



EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

WELCOME PACK

NURSERY





Welcome to the Early Years Foundation Stage at Wessex Gardens Primary School!

The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum is followed in our Nursery and two Reception classes. We hope that this booklet will serve as a guide and will help make your child's transition to school a smooth one.

The Importance of Play

“One of the greatest advances this century is the recognition of the importance of play for children. Through play, children learn about themselves and the world. They experiment with different roles and explore the world around them.

The best kind of play is where the child chooses the materials and what to do with them (child initiated play). Much of the best play is where the child appears to the observer to be doing nothing much at all. The action of the play is in the child's internal world”

Dorothy Rowe (Child Psychologist “Time on Our Side”)

The children will experience a mixture of adult led lessons and focus activities, as well as opportunities for self-initiated play.

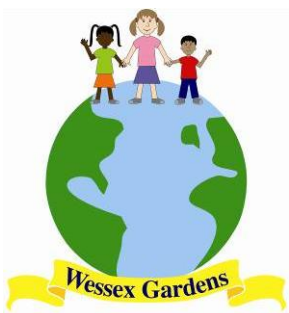
The play based curriculum within the Early Years Foundation Stage is concerned with the development of the whole child. Within your child's Nursery year we are laying the foundations for their future, educational lives.



Teaching and Learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage

At Wessex Gardens we follow the statutory Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. This is divided into seven areas of learning and development:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World, and



- Expressive Arts and Design

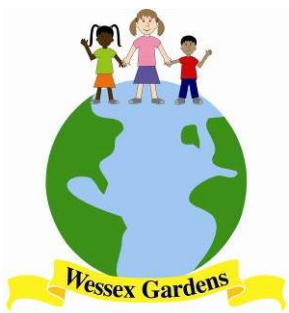
Each of these areas of learning and development are important and interrelated. The Early Years Foundation Stage is not about teaching isolated topics generated by teachers. It is about observing and reflecting on the children's spontaneous play and using these observations and assessments in order to plan challenging activities that build on, and extend children's learning.



Structure & organisation of the day

It is important to remember that children learn more rapidly before they reach the age of five than at any other time in their lives. Both the Nursery and Reception class routines, and the learning environment, are organised to support the way in which young children learn.

When the children arrive at Nursery, they self-register (stick or hang up their names independently). They then have time to say goodbye to parents and carers and settle at an activity of their choice. Once the



children have all settled, free flow activities begin and the children can choose to play inside or outside.

There are a wide range of carefully planned activities on offer each day, both inside and outside. The children are free to choose as we know that children learn best when engaged in activities that interest and excite them.

The Early Years staff plan the activities from their observations of the children, ensuring that the activities are relevant to the children's interests and needs.



Outdoor Classroom

The outdoor classroom is just as important as the inside classroom. We shall be using this outside classroom in all weathers so please supply your child with a waterproof jacket (with a hood) and a pair of wellington boots. Please make sure your child's name is clearly marked on each item.



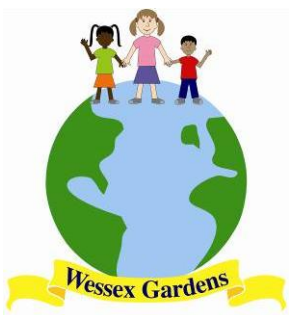
Staff plan for learning in the outdoor classroom in the same way that they do for the indoor classroom. The outdoors offers our children opportunities such as drawing, writing, creative and imaginative play, speaking and listening, problem solving, scientific enquiry and physical activities. In fact, some things are best learnt outdoors! This includes experiencing the weather and changing seasons, growing and life cycles and physical skills (including climbing and balancing skills that are vital for developing children's ability to hold a pencil to write).

The U.K. government has now published Physical Activity guidelines for Early Years, stating:

“Children of pre-school age who are capable of walking unaided should be physically active daily for at least 180 minutes (3 hours), spread throughout the day.”

Physical activity is vital to your child's optimal growth and development!





Some activities in the inside and outside classrooms are always available, as they support children's learning in each of the seven areas of development. For example, each day we will offer:

- ✚ Sand and water play
- ✚ Block play
- ✚ Painting & drawing
- ✚ Modelling (using recycled materials)
- ✚ Music making

When the children first start in Nursery they often move quickly between activities as they explore new environment. However, as they mature, their use of the provision changes and they begin to plan and undertake more complex creations or scenarios. This will often involve other children and materials from several areas of the learning environment.





Important Notes

Clothing: Please make sure that your child is in appropriate clothes for Nursery. They will be moving around and getting messy so please do not send them in their best outfits. Please make sure that coats, hats, gloves and shoes are clearly labelled as these are the items that the children will be taking on and off regularly. It is very difficult to find a child's lost coat when there is no name in it! Please also keep a bag with spare labelled clothes on your child's peg in case they need to get changed.

Arrangements for dropping off/collecting:

Morning session: 8:30am – 11:30am

Afternoon session: 12:30pm - 3.30pm

Children are expected to attend Nursery EVERY DAY and to arrive ON TIME. Similarly, it is very important that your child is collected on time each day. Arriving late and not being collected promptly can cause your child great stress.

If someone else will be collecting your child please inform a member of staff, or phone the school office. If staff have not been told another adult will be collecting your child then they will not allow them to take them. If for any reason your child is not able to come to Nursery please telephone the school to let us know.

Communication: Please feel free to let us know about any daily issues when you drop off/collect your child, i.e. if they haven't had much sleep, or are feeling a bit sensitive that day. If you need to speak to a member of the Nursery team for any other reason, please make an appointment, as the beginning and end of the day is often very busy. We are happy to discuss any issues or concerns that you may have and will be better able to do so when time has been set aside for this.

Birthdays: We are a healthy eating school and a **NUT FREE** zone. If it is your child's birthday please feel free to share individual boxes of raisins.



Due to allergies, food intolerances and special diets we will **NOT** be able to give out ANY OTHER birthday treats (including party bags!).

Parent meetings: In order for us to plan effectively for the children's learning, we observe their play & use this information to inform our planning. We observe set focus children throughout the week and post the observations on Tapestry for parents to see. Once all the children have settled into Nursery we will invite parents/carers to a meeting to discuss their children's progress, development and next steps.

Book Bags: Blue Wessex Gardens book bags can be purchased from the school office. Your child needs to bring these every **THURSDAY** in order to borrow a book from the class library.

WE ARE AWARE THAT THE WAY IN WHICH THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE OPERATES MAY BE VERY DIFFERENT FROM MANY PARENTS' RECOLLECTIONS OF THEIR OWN SCHOOL DAYS AND HOPE THAT WE HAVE ANSWERED SOME OF YOUR QUESTIONS.

IF YOU HAVE FURTHER QUESTIONS ABOUT WHY WE WORK WITH YOUR CHILD IN THE WAY THAT WE DO, PLEASE ASK STAFF FOR FURTHER CLARIFICATION.

Settling – In policy

The initial settling in of your child to Nursery will be a gradual process. It is our aim to make this a safe and secure transition through close communication between parents/carers and the Early Years staff. From experience, we know that a new setting and new adults often take time to get used to and therefore, we feel that it is helpful to stagger their entry into Nursery.

Day 1- Stay for 1 hour in the Nursery (with parent/carer close by)

Days 2 & 3 - Stay for part of session without parent/carer

Day 4 - Stay for whole session (with parent/carer on call if needed)



Please remember that this is only a guide for settling your child into Nursery. The actual settling in process will be based on your child's individual needs. It is important that you are aware that children can be very tired when they start Nursery as they are coming to terms with meeting new children, new adults and exploring new surroundings. By working in close partnership with parents/carers we hope to enable your child to settle happily into Wessex Gardens Nursery.

WAYS TO HELP YOUR CHILD AT HOME

- 🌸 Read and share stories as part of your daily routine. The whole experience of sharing and enjoying books is vital to developing a love of literature. Discussing the story, looking at the pictures and predicting the ending are vital skills that children need before they are able to read.
- 🌸 Visit the local library on a regular basis. Libraries are a useful resource for developing your child's interest in books and reading.
- 🌸 Point out and discuss signs and labels at home and in the environment, this is especially powerful when looking at numbers (buses, prices etc.) and key words (mum, dad).
- 🌸 Sing and say rhymes with your child, for example:

Incey, wincey spider

Twinkle, twinkle little star
- 🌸 Play sound games with you child, i.e. what noise does the horse make? How does our fridge/microwave sound? Or go on a listening walk around the garden/park – what can you hear?
- 🌸 Talk to your child about their interests and how they feel about starting Nursery, what they enjoy doing etc.



- Encourage and support your child in dressing and undressing independently. Being able to put on and take off their coat without support is an important skill.

Nursery Staff

Nursery Teacher:



Ela Wojciak

Nursery Nurse:



Stephanie Johnson



Cover Teacher:



Maiko Takemoto

Cover Teacher:



Rebecca Gray



What to put inside the PE. Bag with your child's name on it: