



Teaching and Learning Policy

Statement

We acknowledge at Washwood Heath Nursery School from the earliest stages of development babies and children are capable confident learners. It is on this foundation, working holistically in partnerships with parents / carers that School and Centre will build. We believe that to ensure the service we offer is best quality we must develop fully as a team, with shared vision and continue to challenge ourselves and each other to enhance our own development.

Curriculum

We will support our children by following the statutory framework and practical guidance of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in order to secure the development and well-being of the children in our care.

The Unique Child

We acknowledge that specific actions may need to take place to ensure that children who have SEN and or disabilities are provided for intrinsically. We aim to provide access to: activities, the physical environment, both inside and out, resources, including displays and visits outside of school. The range of resources will aim to respond to the learning needs of all children and reflect the society in which we live. These may include specialist materials, such as those accessed through sight, touch, sound and smell. Through this provision we aim to promote positive images to prepare our children.

“... for living in a diverse and increasingly inter-dependent society and specifically to prevent and address racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination.” (Pg. 68 ‘Disability Equality in Education’, February 2002.)

Enabling Environments.

We aim to provide stimulating environments where children will want to respond and express themselves. A range of teaching and learning approaches will be used to support children’s different learning styles to acknowledge their background, the pace they work, their stamina, concentration and emotional well-being. **The importance of play will be considered an essential approach to teaching and learning**, focussing on the process rather than the outcome. We believe that understanding and concentrating on the process of learning will automatically produce an outcome, with the added bonus of sustained learning.

Learning and Development.

Learning - How do children learn?

- Children initiating activities that promote learning and enable them to learn from each other. Providing a stimulating environment with resources children can explore at their own pace.
- Children learning through movement and all their senses.
- Children having time to explore ideas and interests in depth.
- Children feeling secure which helps them to become confident learners.
- Children learning in different ways and at different rates.
- Children making links in their learning.
- Creative and imaginative play activities that promote the development and use of language.

Positive Relationships.

Teaching - How do practitioners teach?

- Working in partnership with parents, because parents 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.
- 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 children's skills and knowledge. Practitioners knowing the children they teach and judging when they are ready for certain activities.
- Children teaching each other.
- Interacting with and supporting children in a way that positively affects the attitudes to learning the children develop.
- Planning the indoor and outdoor environment carefully to provide a positive context for learning and teaching.
- 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, who are vital partners in the assessment and planning process.
- Identifying the next step in children's learning to plan how to help children make progress.

Planning and Assessment.

Our planning and assessment is based on the principle that children learn most when they are interested, motivated and engaged in the learning process. Through regular

observations of children's interests planning and assessment develops to support and enhance their learning. In this way we differentiate and ensure that individuals are appropriately challenged with a balance of adult-led activities and the scaffolding to support child-initiated activities. The efforts of our children will be valued and respected at all times. We will provide positive encouragement and feedback to pupils to encourage confidence and develop self esteem.

It is through careful observation and documentation of children's learning that we are able to make judgements about a child's individual development. We use the EYFS 'Developmental Matters' and statements from the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile to base-line children, plan personalised learning and show progress. This data is collected in paper and an electronic form and can be analysed to inform the SEF and SIP.

Make reference to the presentation document of 'Teaching and Learning' which illustrates what teaching and learning looks like in our School / Centre.

Appendixes

Phonics

What we know:

- Literacy development starts early in life and is highly correlated with school achievement.
- All of the domains of a child's development —physical, social-emotional, cognitive, language and literacy—are interrelated and interdependent.
- The more limited a child's experiences with language and literacy the more likely he or she will have difficulty learning to read.
- Key early literacy predictors of reading and school success include oral language, Alphabetic Code, and print knowledge.
- Well-conceived standards for child outcomes, curriculum content, and teacher preparation help establish clarity of purpose and a shared vision for early literacy education.
- Increased demands for program accountability are often heavily focused on assessments of children's early literacy development.
- Highly capable teachers are required to implement today's more challenging early literacy curriculum.
- Teacher knowledge, respect and support for the diversity of children's families, cultures, and linguistic backgrounds are important in early literacy development.

Our Policy

- All children will have access to strong literacy components that include clear adaptations for children with special needs.
- Early literacy curricula and teaching practices will be evidence-based, integrated with all domains of learning, and understandable to staff members.
- Early literacy assessment will use multiple methods and use the information to improve teaching and learning.
- Parental involvement will have a strong early literacy component that guides parents and caregivers in providing early literacy experiences at home.

- Support for English as an Additional Language Learners should be specified
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A growing body of evidence shows that early learning experiences are linked with later school achievement, emotional and social well-being, fewer grade retentions, and reduced incidences of juvenile delinquency and that these outcomes are all factors associated with later adult productivity. Other research has identified key predictors for reading and school success.

Key predictive skills and abilities include:

- **Oral language**
listening comprehension, oral language vocabulary
- **Alphabetic Code**
alphabet knowledge, phonological/ phonemic awareness (the ability to discriminate sounds in words), invented spelling
- **Print Knowledge/Concepts**
environmental print, concepts about print

Other less significant indicators include: Rapid Automatic Naming (RAN); visual memory; and visual perceptual abilities.

The context of phonics is taught from these precepts:

Words are made up from small units of sound called phonemes. Phonics teaches children to be able to listen carefully and identify the phonemes that make up each word. This helps children to learn to read words and to spell words

In phonics lessons children are taught three main things:

GPCs

They are taught GPCs. This stands for grapheme phoneme correspondences. This simply means that they are taught all the phonemes in the English language and ways of writing them down. These sounds are taught in a particular order. The first sounds to be taught are:

Set 1: s, a, t, p

We aim to get to set 3 by the end of the Summer term.

Set 2: l, n, m, d

Set 3: g, o, c, k

What makes phonics tricky?

In some languages learning phonics is easy because each phoneme has just one grapheme to represent it. The English language is a bit more complicated than this. This is largely because England has been invaded so many times throughout its history. Each set of invaders brought new

words and new sounds with them. As a result, English only has around 44 phonemes but there are around 120 graphemes or ways of writing down those 44 phonemes. Obviously we only have 26 letters in the alphabet so some graphemes are made up from more than one letter.

ch th oo ay (these are all digraphs - graphemes with two letters)

There are other graphemes that are trigraphs (made up of 3 letters) and even a few made from 4 letters.

Another slightly sticky problem is that some graphemes can represent more than one phoneme. For example **ch** makes very different sounds in these three words: **chip, school, chef**.

So why bother learning phonics?

In the past people argued that because the English language is so tricky, there was no point teaching children phonics. Now, most people agree that these tricky bits mean that it is even more important that we teach phonics and children learn it clearly and systematically. A written language is basically a kind of a code. Teaching phonics is just teaching children to crack that code. Children learn the simple bits first and then easily progress to get the hang of the trickier bits.

How is phonics taught at Washwood Heath

Phonics sessions are mainly made up from games, songs and actions and these sessions are organic and when they are focused they only last for 5-10 minutes per day. Our main aim is to focus on sounds in the environment, distinguishing between sounds, playing with songs and rhymes,

A guide to Letters and Sounds Terminology

Before we give a brief outline of the different Letters and Sounds Phases we thought we'd put together a few definitions that you may find useful if you're unfamiliar with the Letters and Sounds programme or the practise of teaching phonics.

Term	Definition
Phonics	Refers to a practice of teaching children how to read and write by focusing on the relationship between sounds and the letters (or groups of letters) that they are represented by in the English language.
Phonemes	Phonemes are the smallest unit of sound in a language. They are not segments of words like syllables but rather they are 'speech sounds' that can be combined to form words. There are 26 letters in the English language but there are 44 phonemes.
Graphemes	A grapheme is a letter or a group of letters that spell a sound in a word. In other words a grapheme is a way of writing a phoneme
GPC	GPC stands for Grapheme Phoneme Correspondence and it refers to the ability to match a grapheme to its corresponding phoneme and a phoneme to its corresponding grapheme.
Digraph	A digraph is a grapheme containing 2 letters that makes a single sound

Trigraph	A trigraph is a grapheme containing 3 letters that makes a single sound
Blending	Blending refers to the technique of assembling the individual sounds that comprise a particular word.
Segmenting	Segmenting refers to the ability to divide a word in to its various sounds. In particular this involves breaking a word down into the phonemes that make it, deciding which graphemes represent those phonemes and then writing them down in the correct order.
Decode	Decoding involves reading a word by saying and then blending its individual sounds.
Syllables	Syllables are the beats in a particular word when it is spoken. The words syllable consists of three syllables: syl-la-ble
Synthetic Phonics	Synthetic phonics refers to a particular method of teaching phonics where pupils are first taught the letter sounds in isolation before moving on to blending these sounds together to form full words.
CVC	CVC words are words that begin and end with a consonant phoneme and have vowel phoneme in-between.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually

Adopting Policy

This policy was adopted by Washwood Heath Nursery School Governing Body.