



# Early Years Foundation Stage Early Years and Foundation Stage Policy 2025-2026

Ratification by the Headteacher	
Policy Updated:	October 2025
Date of next Review	October 2026
Signature (Headteacher):	<i>H Brown</i>

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## Why is the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum different and important?

The provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage should underpin all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children's ability to effectively learn through acknowledging children's characteristics of learning, in particular by building upon the children's playing and exploring, and by encouraging and providing opportunities to actively learn and extending these into being creative and thinking critically.

This is achieved through our curriculum which provides opportunities to develop children's:

- Personal, social and emotional development: in particular by supporting the transition to and between settings, promoting an inclusive ethos and providing opportunities for each child to become a valued member of that group and community so that a strong self-image and self-esteem are promoted
- Self-confidence and self-awareness: in particular by developing each child's ability to make choices, develop confidence within a group and share their needs, wants, interests and opinions
- Managing feelings and behaviour: in particular by providing opportunities that enable each child to adapt behaviour in different events, adhere to rules and begin to negotiate and solve problems without aggression
- Making relationships: in particular the capacity to concentrate on group tasks and to take account of others' ideas
- Communication and language: with opportunities for all children to talk and communicate in a widening range of situations, to respond to adults and to each other, to practise and extend the range of vocabulary and communication skills they use and to listen carefully
- Reading and writing: with opportunities for all children to explore, enjoy, learn about and use sounds, letters, words and text in a broad range of contexts and to experience a rich variety of books
- Mathematical development: with opportunities for all children to develop their understanding of number, measurement, pattern, shape and space by providing a broad range of contexts in which they can explore, enjoy, learn, practise and talk about them
- Understanding of the world: with opportunities for all children to solve problems, make decisions, experiment, predict, plan and question in a variety of contexts, and to explore and find out about their environment, technology and people/events that have significance in their lives
- Physical development: with opportunities for all children to develop and practise their fine and gross motor skills and to increase their understanding of how their bodies work and what they need to do to be healthy and safe
- Expressive Arts: with opportunities for all children to explore and share their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of art, design, music, movement, dance and imaginative and role play activities.

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The **Three PRIME** areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum are:

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

The **Four SPECIFIC** areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum are:

- Literacy
- Mathematical development
- Understanding of the World
- Expressive Arts

## Environment

These seven areas help us to organise the learning environment, activities and experiences and provide a framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. Our classrooms have a range of areas for the children to explore during free play. This does not mean that all young children's learning is divided up into areas; one experience may provide a child with opportunities to develop a number of skills and concepts across several areas of learning.

This includes:

- Writing Area
- Creative Area
- Maths Area
- Funky Fingers Area (Fine motor development)
- Sand/Water Area
- Reading Area
- Role-play Area
- Small World Area
- Construction Area

These areas are mirrored in our outdoor area to give the children a sense of familiarity with their learning. A sense of familiarity enables Nursery and Reception to explore some aspects of their learning independently, such as our Maths, Literacy, Creative and Understanding the World cupboards. Children are free to explore resources as they wish; for example using clipboards to mark make whilst constructing creations or exploring capacity in our mud kitchen. This enables our children to take an active role in their own learning. We also have a Movement Area and a Performing Area outdoors to support Expressive Arts and Moving and Handling. Our provision provides children with experiences and opportunities to develop a number of skills and concepts across several areas of learning, rather than just one.

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## School Development



Warrender  
Primary School

"Every child will make outstanding progress academically, socially and emotionally – enabling them to excel at secondary school and thrive in the world beyond."

Our Values: Achieve, Support, Pride, Inspire, Respect, Enjoy

## 'Making our School Better 2025-27'

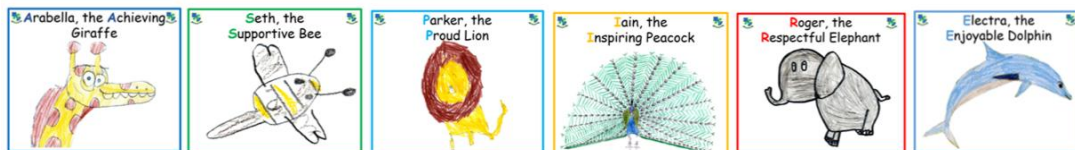
Our children deserve the best education we can provide- so we are constantly trying to improve. Below is a summary of the areas we are working on to make our school outstanding. These priorities have been chosen after considering changes to the curriculum, looking at what Ofsted have said, analysing our test / assessment data and through various courses and conferences that staff have attended.

<b>Priority 1</b>	<b>Quality of Education:</b> To embed high quality, evidence-based teaching and learning practices that directly impacts writing outcomes for all pupils
<b>Priority 2</b>	<b>Behaviour and attitude:</b> To develop whole school ownership of pro-social and valued behaviours through the implementation of a Warrender approach/way to behaviour
<b>Priority 3</b>	<b>Personal development:</b> To equip and empower children and staff to take ownership of their personal and collective responsibilities to positively impact their school community.
<b>Priority 4</b>	<b>Leadership and Management:</b> To strengthen the positive impact that subject and departmental leaders have on the quality of social and educational provision for all children.
<b>Priority 5</b>	<b>Quality of Education in Early Years:</b> To enrich children's language and oracy through skilled modelling, social interaction, and immersive experience.

Our school development plan focusses on oracy development in Early Year. It is essential that the practitioners in Early Years as laying strong foundations for our early learners in areas of oracy, number, gross and fine motor skills as well as independence. Where there are barriers for learners, Early Years practitioners will analyse these and adapt learning to address gaps.

### ASPIRE

In EYFS, we promote our ASPIRE learning characteristics throughout our 6 chosen animals – Arabella, the achieving giraffe, Seth the supportive bee, Parker the proud lion, Iain the inspiring peacock, Roger the respectful elephant and Electra the enjoyable dolphin. Both our indoor and outdoor activities are linked to our ASPIRE animals and the children receive dojos for completing set activities. The children in both Nursery and Reception take full ownership of moving their names to receive dojos for activities completed. We implement our good behaviour policy awarding class dojos, stickers and weekly ASPRE certificates. We explicitly link Dojo reward points to our ASPIRE learning characteristics. For example, "You have supported your friend when they were upset".



### Learning Pit

In all of our Early Years classrooms, we display our Learning Pit. Children are encouraged to voice their struggles if they feel that they cannot do something. The visual of the learning pit encourages our children to work hard or ask a teacher or friend to help. These strategies can then be used when children are playing indoors or outdoors. Our staff are also encouraged to speak about the Learning Pit when we see children struggling during learning input time or free play. For example, a group of children constructing may find it difficult to balance another block. Children would be asked to think carefully about what to do next, e.g. we could work as a team, ask somebody for help etc. These strategies help our children to become more resilient learners.

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## First Attempt In Learning (FAIL)

Throughout EYFS, Early Years practitioners encourage children to build resilience when children find activities challenging. First Attempt In Learning (FAIL) is seen as a positive and phrases such as “ You haven’t failed but had your first attempt in learning” are used to motivate children to develop their learning skills.

## Learning Through Play – Rationale

Play is the child’s work and must be valued as a process in its own right. We acknowledge children’s right to high quality, challenging and motivating opportunities and experiences; and their right to make choices and manage their own learning.

“You don’t stop playing because you grow old... you grow old because you stop playing.”

*George Bernard Shaw*

Well-planned play – both indoors and outdoors – is a key way in which young children learn with enjoyment and challenge. In playing, they behave in different ways: sometimes their play will be boisterous and sometimes they will describe and discuss what they are doing, while sometimes they will be quiet and reflective as they play.

The role of Early Years Foundation Stage staff is crucial in:

- Planning and resourcing a challenging environment
- Supporting children’s learning through planned play activities
- Extending and supporting children’s self-initiated play
- Extending and developing children’s language, communication and social behaviour in their play

Through play, in a secure environment with effective adult support, our children can:

- Explore, develop and represent learning experiences that help them make sense of the world
- Practise and build up ideas, concepts and skills
- Learn how to control impulses and understand the need for rules
- Be alone, be alongside others or cooperate as they talk or rehearse their feelings
- Take risks and make mistakes
- Think creatively and imaginatively
- Communicate with others as they investigate or solve problems

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- Express fears or relive anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations

Our role-play areas are always linked to our topics to enhance the children's vocabulary and expressive language. We ensure that we provide children with a range of experiences and opportunities, for example having writing opportunities in our role-play area as well as chances to develop expressive language and speaking skills.

## Equal Opportunities

Staff should work positively to enhance children's self-worth and self-esteem by being genuinely sensitive to their needs and feelings and responding to them with sincerity, empathy and care.

Staff should ensure that their intervention in children's activities will scaffold the learning process appropriately and not simply control, direct or change the activity in a way that removes ownership from the children.

The staff role is to extend, develop, enhance and motivate, whilst working alongside the child as a play partner; facilitating, targeting and challenging learning. Staff should value and trust each child as a learner/person in their own right.

When planning, staff should ensure that children have choices and autonomy to experiment, explore, make judgements and express their own ideas, for example, choosing paint colours, next week's table top toys, adding and mixing sets/types of toys, changing/adding to the role-play areas or physical play.

All staff should fully understand and value the importance of our partnership with parents and carers in the learning process, in forming assessments of children's learning and in reporting progress to parents and carers, as well as being open to finding out about children's achievements and needs.

Children should also be encouraged to negotiate their way out of conflict, resolve behavioural issues, earn trust, reach compromises and learn to follow simple rules.

Children who are tired, unhappy, stressed, hungry, or denied their own culture – either at home or at school – cannot and do not learn effectively. Staff should be sensitive to the needs and feelings of all children.

## Safeguarding

Children are always in sight or hearing of staff when playing and when eating. For children age 3 and over (below Reception class), there is at least 1 member of staff for every 13 children, at least 1 member of staff is a school teacher and at least 1 member of staff holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification. Children will only be released to their parents or carers, or to individuals who have been approved by their parents or carers. A record is kept of which children are allocated to which key worker. Key workers will be assigned within the first week of children attending nursery after careful consideration to who the child has shown a strong attachment to. In line with the wider school safeguarding approach, all incidents are logged and managed through our own school reporting system (CPOMS) and exactly the same process is followed as the rest of the school (Refer to Safeguarding Policy).

## Absence Monitoring

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Warrender will follow up the attendance procedures for children absence from Nursery and the school will monitor patterns and trends in absence. If the child is absent for a prolonged period of time, or if a child is absent without notification from the parent or carer, attempts will be made to contact the child's parents and alternative emergency contacts. This contact will take the form of email, phone calls and home visits.

## Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is when a member of staff (including students and volunteers) raise a concern about poor or unsafe practices especially those that could put children at risk. If you have a concern, please refer to our Whistleblowing policy for procedures. It is normally expected that concerns will, in the first instance, be raised internally with the immediate Line Manager, Headteacher or Chair of the Governing Board. Internal processes must be considered before reporting the concern to an external prescribed person or body. In relation to child protection and/or safeguarding matters, concerns should initially be made with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Assistant Designated Safeguarding Lead in their absence. Concerns may be raised verbally or in writing. If the employee wishes to make a written report it is suggested that they include the background and history of the concern with relevant dates and the reason why they are particularly concerned about the situation.

In order to engage the protection under this policy, the employee will need to demonstrate that:

- There are reasonable grounds for their concern
- They are making a disclosure which they reasonably believe to be true
- The disclosure is made in the public interest
- The disclosure relates to any one of the specified grounds as referred to above.

The employee may be accompanied by a trade union representative or a work colleague at any meeting/interview in connection with the concerns they have raised. Any companion must respect the confidentiality of the disclosure and any subsequent investigation.

## Mobile phones

EYFS staff do not use mobiles phones nor check emails whilst working with children. EYFS staff may use their mobile phone during break/lunchtime in an area that is not used by the children. The school displays a notice advising visitors and parents and carers that mobile phones are not to be used in the setting for the safeguarding of our children. Photographs taken as evidence of Early Learning Goals will be taken on school equipment such as iPads or school cameras.

## Toileting in EYFS

There are two cubicles for children to use in the Nursery setting. Children are encouraged to be independent when using the toilet facilities. If a child has an accident whilst at Nursery, two members of staff will be present when providing intimate care. Children should be toilet trained by parents before starting at Warrender Nursery. Where there are specific medical needs, the school and parents will work in partnership to create a plan of support. Children's privacy is considered and balanced with safeguarding and support needs when toileting. Warrender has an intimate care policy.

## First Aid

Our staff at Warrender are paediatric first aid (PFA) trained and EYFS follow the same reporting systems as the school for injuries and illnesses. When children are eating, there will be PFA trained staff members in the room with them. The school will gather and record any allergies and dietary requirements before the child

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starts nursery. Food will be prepared in a way that is suitable for each child's needs and developmental stage. Warrender will record any choking incidents that requires intervention, no matter how minor they may seem.

## Guidelines for Staff

Early childhood is a crucial time for learning and the correct vehicle for that learning is play.

Effective teaching and support requires:

- Working in partnership with parents and carers, because parents and carers continue to have a prime teaching role with their children
- Promoting children's learning through planned experiences and activities that are challenging but achievable
- Practitioners who model a range of positive behaviour
- Children teaching each other
- Interacting with and supporting children in a way that positively affects the attitudes to learning that children develop
- Planning the indoor and outdoor environment carefully to provide a positive context for learning and teaching
- Using language that is rich and using correct grammar. Recognising that what is said and how the practitioner speaks is the main way of teaching new vocabulary and helping children to develop linguistic structures for thinking
- Using conversation and carefully framed questions because this is crucial in developing children's knowledge
  - Direct teaching of skills and knowledge
  - Skilful and well-planned observations of children
  - Assessing children's development and progress to serve several purposes– assessment opportunities may be identified in planning or arise spontaneously
  - Working with parents and carers, who are vital partners in the assessment process
  - Identifying the next step in children's learning to plan how to help them to make progress
  - Self-regulation approach for both indoor and outdoor areas
- Transitions are monitored carefully:
  - Allocated carpet spots where all children sit before a transition
  - Children line up by the door and head count is taken
  - Adult at the front/ middle and end of the line
  - Stop breaks to ensure whole class remains together when transitioning

## Admissions

New starters will begin at the beginning a term after they have turned 3 years old. Before a child begins in Nursery, a parent meeting is scheduled where the child attends the Nursery setting. The office staff will arrange a suitable time in the last week of the previous term. The following tasks will take place before the child starts at Nursery:

- Relevant name tags (Peg/ self registration)
- Relevant resources (Exercise books/ individual photo)
- Parents and carers are invited to join Class Dojo

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## 30 Hours Funded Childcare

We provide up to **30 hours of funded early education and childcare** for eligible children in our nursery setting. This provision runs from **8:30am to 3:30pm**, Monday to Friday, during term time only.

- The 30 hours entitlement is funded by the government and must be accessed via the **Childcare Choices** portal.
- Parents/carers must provide a valid eligibility code and ensure this is renewed as required to maintain funding.
- The school verifies eligibility in accordance with DfE guidelines before a place is confirmed.
- The additional 5 hours a week to make 35 hours will be paid via Parent Pay or Invoice from the school

## Wrap Around Care Provision

To further support families requiring extended hours, we offer **wrap around care** from **3:30pm to 5:30pm** each school day – Little Warrender Acorns. This is run by staff at Warrender in the Nursery setting.

- This additional service is charged at **£18.00 per day**.
- Fees for wrap around care are payable in advance through **ParentPay**.
- This extended care is delivered by qualified staff in a safe and engaging environment, following EYFS principles and safeguarding requirements.

We are committed to delivering flexible childcare that supports both children's development and families' working arrangements. Our provision is regularly reviewed to ensure it meets the needs of our community and remains fully compliant with DfE statutory guidance.

## Recruitment

Warrender will obtain references for any members of staff (including students and volunteers) before they are recruited. Clear records will be kept of staff qualifications, identity checks, vetting procedures, references and Criminal record checks.

## Fire List

Before new children start, the class teacher will update the fire list and display it by the fire exit in the classroom.

## Planning: Targeting progress and ensuring challenge

All EYFS staff are encouraged to contribute towards planning (both indoor and outside) and daily modifications to the setting that may render the children's learning experience better. It is crucial for the provision within the setting to be accessible for all. As all the children within our EYFS setting have access to the outdoor classroom, differentiated activities are key to progress. Early Years teachers are given time out of class to plan weekly.

All Foundation Stage staff are expected to contribute towards the children's learning journeys and assessment using the Early Essence Software as a tool for recording evidence of experiences and

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achievement. Whoever takes each observation is expected to complete their own observations and, where possible, Next Steps of learning to a high level of accuracy promptly; including adding Learning Objectives and Characteristics of Learning that meet their observations fairly across the EYFS curriculum. Promptness is paramount to ensure that accurate planning may go ahead, taking children's interests and abilities into account, thus keeping their learning fun and effective as much as full of potential to progress. Progress is monitored by the EYFS leader, teachers and Deputy Headteacher, with any areas of need being targeted through termly Pupil Progress Meetings.

At the start of Nursery and Reception, all children's on-entry levels are assessed and tracked on Early Essence. In Reception, the Department of Education baseline assessment is also used to assess learning and submitted to the Department of Education. These focus on early Literacy and Maths skills. This allows the EYFS staff to target and challenge the children through provision placement and carefully planned learning experiences. Upon leaving the EYFS, the children are assessed against the Early Learning Goal descriptors.

### **ClassDojo**

Parents and carers are encouraged to add videos and photographs to their child's portfolio. Dojo points will be awarded when children demonstrated our six learning characteristics in school. In Reception, children are provided with a home learning book and home learning grids linked to half termly topics. Home learning evidence for both Nursery and Reception can be added to their individual portfolios on ClassDojo.

### **Monitoring, evaluation and review**

We will review this policy and evaluate its implementation and effectiveness every year.

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