

WEST PARK ACADEMY

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



Date Reviewed – March 2024
Policy to be reviewed – March 2025

Principal / Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead – Mrs Sam Hirst
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) – Mrs Jenna Ford
Head of Early Years – Mrs Hannah Fenwick
SENDCO – Mrs Alex Nelson
Designated Teacher for LAC and PLAC – Mrs Joanna Dixon

Link Trustee: Mrs Abigail Rowcroft

The effectiveness of our policy will be reviewed annually by the Head of Early Years in conjunction with the Principal and shared with Staff and Trustees to ensure it reflects our current practice and any local or national developments.

Within this document, the term Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is used to describe children who are in our Nursery and Reception classes.

Introduction

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child’s experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.” (The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.’ DfE April 2017)

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- Close partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At West Park Academy we inspire a life-long love of learning where children are valued for their individuality and realise their full potential within a positive enriched learning environment.

Curiosity, flexibility of thought and risk taking are at the heart of everything we do. We aim to rise above the ordinary by developing a creative curriculum that responds to children’s individual needs and interests and promotes independence and a sense of self-belief.

We value the individual child and work alongside parents and others to meet their needs and help every child to reach their full potential. Our children are responsible citizens, aware of and active within the local and global community.

The following documents should be read in conjunction with this policy:

Admissions Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Single Equality Scheme; SEND Policy; Curriculum and Engagement Policy; E-Safety Policy; Assessment Policy; Effective Use of Teaching Assistants Policy; Behaviour Policy; Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy; Intimate Care Policy; Medical Policy; Code of Conduct Policy

Curriculum

This policy is based on requirements set out in the 2024 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**
- Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers
- **Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates**

Principles into practice

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS and Development Matters, across the seven areas of learning, using play as the vehicle for learning building on what children know
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. We provide early intervention and multi-agency working for those children who require additional support
- Work in partnership with parents and within the wider context
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-initiated and child-initiated, supported by the adult
- All practitioners across the EYFS develop close and trusting relationships with the children.
- Provide a rich and stimulating environment, secure and safe learning environment indoors and out

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observations of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve and exceed the early learning goals.

All the seven areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

These three areas are the **prime** areas:

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

Children are also supported through the four **specific** areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The **specific** areas are:

- **Literacy**
- **Mathematics**
- **Understanding the World**
- **Expressive Arts and Design**

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which they explore, think creatively and are active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

Planning

As a team, we write long term plans using the EYFS based on a series of themes each of which offers experiences in all seven areas. We have created a framework, which gives structure and coherence to the curriculum. Themes are loosely planned reflecting the festivals and celebrations to be covered and link with seasonal changes for each of the six half terms. The early learning goals and educational programs are distributed over the terms, to give a broad and balanced coverage. These plans are reviewed by the Principal.

We may choose to address particular aspects of the curriculum through medium term planning in more detail for each half term, but not always. When we do we include links between areas of learning and development and opportunities for ICT. Learning objectives, assessment opportunities, and activities and experiences for each area of learning and development are identified.

Short term planning is comprehensive. We identify specific learning objectives, activities, differentiation, deployment of adults and resources, to meet the learning needs of the children on a weekly and day-to-day basis. It allows for flexibility in response to individual children's needs and interests and for revision and modification, informed by on-going observational assessment.

Practitioners working with the youngest children in Nursery will focus strongly on the three prime areas, which are the basis for successful learning in the other four specific areas. The three prime areas reflect the key skills and capacities all children need to develop and learn effectively, and become ready for school. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as the children move through the Early Years at West Park and grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas. Floor books are used in Nursery and Reception as a tool for children's planning. Children are included in the planning process as their thoughts and ideas are recorded in the book. The floor book is used to document the consultation process between the children and staff.

Children have whole group and small group times which increase as they progress through the EYFS with times for a daily phonics session using 'Little Wandle', teaching aspects of Mathematics and Literacy as well as a core physical development programme.

The curriculum is delivered through a play-based approach, as outlined by the statutory framework, with a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are planned by the adults. As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1.

In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice. We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the characteristics of effective teaching and learning which are:

- **playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- **active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

The Learning Environments

We believe strongly in the importance of the early years in a child's education. Our Nursery, led by a teacher, is a beautiful open-plan space where children have access to an attractive outdoor area which is shared with the Reception children. In Reception, we have two teachers supporting 60 children. Each classroom is an attractive, welcoming and stimulating learning environment which will encourage children to be active, explore, investigate and learn through first-hand experiences. We also aim to make it a place where children feel secure and confident, and are challenged to develop their independence. Children are encouraged to become independent learners and to take some responsibility for initiating their own lines of enquiry and investigation.

Assessment, recording and monitoring

Children are assessed on entry to Nursery and Reception on our own school SIMS Assessment which is completed termly to enable us to feed into a comprehensive school assessment.

Children are also assessed using the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) which is a short assessment, taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts reception.

Assessments of the children are updated at the end of each term and their exit data is inputted at the end of the summer term. Children are assessed through Language Link at the beginning of term and information from this is used to inform extra interventions if necessary.

As part of our daily practice, we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform our future plans. We record our observations in a variety of ways. Everyone is encouraged to contribute including parents, and discussions take place on a daily basis. Significant observations of children's achievements are put onto our Facebook page, Class Dojo or Tapestry. Both Nursery and Reception use our Facebook page. Tapestry is used in Nursery and Class Dojo is used in Reception in line with the rest of the school. Each parent is provided with their own unique log in details for their relevant platform so that they can view their children's observations and reports. Parents are invited to attend a parent evening in the autumn and spring terms. Reports are written once a year.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers.

In EYFS children are tracked against Development Matters and Birth to Five Matters, through formative assessment and observations from both practitioners and parents. A child is thought to be broadly typical if on entry to Nursery they are working at range 4-5. In Reception, ranges 5-6. It would be expected that they make good to better progress and leave Reception having achieved the Early Learning Goal. On our internal tracking system this would equate to 7 points progress over their time in EYFS. This is judged to be expected progress. However, there is the expectation that for some children (children from lower starting points) they will make more than expected progress in order to catch up with their peers. This will be tracked through termly pupil progress meetings with the Senior Leadership Team.

How we work in EYFS

Assessment in the Early Years at West Park Academy is an intrinsic part of our practice as adults take a genuine interest in understanding the interests, abilities and characteristics of each and every child we work with. Robust methods are used for collecting and interpreting these assessments for the benefit of each child and also to inform parents and our school.

In Nursery and Reception, all adults get to know the children very well and have clear expectations of their competencies and abilities. The staff quickly and accurately identify children's starting points and use these to inform planning and provision. These on entry judgements are based on a combination of observations and information collected from parents and other professionals with 2-6 weeks of the children starting. We are interested in not only the prime areas but also children's ability to use scissors, pencil grip and their ability to blend and segment the sounds in words. This information is recorded on SIMs. At key points throughout the year, individual and cohort assessment data is collated to inform provision and planning. At the end of the Reception Year, the statutory Early Years Foundation Stage Profile is completed for every child.

Formative assessment happens on a daily basis to enable staff to build up a picture of where children are in relation to each area of learning and make plans accordingly. Observation, assessment and planning are at the heart of our practice. This information is needed to measure their achievement and progress but also to plan appropriately for each child. The characteristics of effective learning are upheld and staff understand that not only what children do but also how they do it is important. Time for staff to observe and work alongside the children is timetabled to enable staff to pay close attention to what they are doing as they play and engage in focussed teaching tasks to gain an understanding about their learning. Quality interactions with children with staff asking questions, modelling thinking and developing learning are at the heart of our practice. Storing and presenting the children's learning may be recorded in learning stories and displayed around the setting but also in the children's Online Learning Journeys. Staff use The Development Matters and Birth to Five Matters Statements to support assessment judgements. The ranges within these documents

are used to form the basis of tracking systems used to measure progress and attainment across the year to find a best fit for each child. Staff also take each child's chronological age into account. Staff also moderate across Nursery and Reception but also with other schools and the Authority to ensure judgements are in line with National and the LA.

Sharing information with parents and encouraging them to contribute is very important to us at West Park Academy and we are continually developing our systems to enable a collaborative approach.

Safeguarding and 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.'
(Statutory Framework for EYFS 2021)

At West Park Academy, we understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2024.

- To provide a setting that is welcoming, safe and stimulating where children can 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. (More information can be found in the school's safeguarding policy)

We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious food, following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident.

At West Park Academy any safeguarding concerns should be reported immediately to Mrs Jenna Ford (Deputy Principal) the Designated Safeguarding Lead or to the Deputy Safeguarding Leads, Mrs Sam Hirst (Principal) or Miss Hayley Woodcock. The concerns should also be logged on CPOMs.

Staff

Staff working in the Early Years hold current Paediatric First Aid Certificates in line with requirements of the Early Years Framework 2024.

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 before they begin Nursery/Reception.

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.

Health, Illness and Emergency

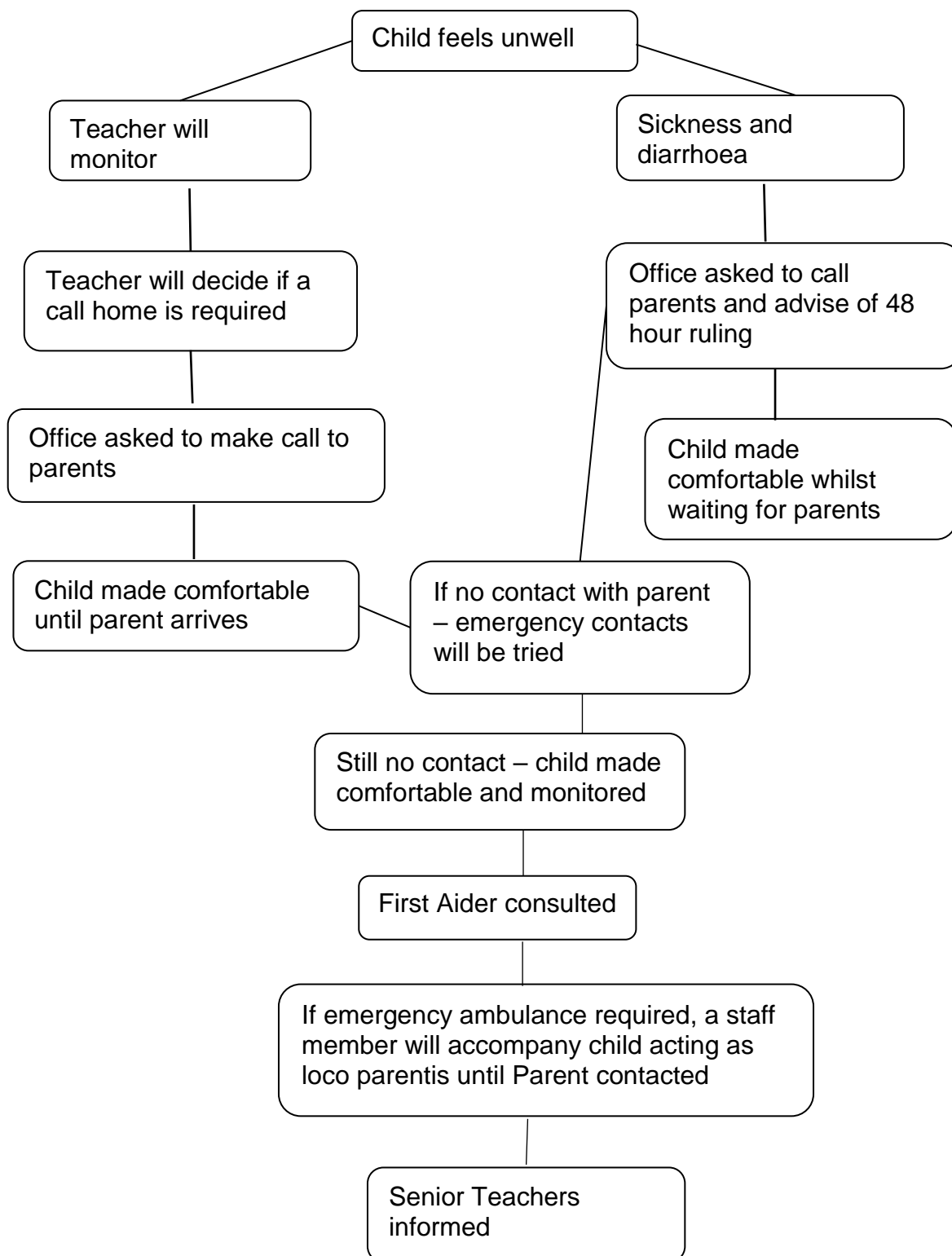
At West Park Academy, we believe it is of paramount importance that children are in school as often as possible in order that they can make the best possible progress. The health and well-being of children is of paramount importance and we wish to support all parents who have any concerns about their child's wellbeing. In order to maintain a clean and healthy environment for all our children we ask that parents refrain from bringing children to school if they are sick and displaying signs of illness. We recognise our responsibility to promote a culture where health issues are discussed in an open and positive way to achieve high standards.

Aims:

- To ensure sick children are identified
- To ensure sick children are cared for appropriately
- To protect children and adults from preventable infection
- To enable staff and parents to be clear about the requirements and procedures when children are unwell
- To deal efficiently and effectively with First Aid emergencies that may arise while children are in our care.

Procedures for Sick Children

If a child becomes ill in school the following procedures will be followed:

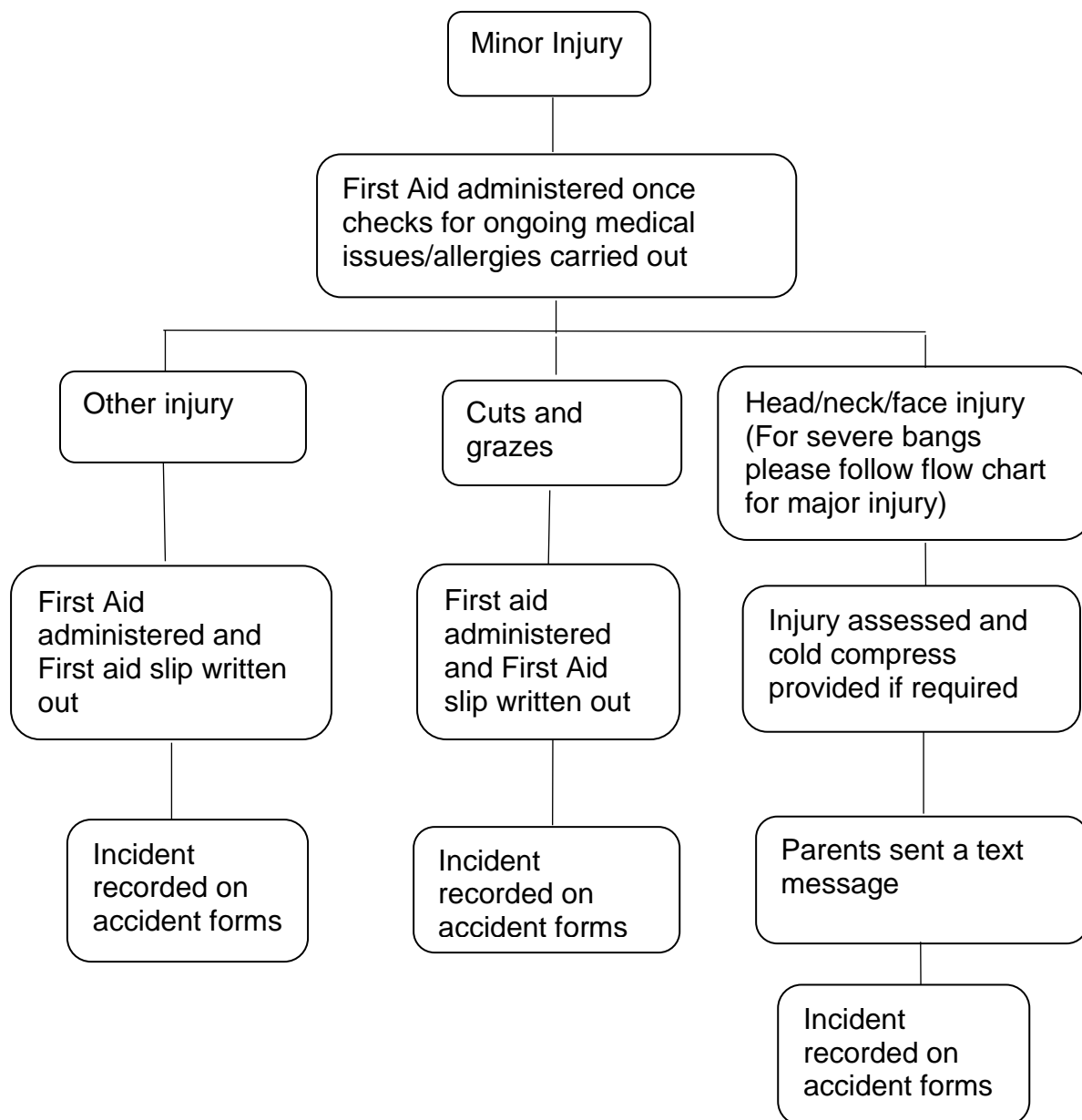


Notifiable Diseases - If a notifiable disease is suspected or reported by a parent/carer the office manager/senior leader will contact the health protection agency and school will follow the advice given. The school will also inform Ofsted if a notifiable disease is confirmed by the health protection agency.

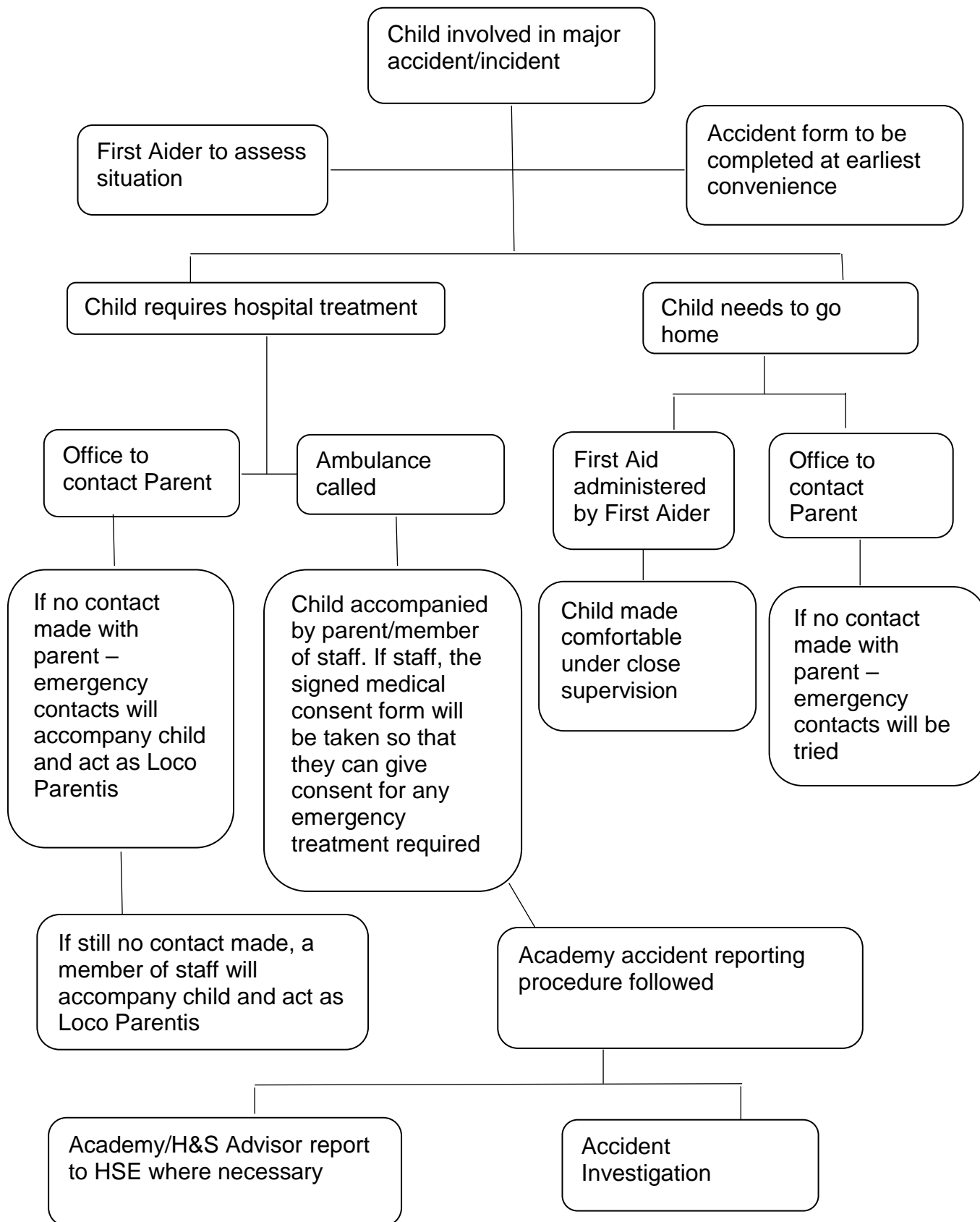
Please see our separate policies and procedures on Intimate Care, Health and Safety, Child Protection.

First Aid Procedures

Staff working in Nursery and Reception have Paediatric First Aid Training. In the event of a suspected minor injury, when a child reports an injury or an injury is witnessed the following procedures will be followed:



The School requests that parents/carers complete and sign an emergency medical treatment statement enabling any member of staff so empowered, to give permission for emergency medical treatment for their child in the event of a major accident, incident or illness occurring at the school. If a more serious incident occurs in Nursery or Reception, the following procedures will take place:



Medication

Please see: Policy and Procedures for the Administration of Medicine to Children

Sun Protection

Leaders and staff understand the dangers posed to children and themselves by over exposure to the sun. In hot weather, parents/carers are encouraged to apply long-lasting sun cream to their child before school. Children will also be encouraged to wear a hat when playing outside in the sun. In hot weather, staff will encourage children to drink water frequently. Staff should also ensure that shady areas out of the sun are always available to children when playing outside. If the weather is exceptionally hot then the Principal may take further precautions such as limiting the time outside.

Home/School links

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers. Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. The EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

All staff in EYFS help to ensure that the children's learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The staff support parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home and also, helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

We do this through:

- Talking to parents about their child before school starts
- Arranging home visits
- Visits by the class teacher and teaching assistant to as many pre-school settings as possible
- Inviting all Reception parents to an induction meeting in the Summer Term prior to their child starting school outlining the Reception curriculum to parents/guardians during the new parents' meeting in July, to enable them to understand the value of supporting their child's learning at home
- Encouraging parents/guardians to complete the home/school admissions booklet and All About Me profile
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress
- Encouraging parents to talk to their child's teacher if there are any concerns
- Offering a range of activities, throughout the year, that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents
- Holding parent/carer evenings during the year to outline the Phonics program and reading, writing in Reception, and to provide an opportunity for asking questions and sharing information
- Encouraging parents/guardians to listen to their child read each night and to comment on reading progress in a home/school reading diary
- Sharing Tapestry/Class Dojo observations with parents and encouraging parents to share experiences your child has outside of the school environment. This provides us with opportunities to celebrate any achievements your child has made at home.

- Providing an annual written report to parents/guardians in July summarising the child's progress against the early learning goals and EYFS assessment points.
- Providing a transition meeting for parents where necessary, preparing them for their child's move into Year 1.

The Aim of Home Visits

- To enable staff to develop warm, caring relationship with the child and parent/carer before the child starts in Nursery/ new to school for Reception children.
- To meet the child in their natural environment and to establish a friendship to ease the settling in period
- To ensure that the child has met staff on familiar territory. This can help the child feel more confident about making the transition from home to school
- To encourage parents/carers to share with us as much information as possible about their child. This information will help us get to know the child's needs and to plan an appropriate settling in programme. To get a picture of what the child likes to do at home
- To share information about Nursery/Reception and what happens there
- To allow parents/carers to share things in private and without interruption.

Transitions

Transitions are carefully planned for and time given to ensure continuity of learning. At any transition, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child and other settings, including nurseries and childminders. Children attend introductory sessions to Nursery/Reception/Year 1 to develop familiarity with the setting and practitioners. They receive a small booklet containing photos and complete an 'All About Me' sheet.

For children starting Nursery, a staggered start may be advised by the Nursery staff if a child is taking a little longer to settle into the Nursery setting, especially those children who have a 30-hour place. A Nursery practitioner will discuss this with parents and advice will be given about further visits and shorter Nursery days while the child adjusts. Often in the early day's children need a lot of nurture and reassurance and may require further visit sessions.

For children starting Reception, a staggered start is put in place. Children who are new to school start two days before those children who already came to our Nursery. All children will have had 2 half day visits in the summer term prior to starting Reception and class teachers will have been to visit the children in their Nursery setting and the home.

In the final term in Reception, the Year 1 teachers will meet with the Early Years staff and discuss each child's development against the Early Learning Goals in order to support a smooth transition to Year 1. This discussion helps the Year 1 teachers to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children.

Please also see the School's Transition Policy

Equal Opportunities

At West Park Academy we aim to provide all pupils, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability, equal access to all aspects of school life and work to ensure that every child is valued fully as an individual.

Practitioners, as role models, are aware of the influence of adults in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical ideas.

Inclusion

At West Park Academy we use our best endeavours to make sure that a child with SEND gets the support they need. This includes children that are more able, and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities. Additional adult support may be provided for children with SEND and special medical needs, thus increasing the adult/pupil ratio.

We place great emphasis upon early identification of need and clear arrangements are in place to support children with SEND including a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEND, which is part of our overall approach to monitoring the progress and development of all children.

When a child has been identified as having SEND, we work in partnership with parents to conduct an assessment to determine whether there are any causal factors such as underlying learning or communication difficulty. A One Plan is completed which provides a detailed support plan for the child and with the families permission the child is placed on the Special Educational Needs and Disability Support record. Support is outcomes based and family centred and considers the individual family's needs and the best ways to support them.

Children are identified on class provision maps and support plans identifying the children's targets are shared and updated with parents on a termly basis.

Where a child continues to make less than expected progress, despite evidence-based support and interventions matched to the child's area of need, specialist support may be requested (Educational Psychologist, Speech and Language Therapist, Low Incidence Team, Paediatrician, Occupational Therapy, Early Years Inclusion Officer).

The Academy's SENDCO is Mrs Alex Nelson. She is responsible for monitoring SEND provision in school, providing additional information and advice to practitioners and parents, and for arranging external intervention and support where necessary. Additional information can be accessed in The Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy.

This policy will be reviewed and approved by Mrs Hannah Fenwick every year. At every review, the policy will be shared with the Board of Trustees.

Policy to be reviewed: March 2025

Appendix 1: List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

This checklist lists the policies and procedures that we must have according to the EYFS statutory framework.

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy
Administering medicines policy	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See health and safety policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy