

Whipman Woods

Flying High Academy



EYFS Policy 2026-2027

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1. Introduction and Statutory Context

At Whipman Woods Flying High Academy, we are committed to giving every child the strongest possible start to their education. We recognise the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) as a distinctive and important phase in which children develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes and dispositions that provide the foundations for future learning.

This policy has been written in accordance with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage for group and school-based providers, effective from 1 September 2026. It should be read alongside the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, SEND Policy, Positive Behaviour Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Intimate Care procedures and other relevant school policies.

Our curriculum encompasses all seven areas of learning and development and is ambitious, inclusive and responsive to children's different starting points and needs. We work in close partnership with parents and carers and recognise the important contribution they make to their child's learning, development and wellbeing.

2. Whipman Woods' EYFS Vision

At Whipman Woods, we want children to leave the EYFS as happy, confident, curious and increasingly independent learners who communicate effectively, build positive relationships and are ready to embrace the next stage of their education.

We provide an ambitious curriculum within a language-rich environment where children encounter high-quality books, stories, rhymes, experiences and conversations. Adults know children well and use purposeful interactions, direct teaching and carefully designed continuous provision to help children build knowledge and skills over time.

We believe that children learn best when they feel safe, valued and successful. **Through learning, exploring and growing in the Whipman Woods Way, children learn from the very beginning what it means to Be Ready, Be Kind and Be Safe.**

3. Staffing and Key Person

Staffing arrangements within Nursery and Reception meet the statutory requirements of the EYFS framework in relation to staff: child ratios, qualifications and deployment. Staffing is organised to meet the needs of the children and to ensure their safety and wellbeing.

All staff are appropriately qualified and/or experienced for their roles and receive appropriate induction, training, professional development and supervision.

Each child is assigned a key person. The key person helps to ensure that each child's learning and care are responsive to their individual needs, supports the child in

becoming familiar and confident within the setting, develops a secure and settled relationship with the child and builds an effective partnership with parents/carers.

Appropriate paediatric first-aid arrangements are maintained in accordance with statutory EYFS requirements.

4. Curriculum and Overarching Principles

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based on four distinct but complementary principles which shape our practice:

- ❖ A Unique Child
- ❖ Positive Relationships
- ❖ Enabling Environments
- ❖ Learning and Development

4.1 A Unique Child

We recognise that every child is unique, constantly learning and capable of being resilient, confident and self-assured. Children develop in individual ways and at different rates. We build on their strengths, interests and experiences while maintaining high expectations for what every child can achieve.

Children's attitudes to learning are shaped by their experiences and relationships. Adults use encouragement, meaningful praise and celebration to help children develop confidence, motivation, perseverance and positive attitudes towards learning.

5. Inclusion, Equality and SEND

At Whipman Woods, we believe that every child matters and we value and celebrate the diversity of our school community. We are committed to equality of opportunity and to ensuring that our curriculum, provision and practice are inclusive. We recognise and respect individual differences, including those relating to special educational needs and/or disability (SEND), ethnicity, culture and language, including children who speak English as an additional language. Discrimination in any form is not tolerated and inappropriate attitudes or practices are challenged.

We recognise the importance of early identification and timely intervention in supporting children's learning, development and wellbeing. Practitioners have high expectations for all children while recognising that children develop at different rates and may require different levels or types of support. Adaptive teaching and provision, alongside appropriate reasonable adjustments, are used to remove barriers to learning and participation and enable every child to access the full EYFS curriculum.

Where concerns about a child's development or progress arise, the class teacher works in partnership with parents/carers and the SENDCo to identify and respond to individual needs. Where appropriate, support is planned and reviewed through the graduated

approach of assess, plan, do and review, with advice and involvement from external professionals sought where necessary. Adaptations may be made to teaching, resources, communication, routines, the environment or timetable according to individual need.

6. Positive Relationships and Partnership with Parents

We recognise that children learn best when they feel safe, secure and valued within strong, positive relationships. We prioritise caring, respectful and professional relationships with children, their families and the wider school community.

Parents and carers are children's first and most enduring educators. We value strong partnerships with families and seek to involve them actively in their child's learning, development and wellbeing.

We do this by:

- using Class Dojo as a regular communication tool, providing families with a window into their child's learning and experiences in school;
- supporting positive transitions through opportunities for children and families to become familiar with staff and their new environment and, where appropriate, liaison with previous settings;
- taking time to get to know each child and their family, including their interests, experiences, celebrations, strengths and development;
- holding parent meetings to discuss children's progress, development, wellbeing and next steps;
- sharing information about learning and providing ideas to support learning at home;
- working in partnership with families to develop children's early reading, including access to appropriate books and guidance about phonics and reading;
- providing an end-of-year report summarising each child's progress, achievements and development;
- providing workshops and guidance where these will help families support key aspects of learning and development; and
- maintaining open communication and providing additional opportunities to meet whenever concerns, changes or additional support needs arise.

Effective partnership between home and school provides children with consistency, security and strong foundations for learning.

7. Enabling Environments

We recognise the learning environment as an important part of our curriculum. Our indoor and outdoor environments are carefully designed, reviewed and adapted to support children's learning, development and increasing independence.

Continuous provision provides consistent opportunities for children to revisit, practise and deepen important knowledge and skills. Resources are thoughtfully selected, organised and accessible, enabling children to make choices, explore ideas, solve problems and engage purposefully in their learning.

Where practitioners identify opportunities to deepen, extend or support learning, provision is deliberately enhanced. Enhancements may respond to children's interests and experiences, address an identified developmental need, provide additional challenge or make meaningful links with current learning. Enhancements are purposeful rather than decorative: adults are clear about why resources have been introduced and the learning they are intended to promote.

Children have regular access to carefully planned outdoor learning. We recognise that the outdoors offers distinctive opportunities for physical development, exploration of the natural world, sensory experiences, problem-solving, communication and collaboration. Outdoor provision is planned and evaluated with the same purpose and ambition as provision indoors.

8. Learning and Development

Our curriculum is ambitious for all children and is carefully sequenced to build progressively upon what children know, understand and can do. It reflects the needs, experiences and interests of our children while ensuring that they encounter the essential knowledge, skills, vocabulary and experiences they need for future learning.

The EYFS identifies seven interconnected areas of learning and development. The three prime areas are:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

The four specific areas are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Our curriculum provides opportunities for children to acquire new knowledge and skills, revisit and practise previous learning, make connections and develop increasing independence.

Learning takes place through an appropriate balance of direct teaching, adult-led learning, purposeful play and child-initiated learning. Play is fundamental to children's development, enabling them to explore and apply learning, communicate and

collaborate, solve problems, develop creativity and imagination and make sense of the world around them.

Communication and language underpin learning across the curriculum. Adults deliberately introduce, model and revisit ambitious vocabulary through conversation, stories, rhymes, play and direct teaching, giving children repeated opportunities to understand and use new language.

9. Developing a Love of Reading

Developing a love of reading is central to our EYFS curriculum and reflects the school's wider commitment to creating a strong culture of reading for pleasure. High-quality books, stories, rhymes and poems support children's communication and language, vocabulary, imagination and understanding of the world while establishing positive attitudes towards reading from the earliest stage.

Children encounter a rich range of carefully selected texts throughout Nursery and Reception. Books reflect and extend children's interests and experiences, connect with curriculum learning and enable children to encounter characters, cultures, families and experiences beyond their own.

Books are accessible throughout our indoor and outdoor provision. Practitioners read aloud regularly, model enthusiasm for books and provide frequent opportunities for children to revisit familiar and well-loved stories, rhymes and poems. Children visit the school library regularly, developing enjoyment in choosing, exploring and sharing books. Our youngest children also encounter carefully selected book characters which help to bring our school values to life through meaningful stories and situations.

Reading is celebrated beyond the daily curriculum through experiences such as book fairs, themed reading days and whole-school celebrations of books and authors. We recognise the important role families play and provide opportunities for parents and carers to share books and reading experiences with their children.

Our culture of reading for pleasure sits alongside the systematic development of the knowledge and skills children need to become successful readers, including communication and language, phonological awareness and, when developmentally appropriate, systematic synthetic phonics. Our aim is for children to learn both how to read and why reading is something to value and enjoy.

10. Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning

In planning and guiding learning, practitioners consider not only what children need to learn but how they learn. Our practice reflects the three Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning:

- **Playing and exploring** – children investigate, experience things and 'have a go'.

- **Active learning** – children concentrate, persevere when they encounter difficulties and enjoy their achievements.
- **Creating and thinking critically** – children develop their own ideas, make connections and develop strategies for doing things.

Practitioners create opportunities for children to explore, investigate, make choices, solve problems, persevere and think independently. Through this, we aim to develop children who are curious, motivated, resilient and increasingly able to take responsibility for their own learning.

11. The Role of the Adult

We recognise that skilled, knowledgeable and responsive adults are fundamental to high-quality Early Years practice. Practitioners know children well and draw upon their knowledge of child development, the curriculum and individual children to make purposeful decisions about how and when to support, extend and challenge learning.

Adults know when to teach directly, model, explain, question or join children's play, and when to step back, allowing children time and space to explore, practise, persevere, make decisions and solve problems independently. Through careful observation, adults identify what children know and can do and adapt teaching, interactions and provision accordingly.

High-quality interactions are central to our practice. Adults use the ShREC approach to support meaningful interactions:

- **Share attention** – notice and engage with what the child is focused on;
- **Respond** – respond sensitively to the child's communication, ideas and interests;
- **Expand** – build upon the child's language, thinking, knowledge and understanding; and
- **Conversation** – create opportunities for purposeful back-and-forth interaction.

Through their interactions, adults model and extend language, introduce ambitious vocabulary, stimulate curiosity, help children make connections, address misconceptions and provide appropriate challenge. They encourage children to become increasingly independent, to persevere, cooperate, investigate and develop their own ideas.

12. Curriculum Organisation and Implementation

Our curriculum is carefully sequenced across Nursery and Reception to provide continuity and progression in children's knowledge, skills and understanding. It is delivered through an appropriate balance of direct teaching, adult-led learning, high-quality interactions, continuous and enhanced provision and child-initiated learning.

12.1 Nursery

In Nursery, practitioners establish strong foundations for future learning through a language-rich, play-based curriculum. Children develop communication and language, personal, social and emotional development and physical development alongside early literacy, mathematics, understanding of the world and expressive arts and design.

Early reading is promoted through high-quality stories, songs and rhymes, phonological awareness and planned early phonics experiences. Children are given frequent opportunities to talk, listen, explore, create, move, investigate and develop increasing independence. Targeted language or other additional provision is used where assessment identifies a need.

12.2 Reception

In Reception, children continue to learn through purposeful play and carefully designed provision alongside an increasing amount of direct teaching. Daily systematic synthetic phonics is taught through No Nonsense Phonics. Early reading, writing and mathematics are taught explicitly and children are given regular opportunities to practise and apply their developing knowledge across the provision.

Timely keep-up and catch-up support is provided where children require additional practice or teaching. Curriculum learning across the wider areas is deliberately planned so that children build knowledge, vocabulary and experiences over time.

12.3 Responsive Provision and Additional Support

Practitioners continually use their knowledge of children to ensure that teaching and provision remain appropriately challenging and responsive. Where children require additional support, this is provided promptly through adaptation, targeted teaching, additional practice or intervention, without unnecessarily narrowing their access to the wider curriculum.

13. Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning in the EYFS. Through everyday interactions, observation, discussion with children and families and consideration of children's learning, practitioners develop a secure understanding of what children know, understand and can do.

Assessment is primarily formative and is used to inform teaching, provision and appropriate next steps. Practitioners use their professional knowledge and judgement to identify where children may require further teaching, additional practice, support or challenge.

Assessment is proportionate and purposeful. Staff are not expected to produce excessive written observations or collect evidence simply to demonstrate that learning

has occurred. Our emphasis is on practitioners knowing children well and using assessment information to make a difference to what happens next.

Children are provided with age-appropriate opportunities to revisit and retrieve important knowledge and vocabulary over time, helping practitioners identify what has been securely retained and where further teaching or consolidation may be required.

Children's progress is reviewed regularly and concerns are identified promptly. Where appropriate, practitioners work with parents/carers, the SENDCo and other professionals to ensure that additional needs are identified and supported at the earliest opportunity.

13.1 Reception Baseline Assessment

Children in Reception complete the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) in accordance with the current Department for Education Assessment and Reporting Arrangements. The RBA provides a starting point for the cohort-level progress measure from Reception to the end of Key Stage 2. It is not used to judge individual children's attainment or to determine the curriculum they receive.

13.2 Assessment at the End of the EYFS

In the final term of Reception, the statutory EYFS Profile is completed for each eligible child in accordance with the current EYFS statutory framework and EYFS Profile Handbook. Practitioners make a best-fit professional judgement against each Early Learning Goal and information is shared appropriately with parents/carers, Year 1 teachers and the local authority as required.

The EYFS Profile forms part of the transition into Year 1, alongside practitioners' wider knowledge of each child, so that teaching and support can build effectively upon children's strengths and next steps.

14. Safeguarding, Welfare and Health

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Whipman Woods Flying High Academy is committed to providing an environment in which children are safe, secure and well cared for, their individual needs are met and they are able to learn, develop and thrive.

The school complies with the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the EYFS Statutory Framework for group and school-based providers, effective from 1 September 2026, alongside Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, Working Together to Safeguard Children and the Prevent duty.

14.1 Safeguarding Responsibilities

EYFS staff follow the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and receive appropriate safeguarding training. Staff understand how to recognise and respond to

concerns about a child and know how and when concerns must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Appropriate arrangements are maintained in relation to safer recruitment, staff suitability, supervision, attendance and unexplained absence, collection of children, missing-child procedures, premises and security, risk assessment, emergency procedures and the appropriate use of mobile phones, cameras, digital technology and screens. Detailed procedures are contained within the school's relevant policies.

14.2 Health, First Aid and Medicines

Appropriate paediatric first-aid provision is maintained in accordance with statutory requirements. Accidents, injuries and first-aid treatment are recorded and parents/carers are informed in accordance with school procedures.

Medicines are administered only in accordance with the school's Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions procedures and statutory EYFS requirements. Relevant health, medical and allergy information is kept up to date and shared appropriately with staff who need to know.

14.3 Intimate Care and Toileting

Children are supported with toileting and intimate care sensitively, respectfully and in ways which promote their dignity, privacy, independence and safeguarding. Staff follow the school's Intimate Care procedures and relevant individual care plans.

Parents/carers are informed and appropriate records are maintained where required.

14.4 Food, Drink and Safer Eating

Children have access to fresh drinking water and any meals, snacks and drinks provided by the school are healthy, balanced and nutritious. The school obtains and maintains up-to-date information about children's allergies, intolerances, dietary requirements and relevant medical needs and shares this appropriately with staff responsible for children's care and food provision.

Children are appropriately supervised while eating. Staff understand safer eating practices, including reducing choking risk, ensuring food is prepared and presented appropriately for children's age and development and responding promptly to signs of choking or allergic reaction.

Mealtimes are also an important part of children's personal and social development. Adults explicitly teach and model the safe and appropriate use of cups, plates and cutlery and support children to manage food with increasing independence. Children are encouraged, but not pressured, to explore a range of appropriate foods. Individual dietary, medical, cultural and developmental needs are respected and reasonable adjustments are made where required.

14.5 Safeguarding Through Daily Practice

Safeguarding is embedded within everyday EYFS practice and is not limited to responding when concerns arise. Through developmentally appropriate teaching, routines, relationships and interactions, children are supported to understand how to keep themselves and others safe, develop appropriate boundaries and seek help from trusted adults.

15. Positive Behaviour and Self-Regulation

Children in the EYFS are explicitly taught the expectations of the **Whipman Woods Way: Be Ready, Be Kind and Be Safe**. These expectations provide a consistent foundation for behaviour across the school and are introduced and reinforced in ways that are meaningful and developmentally appropriate for young children.

EYFS practice follows the principles and procedures set out within the school's Positive Behaviour Policy, including its positive, stepped and restorative approach. We recognise that young children are still developing the language, social understanding and self-regulation required to manage their emotions and behaviour successfully. Expectations are therefore taught rather than assumed.

Practitioners place strong emphasis on secure relationships, predictable routines, clear and consistent boundaries, explicit teaching, adult modelling and positive reinforcement. Adults support children through co-regulation, helping them to recognise and communicate emotions, understand expectations and develop strategies for managing their responses.

Where difficulties arise, adults respond calmly and consistently, helping children understand what has happened, recognise the impact of their actions and, where appropriate, repair relationships and make a more positive choice. Developmentally appropriate strategies such as visual prompts, social stories, modelling, supported reflection and opportunities to regulate may be used according to individual need.

Practitioners recognise that behaviour can communicate an underlying need. Where behaviour is persistent, changes significantly or presents a barrier to learning, staff work with parents/carers, the SENDCo and other professionals where appropriate. Reasonable adjustments are made for children with SEND or other additional needs without reducing our ambition for them to develop increasing independence, self-regulation and positive relationships.

Through consistent, nurturing and developmentally appropriate practice, we aim to help children increasingly understand and embody what it means to Be Ready, Be Kind and Be Safe.

16. Transitions

At Whipman Woods, we understand that transitions are significant moments in young children's lives. Transition is viewed as a planned and graduated process rather than a single event, with arrangements responsive to the needs of each child and family.

16.1 Starting Nursery and Reception

Prior to starting Nursery or Reception, children and their families are invited to take part in Stay and Play opportunities which help children become gradually and sensitively familiar with the environment, practitioners, other children and everyday routines. Arrangements are adapted where children would benefit from additional transition experiences.

Transition also provides an important opportunity to begin building strong relationships with families. Parents and carers are encouraged to share information about their child's interests, experiences, routines, communication, development, medical or additional needs and anything else that may help staff to understand and support them effectively.

Where appropriate, practitioners liaise with previous settings and relevant professionals. Children who require additional support, including children with SEND or other identified needs, may receive enhanced transition arrangements such as additional visits, visual supports, social stories, familiarisation with key adults or environments and closer liaison between families, settings and professionals.

16.2 Transition within the EYFS

Transition between Nursery and Reception is carefully planned to build upon children's existing relationships, knowledge and experiences. Practitioners share relevant information and provide opportunities for children to become familiar with new adults, environments and expectations.

16.3 Transition from Reception to Year 1

Transition into Year 1 is planned collaboratively between Reception and Year 1 staff. Children are provided with opportunities to become familiar with their new teacher, classroom and routines, while professional dialogue ensures that the Year 1 teacher develops a well-rounded understanding of each child.

This includes children's strengths, interests, learning and development, EYFS Profile outcomes, additional needs, successful strategies and any provision or support that should continue. Particular attention is given to children assessed as emerging in one or more Early Learning Goals and to those with SEND or other additional needs so that appropriate support continues without unnecessary interruption.

Through careful planning, communication and collaboration, we aim to ensure that each transition builds upon what children already know and can do and enables them to approach their next stage with confidence, familiarity and a sense of belonging.

17. Leadership, Monitoring and Review

The EYFS Lead is responsible for the day-to-day leadership and development of EYFS provision, working in partnership with the Headteacher and wider leadership team. The Headteacher retains overall responsibility for ensuring that statutory EYFS requirements are met, and the governing body provides appropriate strategic oversight and challenge.

The quality and impact of EYFS provision are monitored through a range of activities which may include learning walks, observation of practice, professional dialogue, review of planning and provision, consideration of children's learning and outcomes, assessment information and feedback from children, staff and parents/carers.

Monitoring is used to identify strengths and areas for development, evaluate whether the curriculum and provision meet children's needs and ensure that agreed actions lead to improvement. Leaders ensure that EYFS staff have access to appropriate professional development and that identified priorities contribute to the school's wider improvement planning.

This policy is reviewed at least annually and sooner where statutory requirements, guidance or school practice change significantly. It is made available to staff and parents/carers.

