sustained shared thinking'

" an episode in which two or more individuals 'work together' in an intellectual way to solve a problem, clarify a concept, evaluate activities, extend a narrative etc. Both parties must contribute to the thinking and it must develop and extend" Siraj-

Blatchford et al (2002) Researching Effective Pedagogy in the Early Years (REPEY), Dfes.

Parents as partners

We believe that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and when parents and practitioners work together in Early Years settings, the results have a positive impact on children's development and learning. We encourage parents to contribute to our assessments and provide advice and support on how learning and development can take place at home.

As a mum or dad, how can I help with my child's learning?

All the fun activities that you do with your child at home are important in supporting their learning and development, and have a really long lasting effect on your child's learning as they progress through school.

Even when your child is very young and is not yet able to talk, talking to them helps them to learn and understand new words and ideas. If you make the time every day to do some of the following things with your child it will make a real difference to your child's confidence as a young learner.



Planning

Our Early Years planning consists of:

Long term planning which is based on four EYFS overarching principles of every child is unique, children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships, children learn and develop well in enabling environments and children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. We meet the requirements of the educational programme in relation to the seven areas of Learning and Development, and the characteristics of effective learning.

Medium term planning informs and helps us focus on short term planning such as planning for continuous provision, planning for outdoor learning and special events and celebrations, planning for identified interests and themes for nursery and reception children. We include a range of experiences and activities appropriate to our groups of children in line with the EYFS outcomes. We have three main medium term plans in place, including

Autumn term – Ourselves and our communities

Spring term – The world around us

Summer term – Living and growing

Short term planning provides a weekly overview of teaching and learning activities covering the seven areas of learning and opportunities for the development of the characteristics of effective learning. Short term planning is responsive to individual children's interests and developmental needs. We plan for whole class maths and literacy sessions as well as small group adult led focus groups. Alongside this stands our continuous provision planning.

Observation and assessment

On entry to nursery or reception classes, information is collected to help establish where the child is in relation to the development matters age-related bands. Where possible we get parents to add to this picture, once in school and during any home visits. This information is used as a guide to providing a 'best fit' baseline. There are ongoing formative and summative assessments to ensure that practitioners have a clear understanding of a child's progress across all areas of learning and development during the year. Concerns about individual children's progress are identified and addressed. Photos, observations and assessments are kept using an online app called 2simple as well as recorded on our target tracker system. Children all have a first writing book, where examples of focus and child initiated writing is kept. In the final term of the year each child receives an end of year report.

Self-help and independence

Through the Early Years, our practitioners support the children's growing independence and self-help skills. They are positively encouraged to do things for themselves. We support children's growing independence as they do things for themselves, such as dressing and feeding themselves as well as making choices about their meals at lunch.

Safeguarding

In our school and in our Early Years provision, safeguarding is a priority. We look to ensure that children feel safe and we aim to promote children's welfare and strive to safeguard children at all times. We look to ensure children's safety, while not unduly inhibiting their risk-taking.

Healthy living

We promote children's awareness of the factors that support a healthy lifestyle, including a balanced diet, the importance of regular exercise and an active daily routine, including travelling to school, feeling good about yourself and a tolerance and respect for others and their beliefs. In order to lead a healthy life children are encouraged to interact with their world, and to develop a sense of wonder and curiosity. We value the taking of risks in learning and the questioning of the things around them. Children in Reception have yoga once a week and a second PE session as well.

Janet Johnston

Assistant Head teacher for EYFS