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**EARLY YEARS’ POLICY**

**October 2020**

Date for Review: September 2021

**James Montgomery Academy Trust**

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

*‘Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age 5 have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. (The EYFS Statutory Framework early adopter version 2020).*

***At Wath Victoria we have chosen to be an early adopter of the reformed EYFS Statutory Framework version 2020 which will be statutory for all providers in September 2021.***

At Wath Victoria we aim to provide:

* ***quality and consistency*** across all early years, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
* ***a secure foundation*** through planning for the learning and development of each individual child, and assessing and reviewing what they have learned regularly.
* ***partnership working*** between practitioners and with parents and/or carers.
* ***equality of opportunity*** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Wath Victoria, children join our provision from the age of 2 up to the beginning of the school year in which they are five.

**The Early Years Foundation Team**

**Sunbeams (day nursery) –** Children can access the Sunbeams provision from the ages of 2 -4.Children can access morning or afternoon sessions

**Foundation stage 1 (Nursery)** The Children can start in Foundation 1 in the September of the school year in which they are 4. They can access daily morning or afternoon sessions. We also provide provision for children to access the government funded 30 hours free childcare.

**Foundation stage 2 (Reception)** The Children start full time school in Foundation 2 in the September of the school year in which they are five.

**Learning and Development**

At Wath Victoria Primary School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are interconnected. The children have time and freedom to become deeply involved in the activities and lead their learning based on their interests and love for learning. At Wath Victoria, we place a strong emphasis on the importance and value of daily outdoor experiences for children’s learning and development.

**Overarching Principles**

**Four guiding principles shape our practice in early years. These are:**

* every child is a **unique child,** who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
* children learn to be strong 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.
* importance of **learning and development** as children develop and learn at different rates.

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**The aspects of Learning and Development**

The Early Years Foundation Stage is made up of seven areas of learning and development, 3 prime areas and 4 specific areas. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

Three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children’s curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving.

These are the **Prime Areas**:

* Communication & Language
* Physical Development
* Personal, Social and Emotional Development

The 3 prime areas are strengthened and applied through **4 Specific Areas.**

**These Specific Areas** are**:**

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the World

Expressive Arts and Design

At the end of the reception (F2) year, children will be assessed against 17 Early Learning Goals (ELGs).

**The 17 Early Learning Goals (ELGs) are**:

**Communication and Language**

Listening, Attention and Understanding ELG

Speaking ELG

**Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

Self-Regulation ELG

Managing Self ELG

Building Relationships ELG

**Physical Development**

Gross Motor Skills ELG

Fine Motor Skills ELG

**Literacy**

Comprehension ELG

Word Reading ELG

Writing ELG

**Mathematics**

Number ELG

Numerical Patterns ELG

**Understanding the World**

Past and Present ELG

People, Culture and Communities ELG

The Natural World ELG

**Expressive Arts and Design**

Creating with Materials ELG

Being Imaginative and Expressive ELG

Throughout the EYFS we plan activities to give children learning experiences and opportunities to work towards the Early Learning Goals and prepare them for the National Curriculum. Teaching and learning will take place within the classroom and outside areas which are accessible from all our EYFS learning environments at all times throughout the day. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities.

Staff will discuss each child’s progress and achievement within these areas on a regular basis with parents/ carers. Each child’s developmental profile is available for parents/ carers to look at and parental contributions are welcomed as part of a child’s whole assessment.

**Characteristics of Effective Learning**

We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

**Playing and exploring**:

* Finding out and exploring
* Using what they know in their play
* Being willing to have a go

**Active learning:**

* Being involved and concentrating
* Keeping on trying
* Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

**Creating and thinking critically**:

* Having their own ideas
* Using what they already know to learn new things
* Choosing ways to do things and finding new ways

**Active learning through play**

At Wath Victoria Primary School we provide both structured and unstructured play-based learning opportunities inside and outside. These activities are designed to engage children in practical, first-hand experiences which will support children to discover, explore, investigate, develop their personal interests and areas of curiosity, and help to make sense of the world around them as they begin to understand specific concepts. Play-based learning opportunities are also set up to provide children with opportunities to apply newly acquired knowledge, demonstrating their skills and level of understanding. Playing with their peers is important for children’s development. We talk to them about how we get better at things through effort and practise and that we can all learn when things go wrong.

In a secure environment with effective adult support, children will be able to:

• explore, develop and represent learning experiences that help them make sense

of the world.

• practise and build up concepts, ideas and skills.

• learn how to control impulses and understand the need for rules.

• be alone, be alongside others or co-operate as they talk to rehearse their feelings

• take risks and make mistakes.

• think creatively and imaginatively.

• communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

• express fears to relieve anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Adults in the setting will support play by:

• planning and resourcing a stimulating environment.

• supporting children’s learning through planned play.

• extending and supporting children’s spontaneous play.

• extending and developing children’s language and communication in their play.

• listening to all forms of children’s communication and their ideas and taking these

into account when developing play and planning.

• narrating children’s play.

• asking questions about children’s play.

**Key Person**

Each child will be allocated a key person before they begin in Foundation. Children need familiar and trusting relationships in order for them to develop emotional well-being. If a child displays an attachment to a particular practitioner we will try to accommodate the child’s needs wherever possible.

The key person will:

* build relationships with the child and family.
* help the child become familiar with routines and the new surroundings.
* act as a point of contact for parents.
* help to meet the individual needs of the child.
* respond sensitively to the child’s feelings, ideas and behaviour.
* reassure and enable the child to access all areas of provision.
* be responsible for planning to meet the individual needs and interests of the child.
* contribute to the observing and assessing of their key children in order to plan appropriate experiences/ activities for the children.

Parents are introduced to their child’s key person and will meet them on pre-visits and once the child starts in Foundation. They will be available on a day to day basis to discuss their children’s needs and achievements. Current COVID restrictions require parents to communicate via telephone or Dojo, or outside at the beginning or end of the day.

**Safeguarding & Welfare**

‘Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.’ *(The EYFS Statutory Framework early adopter version 2020).*

At Wath Victoria we understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements as stated in the *“The EYFS Statutory Framework early adopter version 2020.”*

* To provide a setting that is welcoming, safe and stimulating where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence.
* Promote good health.
* Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children’s stage of development and individual needs.
* To ensure that all adults who look after the children, or who have unsupervised access to them, are suitable to do so.
* Ensure that the setting, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for the purpose it was intended for.
* Maintain records, policies and procedures required for the safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

It is important to us that all children in the school are ‘safe’. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. We encourage children to take risks and highlight the importance of keeping themselves safe by teaching them how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. Refer to our detailed safeguarding policy for further information.

**Intimate Care**

Intimate care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. However; depending on a child’s age and stage of development, they may need some support, for example dressing, wiping their bottom after using the toilet and changing underwear following an accident. We actively encourage parents to start helping their children become independent with these tasks as soon as they start in our Foundation 1 setting. Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff and parents work in partnership to give the right support to an individual child. More information can be found in our intimate care policy.

**Transition**

Wath Victoria provides full-time Early Years education for children in the Reception Year. This is for children who enter school from September of the academic year in which they will turn five years old. Before they start in the setting, all children are welcomed into our Foundation 2 class for transition days during the Summer term. The purpose of this initial visit is for the children to meet their new practitioners and start to become familiar with their new school environment.

In the Summer term, parents are invited to an induction meeting to receive information regarding the induction process, to meet the practitioners and to learn a bit more about Foundation 2. There is time during the meeting for an informal chat and parents’ questions. School information packs are also distributed to parents at this meeting.

Children moving from F1 to F2 and from F2 to Y1 have a planned transition programme. Identified children will have enhanced transition to meet individual needs.

Throughout the year, parents are invited to workshops and parent events to provide up to date information regarding what we are currently learning in class, especially with phonics, so that parents become confident with being able to support their child’s learning at home.

COVID restrictions currently make the above more difficult, however the school will endeavour to ensure that families have appropriate opportunities for transition and for parental involvement across the school year.