

John Watson School

Early Year Foundation Stage Policy

Signed by *Lynn Wong*
Chair of Governors

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1. Introduction

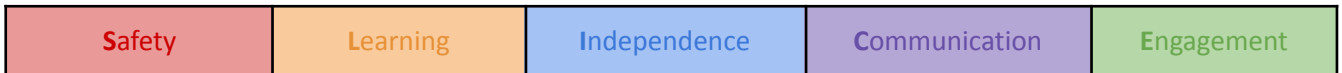
This policy is for staff, governors, parents and other professionals and sets out how John Watson School (JWS) delivers and monitors early years provision for our youngest pupils, those aged from 2 to the end of the school year following their 5th birthday.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is a government framework that all schools and settings, including special schools, must follow. It sets the standards that all early years providers, including JWS, must meet to ensure that our pupils learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe.

2. Aims of our early years provision

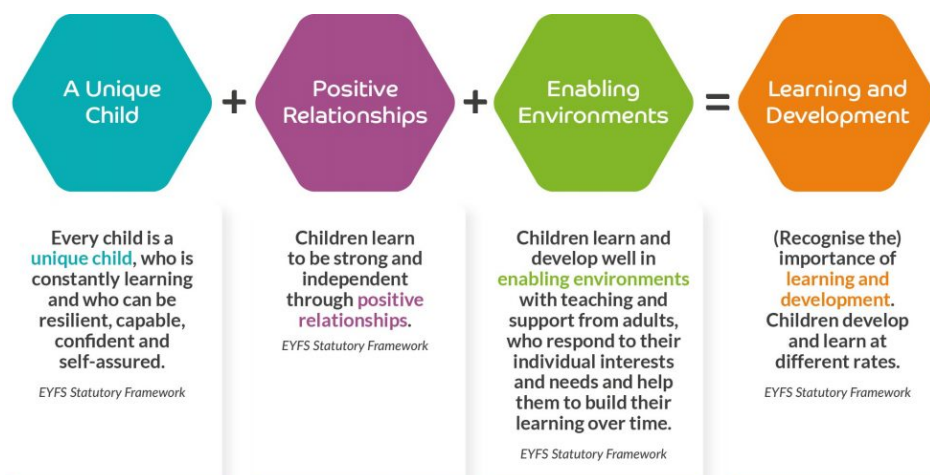
Our early years provision plays an important role in providing the right foundation for school life that helps our pupils make good progress through school and their future life, supporting them to reach their full potential. We follow our core values and the principles of the EYFS in our early years provision.

Our core values are:



These values (SLICE) underpin all teaching and learning at JWS and are closely aligned to the standards set out in the EYFS and its underpinning principles, placing the child at the heart of our practice. We offer an holistic curriculum, supporting pupils' cognitive, physical, social, emotional, spiritual, and moral development. Using SLICE to underpin our teaching and learning is fundamental to our commitment to developing pupils' abilities and ensuring they achieve their best.

We also draw upon the four overarching principles set out in the EYFS:
(Image taken from Birth to 5 Matters 2021)



3. Curriculum

Our planning and teaching in the early years reflects the different ways that pupils learn. Research shows that pupils in their early years mainly learn through engaging in stimulating and active play. However, at JWS we recognise that our pupils might learn in a different way, which we accommodate through a bespoke education using pupil Individual Learning Plans (ILPs). In particular, we have regard to the characteristics of effective

teaching and learning when planning for learning as shown in pupils' Individual Learning Plans and in our thematic planning.

The characteristics of effective learning include:

- Playing and exploring - pupils investigate and experience things and 'have a go'
- Participating in active learning - pupils concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- Creating and thinking critically – pupils have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

The early years curriculum covers seven key areas of learning divided into prime and specific areas. There is more information on the seven areas of learning in the EYFS and supporting documents (see links at end of document).

The Prime Areas:

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

The Specific Areas:

- Mathematics
- Literacy (Reading and Writing)
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Art and Design

Our curriculum is planned to give each child opportunities to learn and develop skills, attitudes, and understanding in seven key areas of learning, according to their individual starting points. All learning is differentiated and linked to pupils' Individual Learning Plan (EHCP outcome) targets. We have small classroom sizes with a high staff to pupil ratio that ensures that staff have a good understanding of each pupil's emotional, cognitive, social, communication and physical needs.

Learning through play is integral to how children learn best in their early years and we offer a broad play-based curriculum supplemented by regular adult modelling, peer to peer support and planned sessions to allow pupils to develop a greater understanding of the world around them and to use their developing skills in different contexts. For example, we offer a range of opportunities and experiences such as cooking that allow pupils to learn and achieve as well as develop an understanding of real-life skills. Central to our philosophy is for learning to be enjoyable, for children to thrive and develop the confidence and skills to take on responsibilities and maximise their independence. Pupils are empowered to "have a go" through adult modelling and following a structure with clear expectations.

Throughout the school, and particularly in early years, we provide multiple opportunities for acquiring and practising communication skills, which we see as key to teaching pupils' development. As a school, we offer a range of communication support. Staff use Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), Makaton signing, Social Communication Emotional Regulation and Transactional Support (SCERTS), Attention Autism (Gina Davies approach), sessions such as Bucket Time to support the teaching of attention, communication and social interaction skills. Other strategies used include singing, Choice Boards, Objects of Reference and Sensory Stories, to support the development of communication skills. The team of teachers and staff work closely with the Speech and Language Therapists to create a communication-rich environment, helping each pupil to find their voice.

Pupils are empowered to “have a go” through adult modelling and following a structure with clear expectations

4. Classroom organisation

The organisation of the classroom reflects the importance that is placed on pupil learning through play and first-hand experience, developing independence and having opportunities to initiate their own activities. Classrooms offer adjacent toilets to support independence and toilet training support.

We provide a low arousal environment, with a focus on natural resources and active learning. The classroom is calm and secure and provides a range of structured activities, including one-to-one, small group and child-led activities that challenge and extend pupils’ skills and support their needs.

We also deliver our curriculum through our outdoor environment. We offer a range of physical activities and play opportunities for pupils to climb, swing, explore our mud kitchen area, scoot around on a range of scooters/cars/buggy boards, mark make or engage with pretend play.

5. Planning

- Each pupil starting at JWS has an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP).
- The EHCP outcomes inform each pupil’s Individual Learning Plan (ILP) targets, which break the outcomes into 3 achievable targets.
- ILP targets are set during the pupil’s induction and assessment, usually in the first 6 weeks of school, and then reviewed regularly to ensure targets are set at the right level of challenge.
- The ILP assessment points are as follows:

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
June - October	November - February	March - May
<i>Annual Reviews are held 2x a year around May and November</i>		
Data collection for Phase 1:	Data collection for Phase 2:	Data collection for Phase 3:
Two weeks after October half term	Two weeks after February half term	Two weeks after May half term

- **When entering the classes, you should see the following in place:**
 - 2-year rolling long term plan [Suggested KS Long Term Plan](#)
 - Thematic Medium-term plan [Suggested Reception Spring 1 MTP Thematic Plan](#)
 - Home learning -sent out at the beginning of terms
 - [Class Documents Template for teachers.](#)

6. Assessment and reporting

JWS have continued contact with parents to ensure that we best support the pupil and learn from the parents on how to best meet their needs.

EYFS Learning intentions overview: this document summarises the **Characteristics of Effective Learning for pupils in the EYFS**. The Characteristics of Effective Learning is shared with parents during the 6-monthly Annual Review and teacher report. This is linked to the pupil's ILP targets. [Blank New EYFS Learning intentions overview](#).

We assess the **EYFS Learning intentions overview with the Characteristics of Effective Learning 3x a year in:**
Green- Jan 22 **Orange-March 22** **Pink- July 22**

Assessment for the Characteristics of Effective Learning is based on:

<i>I am an explorer</i>	<i>I will have a go</i>	<i>I keep trying</i>	<i>I have my own ideas</i>
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Alongside the EYFS Learning Intention overview we are also using the following systems to support us with formative and summative assessment:

- 1x Eng RTR per child per week, kept in individual Green English book [JWS Current Responsive Teacher Record \(RTR\)](#)
- 1x Maths RTR per child per week kept in individual Blue Maths book
- General Observation sheets - [Template](#) - Kept in individual pupil folder
- Reading records - [Template](#) - kept in individual pupil folder
- Phase Running Records (PRRs) [Blank Proforma](#)
- Class Observation Record - [Blank Proforma](#)
- Whole school approach for Intensive Interaction session observations, - [JWS Intensive Interaction Observation sheet template](#)

The EYFS teaching team ensure that assessments from all the above sources are gathered and linked to the pupils' ILP targets, and evidence achievements across the 7 areas of learning (see point 3 above), and the JWS curriculum - Fundamental Pathway. All information is shared with parents and data analysis is shared with stakeholders. *(Please see the Assessment Policy).*

Individual learning plans include the following strands:

Communication and Interaction	Cognition and Learning	Social-Emotional Mental Health and Independence	Physical and Sensory	Health
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Our assessment procedures, and the data gathered, enables us to spot trends and track pupils' progress to see where pupils are making progress and this informs future planning.

Nationally Standardised Summative Assessments:

JWS complies with all national standardised assessments. Given the nature of pupils' starting points, these assessments does not give leaders a clear and accurate picture as the **In-School Summative Assessments**. JWS reports and respond to national deadlines for assessments such as the Reception baseline assessment and reporting arrangements.

Nationally Standardised Summative Assessments includes:

- [Reception baseline assessment and reporting arrangements](#) (May 2021)
- EYFS profile at the end of reception

Early Learning Goals

John Watson School comply with the statutory requirements to assess pupils at the end of the EYFS against the 17 key areas called the Early Learning Goals (ELG). Leaders ensure that documentation is filled in and sent off to the Local Authority, however, given the pupils' starting points, their achievements score low on this assessment tool. Leaders can showcase a range of individual pupil achievements as explained in point 6 **Assessment and reporting**.

7. Transitions

Before starting at JWS:

- JWS staff recognise that it is sometimes difficult for parents when their child first start in a school setting. As such, we skillfully support each individual pupil and their family, through clear communication and bespoke interventions to ensure the transition into our EYFS goes smoothly.
- The Key Stage Lead/member of SLT get in contact with the family and have an initial conversation about the child and their family. In some cases, a home visit will be offered. This gives the school the opportunity to learn about the parent's experiences and cultures and gain an insight into their child as the parents are the first educators.
- Parents and their child are invited to visit the school and meet with the headteacher or Key Stage Lead.
- Once a place is confirmed the school office will be sent further information on the school day, uniform, lunches etc.
- We then arrange a bespoke transition package for the pupil, along with a transition booklet, visits and a phased induction if needed.
- The teacher and Key Stage Lead, use the pupils' EHCP outcomes and subdivide it into 3 achievable targets with suggested learning activities on an Individual Learning Plan (ILP).
- *See here for further information shared with parents/carers before the pupils start at JWS; personal visit (either to their current educational setting or home) [info](#); [home info](#); [welcome info](#)*

September (Starting school):

- The teacher will have daily communication with the parents via Google Classroom.
- The teacher will send photos or videos through Google Classrooms.
- The school offer and support any Early Help Assessments if needed.
- Therapists/nursing team will be in contact with the family if there is a need or as per the pupil's EHCPs.
- The teacher with support from the Key Stage Lead or Senior Leaders will ensure a thorough baseline assessment of the pupil, as well as review their EHCP outcomes.
- Please see **Working with parents and carers** for more information on parental engagement.

Transition into Year 1:

- Pupils moving into KS1 will have a bespoke transition in the summer term.
- The Teacher and Key Stage Lead will ensure opportunities for parents to meet the new teams and explore their new classroom whilst being supported by familiar adults.

8. Working with parents and carers

Parents/carers are the child's first and most enduring educators. When parents/carers and practitioners work together in early years settings, the results have a positive impact on the child's development. A successful partnership needs to be a two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise. We develop a partnership by using daily classroom logs, termly phone calls and the use of home learning documentation in line with planning in the school term.

We offer a range of:

- Informal meetings initiated by the teacher/school or the parent/carer to discuss issues arising, progress or interventions to support learning, development and behaviour
- EYFS Annual Review x2 a year
- Teacher's Annual Review report x2 a year
- Parents' Evening to discuss progress and support
- Daily communication with parents/carers through Google Classroom
- End of term phone calls home to discuss progress/issues/offer of support

9. Monitoring and review

Senior leaders monitor and review the EYFS curriculum offer. This is done through

- learning walks
- book looks
- moderation meetings
- pupil progress meetings
- professional development meetings with the teacher / key stage lead

This policy is updated/reviewed every two years and is shared with governors.

Links to relevant documents/policies:

- [JWS Teaching and Learning policy](#)
- [Our Curriculum, Planning & Assessment Framework](#)
- [Equality Scheme](#)
- [DfE: Early years foundation stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework](#)
- [Reception baseline assessment framework](#)
- [Assessment Recording and Reporting Policy JWS January 2022](#)
- [Reception baseline assessment and reporting arrangements May 2021](#)