



Spotlight on EYFS 2024

At Westfield Infant School we believe in developing the 'whole' child – socially, morally, emotionally and physically.

We follow Julie Fisher's Starting with the Child' ethos and balance our curriculum and continuous provision with adult-led, adult-initiated and child-initiated learning.

“It is our responsibility as early childhood educators to plan an environment, and curriculum experiences, where every child can show us their successful selves:

where every child goes home at the end of the day talking about what they did and what they enjoyed – and not what they could not do and what made them upset.”

Julie Fisher 2024

Our good practice:

Learning Experiences –

The learning experiences within our Early Years are linked to the seven areas of learning and development within the EYFS. These areas are split into three prime areas and four specific areas.

The three **prime areas** are those which the children should develop first and are considered most essential for the healthy development and future learning of our children. These include:

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



As children grow and make progress in the prime areas, this will help them to naturally develop skills within the four **specific** areas. These are:

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

Play is considered essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults.

We adopt the following curriculum development model:

- **Directed activities** – Curriculum through focussed discussion and group activities
- **Enhanced provision** – Curriculum through resource stimulus, interactive displays, visits and visitors. Enhancements are things that are added into areas to promote engagement, link to a theme or book or as a way of addressing identified needs or areas of focus.
- **Continuous provision** – Curriculum through high quality indoor and outdoor learning environment providing opportunities for children to **use, apply, explore and extend** the knowledge and skills they have been taught.

Enhancements –

At Westfield Infants, we continue to carefully organise the environment to ensure high-quality play whilst making time and space available for children to invent their own play. The high quality and well-planned learning environment, indoors and outside, continue to be an important aspect of the learning at Westfield Infants. This year, the EYFS team have particularly focussed on child initiated learning within the continuous provision.



Communication and vocabulary –

The Early Years Foundation Stage Framework says that the development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development.

Children's back and forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development.

At Westfield Infant School, we acknowledge that the number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial and have therefore it is a focus of our developments this year.

By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively.

Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, storytelling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their adults, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

Westfield Curriculum –

We use our curriculum to help us meet national early years requirements, while still prioritising broad and balanced provision across all areas of learning and a play-based ethos. We follow the Primary Knowledge Curriculum as a whole school and the EYFS Curriculum incorporates all seven areas of learning.

Children's language development is also at the heart of the curriculum, so half termly topic is built around focus books and includes plenty of communication activities.

Phonics and Reading –

In EYFS, we follow the Little Wandle Phonics programme for our daily phonics lessons and we use the Little Wandle decodable reading books alongside this. Along with the rest of the school, we also visit the library weekly and earn vouchers to take a storysack home by reading at home 3 or more times per week. Each week in school, children have three guided reading sessions to ensure that all children practice the phonics they have been learning, comprehend what they are reading and use prosody appropriately.



Maths –

In line with the rest of the school, EYFS have adopted Power Maths which follows the ‘Mastery’ teaching approach. It has at its heart the idea that all children can, and should, achieve success in maths. The mastery approach keeps the whole class learning and moving on together, by supporting children who are struggling to keep up with the class and encouraging those who are ready to explore concepts more deeply, rather than moving on to a different topic. The aim is to equip all children with a deep, secure and adaptable understanding of mathematical concepts. The Concrete - Pictorial - Abstract (CPA) approach is used to support our teaching for mastery. In the CPA approach, children explore new maths concepts in a concrete way using real-life situations and objects and use mathematical representations, such as counters or a ten-frame, in order to help them make sense of abstract numbers and symbols. Being able to touch, feel and manipulate the maths is an ideal way to help children develop an understanding of the underlying concepts. Moving from a representation with a clear link (such as toy versions of the animals) to representation with something less obviously linked (such as counters and a part-whole model) ensures children develop an understanding of representation, building a firm foundation for later success in maths.

When introducing new mathematical concepts, the correct mathematical language is used from the start so that it becomes normal and not ‘scary’.

Parental Partnerships –

We continue to build on developing our communication with parents. This year, before children start school, we sent out welcome booklets and information about starting school for children and parents. In August, we held Parent consultations that the child attended with their parents.

Class Dojo is used to share information and to communicate with parents on a 1:1 basis. Teaching staff are always available at the end of the day for any informal discussions. Half-termly newsletters are sent to parents via Class Dojo to keep parents up to date with the learning and experiences within EYFS. Each week we post a link to useful information on BBC’s Tiny Happy People to help parents with the various challenges they face when parenting.

We run in person information workshops for parents and carers including phonics, toileting and behaviour management.

Prospective parents attend an open evening to visit our school and we provide a range of opportunities for parents to come in whether this is to see their child’s work or watch a phonics lesson to support reading with their child at home.

A graphic of a spotlight hanging from above, casting a bright white beam of light onto a circular spot on the floor. The background is a solid blue color.

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