

# Donnington Wood Infant School & Nursery



## EYFS Policy

|                                                  |                               |                             |                                                           |
|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Date of Policy Creation</b>                   | October 2021                  | <b>Named Responsibility</b> | EYFS Lead – Mrs A Hannington<br>Headteacher – Mrs C Boddy |
| <b>Date of review completion</b>                 | October 2023                  | <b>Named Responsibility</b> | Teaching and Learning Committee                           |
| <b>Inception of new Policy</b>                   | October 2023                  | <b>Named Responsibility</b> | Mrs A.Hannington/Mrs C Boddy                              |
| <b>Date of Policy Adoption by Governing Body</b> | 26 <sup>th</sup> October 2023 | <b>Review Due</b>           | Autumn 2025                                               |

All staff and the wider school community will be given a copy of this policy. Copies are available from the office or via the website for parents and members of the wider community

At Donnington Wood Infant School and Nursery our aim is to create an EYFS learning environment and build relationships which support, enhance and invite a child's curiosity, confidence and individual competency to flourish regardless of backgrounds, circumstances or needs.

Growth and development stems from firm roots of happiness and first-hand experiences and this is the basis of everything that we do. Learning happens through a balanced provision of child initiated free choice play and adult led activities

We aim to work collaboratively with parents and carers to encourage independent, enthusiastic learners who thrive and reach their full potential. It is our intent that children who enter our EYFS begin their lifelong learning journey by developing physically, verbally, cognitively, and emotionally whilst also embedding a positive attitude to school and a love of learning.

### **Introduction**

At Donnington Wood Infant School, we believe that all children have potential and learn better

- when learning is rooted in first hand experiences
- by actively involving themselves in an experience
- in an environment of warm trusting relationships
- when there are good partnerships between home and school
- with knowledgeable, supportive adults who listen and respond
- when adults and children reflect on previous learning, develop ideas and plan next steps
- when children feel that their interests and ideas are valued, and they are able to value the contribution of others
- in an environment rich with possibilities to develop and express ideas when they can respond creatively

Our staff are dedicated and thrive to understand how children learn and develop and the practices through which we can enhance that process. How we teach is rooted in values and beliefs about what we want for children and supported by knowledge, theory and experience.

### **Structure**

Our EYFS offers nursery places for 2-year-old and 3/4 year olds.  
We have 2 Reception classes.

Our 2s Nursery offers 16 children 15 hour funded places  
Our 3s Nursery offers 60 children 15 hour funded places  
We offer 30 hour funded places for both 2 and 3 year olds

### **Aims**

At Donnington Wood Infant School, we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children therefore giving them the strong foundation for their future. We aim to ensure that all our children develop into independent and lifelong learners.

“When we succeed in giving every child the best start in their early years, we give them what they need today. We also set them up with every chance of success tomorrow.” Development Matters Sept 2020

Our high expectations will enable children to develop socially, physically, intellectually, and emotionally and to achieve their full potential. We will ensure that all our children are kept healthy and safe and that they achieve the knowledge and skills they need to start in Key Stage 1.

As part of our best practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven areas of learning
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice
- Provide early intervention for those who need additional support
- Work in partnership with parents and where needed outside agencies
- Plan challenging learning experiences for all our children, based on the individual needs of the child
- Provide opportunities for our children to engage in adult led learning and self-initiated learning
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and outdoors
  - Plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observations of children's needs, interests and stages of development across the seven areas of learning

### **Curriculum**

At Donnington Wood Infant School our EYFS team has written a bespoke curriculum, unique to our school. This is based on our knowledge of our children and the local area.

The Nursery and Reception follow the curriculum as outlined in our documents and inline with the EYFS profile (2025).

The EYFS is based on seven key features of effective practice as set out in Development Matters 2025

1. The best for every child
2. High-quality care
3. The curriculum: what we want children to learn
4. Pedagogy: helping children to learn
5. Assessment: checking what children have learnt
6. Self-regulation and executive function
7. Partnership with parents

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of their reception year.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

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

## **A Unique Child**

At Donnington Wood Infant School and Nursery we recognise

- that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates
- that children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebrating success
- to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning

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 self-esteem and confidence
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs
- 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;
- planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary

### **Inclusion**

We value the diversity of individuals within the school. All children at Donnington Wood Infant School and Nursery are treated fairly regardless of race, gender, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school. In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups.

### **Positive Relationships**

At Donnington Wood Infant School and Nursery, we recognise that children learn to be strong independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

### **Parents as Partners**

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children.

We do this through:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school
- offering the parents an opportunity to visit the school and Nursery before their child starts
- offering parents, the opportunity to view, comment and contribute to their child's learning journal through or online system 'Tapestry'
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns
- offering parents support through our Pupil and Family support team
- there is a formal meeting for parents in the Autumn and Spring terms at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher
- parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year;

- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: open afternoons linked to a theme, sports day etc;
- offering a range of family learning activities for parents to attend with their children such as; Christmas crafts

### Transition

At Donnington Wood Infant School and Nursery we have worked hard to develop professional relationships with a number of feeder settings. We have termly Early Years Hub meetings with managers and practitioners who are working together to improve transition, moderate work and share good practice through small research projects. We are committed to evaluating and developing this further and believe that this has a positive impact on our children's learning journey.

### **Enabling Environments**

At Donnington Wood Infant School and Nursery 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 and ways of working, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

### Observation, Assessment and Planning

We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs.

Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. These observations are recorded in the children's 'Learning Journey' and Literacy and 'Maths books.

We also use Little Wandle assessments to assess children's learning during our daily Phonics sessions.

At Donnington Wood Infant School and Nursery, we use the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile, our unique curriculum and assessment documents to measure development and progress over the year. In the summer term children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals.

### The Learning Environment

The EYFS classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active or be quiet and rest. The classroom is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

The EYFS class has its own enclosed outdoor area. 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 opportunities to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all areas of learning. On a weekly basis children have access to our school wooded area.

### **Learning and Development**

At Donnington Wood Infant School and Nursery 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 interconnected.

#### Characteristics of Effective Learning

The ways in which a child engages with other people and their environment-playing and exploring, active learning and creating and thinking critically- underpin learning and development across all areas and

support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner. At Donnington Wood Infant School and Nursery these attitudes are integrated with our whole school core values of 'Learning, Caring and Preparing' this drives the teaching and learning for all children. We are passionate about being inclusive and working with the whole school community to equip children with knowledge and skills to

- be successful in their learning
- aspire and achieve in their futures
- show respect and compassion for those around them
- demonstrate the ability to make a positive contribution to society

### Playing and exploring

"Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development."

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate, take risks and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

We plan for a range of play opportunities for our children including:

- child initiated – where children plan, carry out and evaluate their play.
- adult directed – where an adult describes what a child is expected to do to ensure focused learning in a particular area.
- child led – where children chose from a group of activities but develop the play themselves.

### Active Learning

"Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas 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.

### Creativity and Critical Thinking

"When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understanding and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions."

Children should be given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

## **Areas of Learning and Development**

The EYFS is made up of three **Prime** areas and four **Specific** areas of learning.

The **Prime** areas are fundamental, work together and move through to support development in all other areas.

The **Specific** areas include essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society.

The **Prime** areas are:

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

The **Specific** areas are:

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

All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

As an Early Years team, we have developed our school EYFS Curriculum. This document guides practitioners when planning and ensures that learning throughout EYFS is progressive at Donnington Wood Infant School.

### **Observation, Planning and Assessment**

Adults at Donnington Wood Infant School use an online observation system called Tapestry to record children's learning. Parents are encouraged to access, comment and add their own observations from home.

At Donnington Wood Infant School and Nursery planning is divided into long term, medium term and short term. Long term planning states the topics to be covered for each year. Medium term plans illustrate the objectives being taught each term. Short term or weekly plans, show specific activities planned to achieve the objectives.

Staff ensure that all children are encouraged to experience all area of learning during the week. A mixture of adult led, child initiated and child directed activities are planned and children's choices are carefully monitored to ensure a balanced curriculum. Staff are reflective of their practise and adapt plans daily dependent on their observations and the needs of the children.

The children in Nursery take part in a daily phonics and maths session followed by a child-initiated session. During child initiated there are considered learning experiences through continuous provision and adult led activities for those children not yet confident to lead their own learning. Nursery children have access to weekly sessions in our Willow School (woods) and to access the school hall for PE sessions to help secure the children's transition into school.

In Reception, children take part in daily phonics session. Maths and Literacy sessions build up gradually throughout the year to ensure that children are well prepared to access the Key Stage One framework. During child initiated there are considered learning experiences through continuous provision and adult led activities for those children not yet confident to lead their own learning. Children have planned sessions in our Willow School area. Reception children use the school hall to take part in weekly PE sessions ran by the class teacher and a PE session ran by our Cross Bar coaches.

Brilliant brushers is an evidence-based supervised toothbrushing programme for 3-5-year-olds. The aim is to reduce the rates of tooth decay in children. We follow Public Health England guidance on supervised toothbrushing to make sure that it is evidence-based and safe. All children in Nursery and Reception are given the opportunity to take part in the program.

Good planning is the key to making children's learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive. Effective learning builds on and extends what children know and can already do. Our planning shows how the principles of the EYFS are put into practice and is always informed by observations we have made of the children, staff reflection of their practice, staff knowledge of our unique community and secure staff knowledge of child development. All staff are involved in this process.

The Early Years team follows the school's system for assessment. Adults responsible for the children regularly assess children's progress to help inform their planning. This assessment is shared with Senior Leadership Team. Parents and Guardians are given opportunities throughout the year to meet with the Early Years Team. At the end of the year, we provide a written summary in relation to the children's Early Learning Goals to parents and guardians.

### **2 year old Progress check**

When a child is aged between 2 and 3, staff review their progress and provide parents and/or carers with a written summary of the child's development in the 3 prime areas. This 'progress check' highlights the areas in which a child is progressing well and the areas in which additional support is needed. The two-year progress check is designed to help practitioners identify how children are developing. It helps staff determine if children are developing as expected, or if they require any additional support. The check may be carried out collaboratively with the health visitor.

### **Reception baseline assessment**

During the first 6 weeks of Reception children will be assessed using the Reception Baseline. This will be carried out by a familiar adult when the child is settled in the environment. Children are assessed in both Literacy and Maths. The results of the baseline are not known or reported by school.

### **Transition**

At Donnington Wood Infant School and Nursery we recognise that starting school and moving up classes has the potential to be a stressful time for both parents and children. To this end we have established a strong set of procedures for transitions to be smooth as possible.

#### **Nursery**

All children starting in our Nursery have a set of three play sessions in the provision to meet the other staff and get familiar with their new surroundings. On the first visit parents have the opportunity to talk to staff to begin to build a relationship. We work with parents to ensure that their child and themselves are ready to attend a full session.

#### **Reception**

Transition for Reception begins in Nursery. We have a number of scheduled sessions where Early Years come together to share celebrations. Nursery children come to the hall for some PE sessions during the summer term. Nursery children also have the opportunity to attend some school assemblies. Children then have a transition session during the summer term in the Reception classes. Children who have not attended our Nursery are offered two after school sessions to come and explore the Reception space and meet the adults.

During the first week of the Autumn term children have a staggered start to the week to help with the settling in process.

We take a number of children from outside settings. We have built up good working relationships and share information about children's learning before they start.

Individual classes are confirmed by the end of the first week at school. This is to allow us time to see how the children respond to each other, adults and environments.

All children are given a school book bag. This is to help them feel part of the school. Inside the book bag we provide all children with two picture books and some leaflets for children to support transition to school.

### Year 1

In the summer term all our Reception children visit their new Year 1 classroom on one occasions prior to them starting Year 1. The class teacher will make several visits to the Reception class to ensure the children are familiar with them. Reception teachers pass on their knowledge of each child's development, progress and achievement towards the early learning goals to ensure that all teachers have a well -rounded picture of the children prior to starting the new school year.

### **Safeguarding**

In Early Years we follow the school policies for safeguarding, child protection and the use of cameras and mobile phone.

### **Monitoring and review**

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teacher to follow the principles stated in this policy.

There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. This governor is Mandy Parker and she will discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners regularly and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion.

The Head teacher and subject coordinators will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.