



## Teaching, Learning and Assessment in the Early Years

| POLICY FOR          | Teaching, Learning and Assessment in the Early Years |
|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| PERSON RESPONSIBLE  | HTLA Primary                                         |
| REVIEW DATE         | June 2025                                            |
| REVIEWED BY         | TLA team and Head of FS                              |
| APPROVED DATE       | June 2025                                            |
| APPROVED BY         | ELT                                                  |
| DATE OF NEXT REVIEW | June 2026                                            |
| RELATED POLICIES    | TWS Teaching, Learning policy, TWS Assessment policy |



Executive Principal / CEO .....

## 1. Rationale

This policy has been prepared in accordance with the statutory framework for the early years foundation stage (EYFS, effective from 1 September 2021).

‘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 five 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.’ Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, Department for Education, 31 March 2021

## 2. Aims:

- The main aim for all children in the Early Years at TWS, is to provide every child with a broad and balanced curriculum for lifelong learning and for their growth and development, to motivate children to become independent learners through enquiry, exploration and hands on experiences.
- Apart from providing a free flow curriculum for holistic learning and development, we also incorporate children’s interests in relevant activities that ensure a secure grounding in the core skills necessary for their next stage of education and develop the whole child.
- In the Early Years, the school uses the 4 guiding principles from the EYFS Framework where every child is **unique** who learns through **positive relationships**. Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates in an **enabling environment**.

## 3. Learning and Development in the Early Years

The school follows the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum (EYFS) for students in the age group - 3 to 5 years old. The curriculum is divided into 7 areas of learning. These are the

### ➤ Three prime areas

- Communication and Language (Speaking, listening, and understanding)
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development (Building relationships, managing self and self - regulation)
- Physical Development (Gross motor skills, fine motor skills.)

### ➤ Four specific areas of learning

- Literacy: Reading and writing skills (word reading, comprehension and writing)
- Mathematics: (Number skills and numerical patterns)
- Understanding the world :( Past and present, people and communities and the natural world)
- Expressive, art and design (Creating with materials, being expressive and imaginative)



#### 4. Role of teachers

It is the role of all adults to support children's learning using a range of strategies. All adults are responsible to provide a rich and stimulating learning environment which encourages independent play and investigation. A wide range of play opportunities is provided in the well-resourced indoor as well as outdoor provision areas such as:

- Sand
- Water
- Role-play areas
- Writing area
- Math area
- Reading area
- Music
- Small world
- Construction

Within each of these areas of provision, there are a range of resources which children can use throughout the year. Planning effectively for continuous provision is crucial.

Displays in the Early Years should support children's interests and learning.

Child initiated play and adult led activities are some of the strategies used in the Early year classrooms. The adult led sessions become more frequent as students' progress in their learning.

In the Reception class, as a part of the daily or weekly routine, children participate in small group sessions in Literacy, Phonics and Math. There are also large group or whole class sessions such as singing, ICT Arabic and story sessions.

All lessons in the Early Years are inclusive and planned according to the individual needs of children.

#### 5. Teach Like a GEM (TLAG):

At GEMS Education, world-class teaching requires all staff to understand the mechanisms of the mind – how we think, learn, and remember. Teach Like a GEM defines and supports excellence in classroom practice across all GEMS schools. It is grounded in the work of leading educational thinkers, drawing heavily on Daniel Willingham's research on cognitive science, Barak Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction, Doug Lemov's Teach Like a Champion techniques and the pioneering work of Jim Knight in instructional coaching. The lessons at TWS will adapt the Teach Like a GEM (TLAG) techniques as required.

#### 6. Assessment in the Early Years

Observation and assessment are an important part of good educational practice and reflects the Westminster School's philosophy and educational approach to viewing the child as a unique, active, and developing human being in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Assessment for the very young children is based on the adult's knowledge of child development, and in line



with statutory regulation like Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) for children from birth to 5.

**Observations:** The teacher in contact with the child, uses the content of the curriculum on a daily basis and conducts a range of assessment activities within the class which is known as 'formative assessment'. These activities will be in the form of observations, photos, student's work and parents' feedback, as well as the child's own comments if applicable, in order to know what the child can do well and what they need to practice. Teachers then record their judgements against the new **Development Matters statements or learning objectives** in the **Sonar Tracker, an online assessment tool**, as an integral part of the **formative assessment**. The **Target Tracker** supports formative to summative assessments against the **Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum standards** in the most efficient and effective way.

### **Marking Strategy used in the Foundation Stage: "A Star and A Wish"**

Each piece of writing will be marked with:

**A Star** – Something the child did well.

**A Wish** – Something the child can work on or try next time. (Target)

This feedback will always include **words of praise** and **positive encouragement**.

At the start of school when students have settled into the new environment, they will be screened by using an external speech and language toolkit. This will support in delivering timely and early interventions to students experiencing a speech and language barrier.

**End of year reporting:** By the end of their Foundation Year in school, end of year reports indicates where each student is in terms of the Early Learning Goal standards for each of the 17 aspects. This is reported to parents in June, so parents know if their child is performing **at the expected level, above the expected level or is at the emerging level**. Most importantly it shows how much **progress** has been made from the **start of the year in September**.

## **7. Parent partnership**

To achieve a smooth transition between home and school, parent orientations and school visits forms an integral part of the EYFS.

**Parent Orientation at the start of school:** On entry to the Foundation Stage, there is a meeting with parents to establish background information, including a brief biography forming a picture of the child. This information is entered on the Early Childhood Initial Child Profile.

**Parent Meetings:** Foundation Stage Teachers meet with the parents of all the children in the setting **four times** annually to report on the student's progress and development.

At the end of Term 1, a report is generated against the different areas of learning and development which reflect the EYFS in line with statutory requirements. The parents may be given suggestions to support the child's learning and development in the home.



## 8. Inclusion: Students of Determination and Special Educational Needs

There may be times where the child may need extra support if there are questions around their learning and development, language support or in any other area.

Parents are asked to sign a parental consent form in order to prepare the child's individual learning plan to support his/ her learning needs.

## 9. Safeguarding in the Early Years

All safeguarding and child protection procedures and policies within the school apply equally to the children in the Early Years and they feel safe and secure in their environments.

## 10. Transition

Transitions are carefully planned for, and time is given to ensure continuity of learning. EYFS practitioners and the Year 1 Teachers work together to ensure a robust transition.

The school will allocate adequate time to the EYFS practitioners and Year 1 Teachers to discuss and expand on the information presented in the EYFS profile, especially on the statements related to the characteristics of effective learning and Year 1 Teachers are involved in the EYFS profile moderation and discussions to understand the judgements of the Early Years practitioners to have a clear idea about the attainment of each child in order to plan the Year 1 curriculum.

In the final year of the EYFS, the instructions of the Early Years practitioners are valuable and prepare the ground for Year 1.

As a part of the transition process, there is clear and effective communication between the practitioners of the Foundation Stage and Year 1. An online Learning Journal for each student is shared with parents at the end of the Foundation Years. **Learning** journals is a fabulous tool to facilitate transition to the next level.

## Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of EYFS staff, and all relevant staff involved with EYFS, to follow the principles stated in this policy and any linked policy.

The senior leadership team will carry out monitoring of the EYFS as part of the whole-school monitoring schedule. We will evaluate its effectiveness by considering feedback from all relevant parties involved within the EYFS setting and anything which has come to light during observations in the setting. We also carry out curriculum reviews and take account of any national reviews and reports in this area.

## Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually or earlier if needed.

