

Warden House Primary School



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Date Prepared:	January 2026
Author:	Marina Camilleri-Gorman EYFS Leader
Checked by (Governor)	James Walker
Date ratified:	March 9 th 2026
Review date	March 2027
Date Published on School Website: March 2026	

Introduction

At Warden House Primary School, we recognise that early childhood forms the foundation upon which children build the rest of their lives. Our aim is to create a safe, nurturing, and stimulating environment where every child feels empowered to grow and develop as an independent learner. This period is critical for laying the groundwork for a child's future learning, well-being, and overall development.

The Early Years team is committed to upholding the school's core purpose

"Making learning irresistible by teaching amazing lessons that empower the children to make stunning progress."

In keeping with this, we offer a broad range of experiences and opportunities, both inside and outside the classroom, designed to support every child's intellectual, emotional, and physical development. These opportunities help ensure that each child can reach their full potential in all aspects of their growth.

Transition and Induction

We recognise that starting school is a significant milestone for both children and their families. To support a positive and confident start, we provide a structured transition and induction programme designed to help children settle smoothly into school life, build familiarity with the environment, and feel emotionally secure.

Our induction programme includes a parent information meeting prior to the start of term, providing an opportunity for parents and carers to meet the Early Years team, learn about Reception routines, and discuss any individual needs or concerns. Opportunities for children to attend Stay and Play sessions with their parents or carers are also offered, allowing children to become familiar with the classroom, staff, and resources in a relaxed and supportive setting. Children are additionally invited to attend a Transition Morning, where they visit the classroom independently, helping them experience school routines, meet staff and peers, and begin to form early relationships ahead of September.

At the start of the academic year, Reception children follow a phased start to the school day, enabling them to gradually adjust to full-time attendance. This approach supports emotional well-being, confidence-building, and successful integration into school life.

We place strong importance on working in partnership with parents and carers throughout the transition process. Open communication and collaboration ensure that each child's individual needs are understood, and every child is given the best possible start to their school journey.

Compliance with EYFS Framework

At Warden House Primary School, we closely adhere to the [Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) 2021 Framework](#). This statutory document sets the standards for learning, development, and care for children aged from birth to five. It covers essential aspects of child development, including the safeguarding and welfare requirements, ensuring that all children are provided with the best possible start in life.

The EYFS Framework defines the expectations for children's learning and development through a set of early learning goals that children are expected to achieve by the end of the Foundation Stage. These goals cover seven areas of learning (outlined below) and are carefully designed to ensure that children are ready for the next stage of their education, which in most cases is Key Stage 1.

Additionally, we draw upon the [Development Matters](#) guidance, which offers further support to practitioners in delivering the EYFS curriculum. This non-statutory document provides principles and insights for professionals working with young children and plays an important role in shaping our curriculum and teaching approach.

At the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, children's achievements are recorded through the completion of the EYFS Profile, which provides a comprehensive assessment of each child's progress against the Early Learning Goals (ELGs).

What Makes EYFS at Warden House Special

At Warden House, we believe that every child is unique, and we strive to provide an environment where children feel valued and empowered to grow as independent learners. Our EYFS provision is characterised by:

- **A Commitment to Outdoor Play and Learning:** Play is central to everything we do. Children engage in hands-on exploration through resources like mud kitchens, garden, sandpit, water, construction play zones, and creative outdoor areas designed to stimulate curiosity and critical thinking.
- **A Balanced Approach to Learning:** We seamlessly integrate structured teaching with child-initiated exploration, ensuring children build foundational skills while also enjoying the freedom to imagine, create, and discover.
- **A Rich Environment:** Our classrooms and outdoor spaces are thoughtfully designed to inspire learning, incorporating opportunities for physical activity, sensory exploration, and collaboration.

We actively celebrate children's individuality, providing a curriculum tailored to their developmental needs, interests, and abilities.

A Unique Child

At Warden House, we place high importance on ensuring that every child is recognised as a unique individual. We know that children arrive at school with varying levels of knowledge, abilities, and interests. By placing a strong emphasis on early observation, our skilled staff ensure that each child's needs are met through personalised learning experiences that intrigue, challenge, and extend their learning.

We strive to create a learning environment where all children can thrive emotionally and physically, recognising the importance of well-being in a child's ability to learn. Our early assessments allow us to tailor activities to individual children's abilities, interests, and developmental stages.

Supporting Special Educational Needs (SEN)

We are committed to inclusivity, and our [Special Educational Needs Coordinator \(SENCO\)](#) works closely with the Foundation Stage staff and families to ensure that all children, including those

with additional needs, receive the support they require. We celebrate diversity and individuality by ensuring that children of all abilities and backgrounds are given the opportunities they need to succeed. Please refer to Warden House [Special Educational Needs & Disability Policy/Report](#).

Safety and Independence

Ensuring that children understand safety is a key focus during the early days of school. Class teachers introduce children to important school safety procedures, such as fire drills and first aid. We also work to promote independence, helping children learn how to navigate school life confidently while still adhering to safety rules.

Positive Relationships

We believe that strong, positive relationships form the foundation for a happy and successful learning environment. At Warden House, we model respectful, empathetic, and caring relationships in every aspect of school life. Children are encouraged to develop positive relationships with their peers and adults, fostering a sense of responsibility towards themselves and others.

To support safe and respectful interactions, we promote the following school rules:

- Be kind
- Be safe
- Be your best

In addition to these school rules, we work with children to uphold our core school values:

- Being positive
- Developing independence
- Being determined to succeed
- Being responsible when making decisions
- Being a good partner to peers and others
- Striving for success and celebrating the success of others

Parent Expectations and Partnership

Our partnership with parents is crucial to fostering a love of learning and ensuring children's success. Below are some specific details to help parents understand what to expect in the EYFS at Warden House:

1. Reading Books at Home

- a. **Phonics Practice Book:** These are sent home on Wednesdays and returned on Mondays. These books are carefully matched to your child's reading level, encouraging fluency and confidence. Children will have read this book three times at school before bringing it home. We ask that parents and carers read this book with their child at least three times, following the guidance provided in their reading record.
- b. **Sharing Book:** This book is for enjoyment and shared reading. Children can choose this book, and it can be changed daily or as frequently as they wish.

Re-reading phonics books builds fluency, and sharing books promotes a love of reading and language development.

2. Uniform in EYFS

The EYFS uniform is designed for comfort and practicality, allowing children to explore freely, especially during outdoor play. We embrace messy play as an essential part of learning, so children may come home with signs of active engagement, such as muddy clothes or shoes. This is a positive indicator of their exploration and learning journey.

3. Communication

We maintain an open-door policy and encourage regular communication through Class Dojo, reading records, and consultations.

Enabling Environments

At Warden House, we believe that a rich and stimulating learning environment is essential for children's development. Our learning environment includes both indoor and outdoor spaces, and we ensure that children have the freedom to move between the two during Child-Initiated sessions (COOL Time – Choose Our Own Learning). These learning activities are carefully designed by adults to link to our Early Learning Goals.

The learning environment is regularly updated and adapted to meet the children's changing needs and interests. Resources are carefully selected to provide children with opportunities for exploration, investigation, and imaginative play, which are crucial for fostering curiosity and creativity.

We use information from parents and pre-school settings, along with our own observations of children in school, to inform our understanding of each child's developmental stage. Observations are regularly recorded, analysed, and used to plan next steps in learning. This continuous cycle of observation, assessment, and planning allows us to ensure that each child's needs are being met.

Learning and Development

We believe that children learn best through real, hands-on experiences and active learning. At Warden House, we do not differentiate between play and learning, as we recognise that children

learn at their highest level when they are engaged in play. Our daily routine includes a balanced mix of Teacher-Directed, Teacher-Initiated, and Child-Initiated activities, providing children with structured opportunities to explore and learn through play.

The EYFS identifies seven areas of learning, divided into three **Prime Areas** and four **Specific Areas**:

- **Prime Areas:**
 1. Communication and Language
 2. Personal, Social and Emotional Development
 3. Physical Development
- **Specific Areas:**
 1. Literacy
 2. Mathematics
 3. Understanding the World
 4. Expressive Arts and Design

These areas of learning are interconnected, with the Prime Areas providing a foundation for children's capacity to learn and the Specific Areas building on this knowledge. We use these areas to guide our planning and ensure children engage with a broad and balanced curriculum.

How We Teach Reading and Phonics

We use the [Little Wandle Phonics Scheme](#) to support early reading development. Phonics teaching begins in Reception, where children learn to recognise sounds (phonemes) and the letters (graphemes) that represent them. Children are taught to orally blend sounds and begin to read and spell simple words.

Here is how it works:

- **Daily Phonics Lessons:** Children learn to recognize sounds (phonemes) and letters (graphemes), blending them to read words.
- **Guided Reading Sessions:** Focused on decoding, fluency, prosody, and comprehension.
- **Parental Resources:** Little Wandle provides videos and guidance for parents, which can be accessed [here](#).

For more details about how to support a child's reading journey, please refer to our guidance provided in the Reading Letter (*see Appendix*).

Assessment

We carry out a [Reception Baseline Assessment \(RBA\)](#) in September to assess each child's starting point. This provides essential information for planning and ensures that children's progress can be tracked throughout the year.

Ongoing assessments are made through observations, which are documented in the children's Learning Journey portfolios. These portfolios provide an insightful record of each child's progress, capturing the milestones they achieve during their time in Reception. Additionally, we share children's experiences and class activities with parents through our Class Dojo Class Page, encouraging ongoing communication and engagement between school and home.

Children's progress is reviewed during Pupil Progress Meetings held three times a year, and judgements are moderated internally. At the end of the Reception year, teachers complete the [statutory EYFS Profile](#), sharing this information with parents and the DfE.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

In planning children's activities, we recognise the [Characteristics of Effective Learning](#) as outlined in the EYFS Framework. These characteristics—**Playing and Exploring**, **Active Learning**, and **Creating and Thinking Critically**—are key to fostering a lifelong love of learning.

At the end of the year, we reflect on each child's skills and abilities in relation to these characteristics and share this information with both parents and the child's next teacher to ensure that their learning journey continues seamlessly.

Policy Review Date:

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its ongoing relevance and effectiveness.

