



# West View Primary School

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## Early Years Policy

Policy approved by Local Governors: October 2025

Date for Review: October 2027

This policy outlines the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) at West View Primary School. It should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Assessment
- Attendance and Punctuality
- Behaviour
- Early Reading and Phonics
- Online Safety
- Personal Care
- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Safer Recruitment
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC)
- Transition
- Whistleblowing

Throughout this policy, the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) refers to children in our Pre-Nursery, Nursery and Reception classes.

At West View Primary School, we aim to provide every child with a safe and stimulating environment in which they can learn and develop. We value the ‘whole child’, recognising that achievement and success go beyond the academic. In order to realise our school vision for every child to ‘Dream Big. Aim High. Shine Bright.’ we recognise that we need to work collaboratively, in partnership with parents, carers and the wider community.



We believe that fun and laughter are key principles in providing quality experiences and learning that lasts within the Early Years Foundation Stage. Throughout this phase, play is essential: play experiences and The Curiosity Approach form the basis of our children’s learning here at West View Primary School. We encourage the children to become ‘pilots in their own play’ by providing open-ended, natural resources within an environment which acts as the third teacher.

### **Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage**

We adhere to the [Early years foundation stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework](#) and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings:

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- The importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn at different rates.

We plan the curriculum around the seven areas of learning for the Early Years Foundation Stage:

### The Prime Areas

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

### The Specific Areas

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



Each child is unique and we strive to meet their individual needs by offering a broad and balanced curriculum. Where appropriate, we will seek the expertise, knowledge and support of external agencies and other professionals in order to ensure that this is achieved.

We will embrace the seasons through our environment, by adapting it and respecting it as ‘the third teacher’ in line with the natural seasonal changes that we see and can experience together.

We will take every opportunity ‘in the moment’ to encourage, demonstrate, guide, model, show and support. Because when we, as mindful educators, do this, quality teaching and learning happens.



The ingredients of the [Curiosity Approach](#) influence the teaching and learning within the Early Years Foundation Stage at West View Primary School.

The Curiosity Approach is inspired by Reggio Emilia, Rudolph Steiner, Maria Montessori, Emmi Pikler and the Te Whāriki approach in New Zealand. Elements from each of these approaches are brought together and culminate in a mindful, heart-centred approach, bringing curiosity, awe and wonder into the early years in order to create ‘thinkers and doers’ of the future.

Some of the key components of The Curiosity Approach are outlined below:



### Curiosity

Children have an innate curiosity and it is our responsibility as professionals to reinforce this and to give them the confidence to develop their own theories about the wonderful world around them. By developing a child's curiosity and sense of adventure, they acquire important skills such as problem solving and independent thinking. Children are intrigued by so many phenomena - they are drawn to sparkles, smells and sounds. It's our job to create a magical and wondrous place for children to learn in.

### Loose Parts

Loose parts are items that can be used in a variety of ways with no predefined outcome. Children can combine them, line them up, join them together, transport them - the possibilities are endless! Using loose parts provides opportunities for children to engage in types of thinking that leads to problem solving and theoretical reasoning, to once again develop creativity and curiosity.



We provide a range of small and large loose parts in our indoor and outdoor environments. Smaller loose parts include: shells, corks, buttons, feathers, pine cones and stones. Larger loose parts include: milk crates, tyres, pieces of pipe and guttering, wooden blocks and cardboard boxes of various sizes.

## Transforming Environments

The Curiosity Approach settings are renowned for calm and tranquil play spaces, moving away from the brightly coloured traditions of primary colours. At West View Primary School, we take inspiration from this, recognising that colour, form, light and space can either enhance and facilitate, or impinge and intrude, on a child's learning journey: this belief is integral to the way that we want our classroom environments to be designed. Colour schemes will be carefully chosen to be subtle and not over stimulate, allowing children's own learning to be the main focus. Where bright colours are evident, they bring a specific tone or function. Materials and finishes will be carefully chosen for their aesthetic properties, beauty and sensory experience.

We fill our environments with neutral tones, soft furnishings and comfy spaces for children to feel safe, relax or retreat. This brings a sense of 'hygge' to our environment, which in Denmark and other Scandinavian countries, is seen as the pathway for happiness and good mental health.



## Authentic Resources

The Curiosity Approach encourages the use of authentic items and real resources instead of brightly coloured, plastics toys which have a clear and intended use. In our provision at West View Primary School, you will find an array of beautiful authentic resources, sourced from car boot sales, charity shops and through donations from our wonderful community.

By allowing children to handle authentic resources, they learn to handle items with care and respect - so don't be surprised when you see our youngest children using real china tea sets in their play! Authentic resources also help children learn to manipulate larger items that develop fine motor skills and it also helps us to embed equality, diversity and a sense of belonging by allowing children to play, engage with and handle a wide and varied range of multi-sensory resources from a children's home life and those of the wider community.

Through the use of authentic resources, we are also working to prevent the gender divide of specific toys and we offer opportunities for children to play unrestricted, opening up a world of possibilities to play that would have previously and subconsciously limited play for both genders.

This extends to the clothing that we offer for the children to use in their imaginative play. Previously, this would have been commercialised 'costumes' such as a Batman costume or Cinderella dress - but items like these have a single, intended use. We now provide a range of real items such as heeled shoes, handbags, jackets, hats, scarves, saris, jewellery and even walking sticks! Children can use these items to become whoever they wish in their play - the opportunities are endless!



## Nature



At West View Primary School, we firmly support The Curiosity Approach belief, inspired by the work of Rudolf Steiner, that nature needs to be brought into children's lives at every possibility.

Outdoor play is imperative and we allow children to flow between indoors and outdoors, seeing the environment holistically and not as two separate play spaces. We bring nature into children's play, whether this be natural resources at the play dough station or logs and plants throughout our environment.

In our environments, we look to help children connect with nature, to be curious about the natural world and to feel grounded and in love with the great outdoors. Throughout our pedagogy, we teach children to develop respect for the world in which we live and for all those who share it with us. We therefore seek to take every opportunity to ensure that children can access the outdoor provision just as much as they can indoors. We also make every effort to utilise the local area around us - we are fortunate to be close to local parks and even the beach! All children in Pre-Nursery, Nursery and Reception will take part in a welly walk every week - this may be within the school grounds or out and about in the local area. Our older children in school will support our youngest children in this. We will also take opportunities to build relationships with the wider community, by visiting our local shops and the residents at our local care home for example.

*'There's no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing.'*

This phrase hails from Scandinavia, where it's a common mantra repeated by parents who insist that their children spend time outdoors every day. We wholeheartedly value this and have taken steps to ensure that we can provide suitable clothing for all children to be able to access the outdoor provision, whatever the weather! We believe that there is so much to be learnt from time to play in the puddles or on the muddy hill in our dedicated early years outdoor space!



## Early Reading

*'It is essential that, by the end of their primary education, all pupils are able to read fluently, and with confidence,'* English National Curriculum (DfE, 2013).

Reading is at the heart of our curriculum and this is why we start our children's reading journey as soon as they join us in our Pre-Nursery. We promote books throughout all areas of the provision and have dedicated time each day for the sharing of stories.



As a school, we follow the systematic synthetic phonics programme of *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* and we are recognised as a Champion School. In Nursery, we follow the 'Foundations to Phonics' element of this programme. We provide a balance of child-led and adult-led experiences for all children that meet the curriculum expectations for 'Communication and Language' and 'Literacy'. These include:

- Sharing high-quality stories and poems
- Learning a range of rhymes through our dedicated Rhyme of the Week
- Activities that develop focused listening and attention - including oral blending
- Attention to high-quality language
- Opportunities to explore books within our school library and our local community library

We ensure that Nursery children are well prepared to begin learning grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) and blending in Reception.

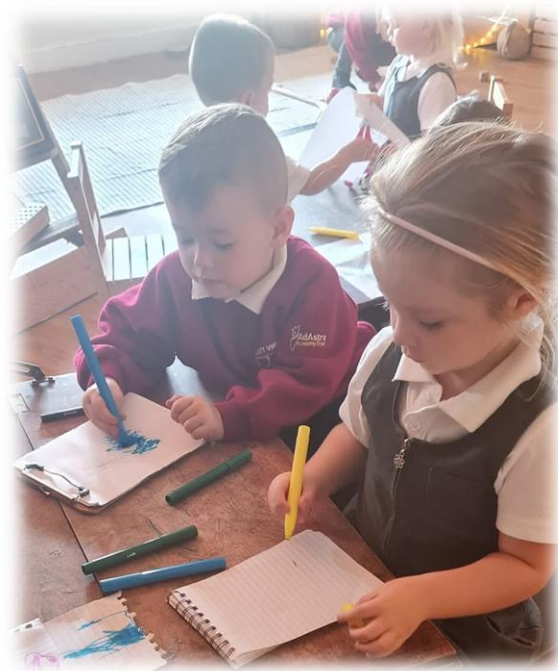
*Further information can be found in our Early Reading and Phonics Policy.*



## Early Writing

In our Early Years, children have a wealth of opportunities to express themselves through mark-making, using a variety of different tools. Invitations and provocations are thoughtfully put together in order to inspire children during their discovery time. Children in Pre-Nursery and Nursery also take part in Greg Bottrill's 'Story Dough' where they are invited to develop their rhyme and make believe, language, vocabulary and mark-making skills through the medium of story and playdough.

STORY DOUGH! - "CAN I GO AND PLAY NOW..?"



Once our youngest learners progress to Reception, they participate in Greg Bottrill's 'Drawing Club' which ignites their imagination and furthers their desire to write. Through the programme and the use of high-quality texts, children develop their fine motor skills, imagination and vocabulary. This is complimented by daily handwriting opportunities and phonics sessions.

Drawing Club - "CAN I GO AND PLAY NOW..?"

## Early Maths

*'Effective early mathematical learning combines deliberate teaching with opportunities for learning through play.'* [Best start in life part 3: the 4 specific areas of learning - GOV.UK](#)

In our Early Years provision, we foster children's natural curiosity by encouraging them to explore and engage in maths learning during play - we offer a math-rich provision, including access to mathematical picture books. As children enter Reception, we further enhance their maths knowledge through the Mastering Number programme and White Rose Maths lessons. These are mastery-based maths schemes of learning that provide activities and resources to help young children develop foundational maths skills.



## Structure and Organisation

Our Early Years setting is made up of a Pre-Nursery indoor space, Nursery indoor space and two classrooms with adjacent corridor space in Reception. We also have a large, shared outdoor area. Children in Pre-Nursery and Nursery are taught by key adults during learning time with the overall responsibility being with the Pre-Nursery Manager and Nursery teachers. Children in Reception are taught in a combination of whole class and small groupings with a teacher taking each class. Teaching Assistants may support the learning and take groups for extra activities and initiatives. Teaching and learning across the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) as a whole is overseen by our EYFS Lead, Mrs Evans.

## Inclusion

We value all of our children as individuals at West View Primary School, irrespective of their ability, background, culture, ethnicity, gender, home language or religion. We plan a curriculum that meets the needs of the individual child and we support them at their own pace so that our children achieve their full potential. We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so, we work closely with our families and any relevant outside agencies.

Transition - please refer to our Transition Policy for further information.

## The 2-Year-Old Progress Check - [Progress check at age 2 - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/progress-check-at-age-2)

Staff complete a progress check for each child within the first term in which they join our Pre-Nursery. Before the check is completed, we need to ensure that the child has had sufficient time to settle and to build up a relationship with key adults in the setting.

This progress check has three main purposes:

1. Partnership with parent
2. Action for every child
3. Early identification

The check will include a short, written summary of the child's development in the prime areas of learning: *Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Communication and Language and Physical Development.*

West View Primary School: 2-Year-Old Progress Check		
Child's Name:	DOB:	Start date in ZYO:
Personal, Social and Emotional	Learning & Development Summary Communication & Language	Physical Development
<b>Check Points</b>	<b>Check Points</b>	<b>Check Points</b>
Children start to see themselves as individuals. Do they decide what they want to wear, what they want to do?	Understand simple questions and instructions.	Can the child run well, kick a ball, jump with both feet off the ground at the same time.
Children begin to enjoy the company of other children and want to play with them?	Frequently ask questions about the things they observe around them.	Begin to climb more confidently, catch a large ball begin to pedal using a tricycle.
Begin to learn to use the toilet and begin to be independent in self-care skills.	Beginning to put two and three words together to communicate.	Use a range of resources to build and manipulate.
Feel strong enough to express a range of emotions.	Understand more words than they can say between 200-500 words.	Begin to use large and small motor skills to do things independently, for example putting on own coat, helping get dressed and undressed and using zips and buttons with support.
<b>Next Steps</b>	<b>Next Steps</b>	<b>Next steps</b>
<b>Support from other agencies</b>		
Key Worker:		Date:

Once complete, a copy of the check will be shared with parents/carers - this will be done through discussion and a paper copy will also be provided. School staff then upload a copy of the check onto CPOMS (our online system of each child's records).

### **Reception Baseline Assessment**

Within the first 6 weeks of starting Reception, we complete the [Reception baseline assessment](#) which we have a statutory duty to administer to all children. This is an age-appropriate assessment of early mathematics and literacy, communication and language. The purpose of this assessment is to create school-level progress measures for primary schools which will show the progress pupils in school make from Reception until the end of Year 6.

A child's progress is formally reviewed every term. Parents/carers are invited to attend parent consultations in the Autumn and Spring terms. A written end of year report is then provided towards the end of the Summer term. Parents/carers are always welcome to discuss their child's progress with their class teacher at any time throughout the year. In order to make accurate judgements of pupil progress we:

- Ensure that we have a deep and thorough knowledge of the child gained through observations of the children within the environment
- Create an environment which enables the children to become independent, curious learners
- Moderate our assessment judgements across the Early Years Foundation Stage and with staff from other schools - both within and outside of our Multi-Academy Trust

### **EYFS Profile**

In the final term of the Reception year (no later than 30th June), the EYFS profile is completed for each child. It is intended to provide a reliable, valid and accurate assessment of each child's development at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It is made up of an assessment of the child's outcomes in relation to the 17 Early Learning Goal (ELG) descriptors - further detail of which can be found within the [Early years foundation stage profile handbook](#)

It includes whether a child has reached a 'Good Level of Development' (GLD). Children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals (ELG) by the class teacher - who uses their knowledge and professional judgement of each child to make a 'best fit' judgement. The children are assessed as achieving a 1 or 2 against each area of the EYFS curriculum:

1 = Emerging ELG (not yet meeting the expected levels)

2 = Expected ELG (meeting the expected levels of development)

Year 1 teachers will have access to the EYFS Profile report for each child, enabling a dialogue between Reception and Year 1 which will assist in the planning of learning in the next academic year. This profile data is the statutory data that is sent to the Local Authority and used to help school benchmark and identify improvements.

### **Safeguarding in the Early Years**

Please read the school's *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy* for comprehensive information regarding the safeguarding and protection of all children in our care at West View Primary School.

Our effective safeguarding arrangements mean that we have:

- A whole-school approach to safeguarding and a safeguarding culture which is embedded in all that we do.

- Clear risk assessments written to protect children whilst still enabling them to take age-appropriate and reasonable risks as part of their growth and development. Risk assessments and procedures ensure that our physical environment is safe and secure and protects all children from harm or the risk of harm.
- Well-developed strategies in place to keep children safe and to support them to develop their own understanding of risks and in learning how to keep themselves and others safe.
- Safer recruitment practices in place to ensure that all staff and volunteers working with children are selected and vetted according to statutory requirements. *Please refer to the Safer Recruitment policy for further information.*
- Regular training for staff in order to ensure that they know and understand the indicators that may suggest a child is suffering or at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or harm. This includes the risk of abuse and neglect in the home, as well as risks outside the home such as sexual and/or criminal exploitation, radicalisation, bullying, sexual harassment or violence, and children going missing.
- Adults who understand the importance of challenging inappropriate and abusive behaviours between children - not allowing them to become normalised.
- Adults who understand the risks associated with using technology, including social media, bullying, grooming, exploiting, radicalising or abusing children. *Please refer to the Online Safety policy for further information.*
- Staff who oversee the safe use of technology when children are in their care. They take action immediately if they are concerned about bullying or children's well-being.
- Staff who recognise that children do not always speak out about abuse. They take steps to build trusting relationships with children. Staff are appropriately professionally curious and always speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy) when they have concerns. Adults take the appropriate and necessary action in accordance with local procedures and statutory guidance.
- Adults who understand that children's poor behaviour may be a sign that they are suffering harm or that they have suffered/are suffering abuse.
- Adults who are clear about procedures where they are concerned about the safety of a child. There is a named Designated Safeguarding Lead who is empowered to play an effective role in pursuing concerns and protecting children.
- A record of referrals is retained by the Designated Safeguarding Lead. There is evidence that any agreed action following a referral has been taken promptly to protect the child from further harm.
- A curriculum which teaches young children the language of feelings, helping them to appropriately develop their emotional literacy - in line with the *personal, social and emotional development* area of early learning. Where appropriate, bespoke support for individual children may be offered through ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support) or play therapy.
- Staff who respond with clear boundaries about what is safe and acceptable, and they seek to understand the triggers for children's behaviour.
- An online monitoring and recording system (CPOMS) which is used to ensure that written accounts are recorded in an appropriate and timely way. These records are shared appropriately with other agencies and professionals where this is necessary to safeguard

the child, while complying with data protection legislation.

- Written procedures for managing safeguarding allegations/concerns about members of staff and other adults working in the school. This is detailed in the following policies:
  - Allegations of Abuse Against Staff
  - Safeguarding and Child Protection
  - Whistleblowing



The poster features the school crest on the left and the AdAstra Academy Trust logo on the right. The title 'Our Safeguarding Team' is centered at the top in a large, elegant font. Below the title is a commitment statement: 'We are committed to the safeguarding and protection of our whole school community.' Four individual portraits are arranged in a row, each with a caption listing their name and roles. At the bottom, contact information for West View Primary School and Hartlepool Children's Hub (CHUB) is provided.

Miss L. Furness	Ms M. Clarke	Miss K. Tallford	Mrs N. Boagey
Headteacher	Inclusion Manager	Deputy Headteacher	Assistant Headteacher
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)
Young Carers Lead Prevent Lead	Senior Mental Health Lead		SENDCO

West View Primary School  
01429 267466  
Safeguarding@westview.adastraschools.org  
Hartlepool Children's Hub (CHUB) can be contacted directly on: 01429 284284

### Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the Early Years Foundation Stage Leader, Mrs Evans, in conjunction with the Early Years team and overseen by the Headteacher - Miss Furness. The next scheduled review date for this policy is October 2027.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.