

The Mulberry Primary School



○ Learning and Achieving Together ○

EYFS
Policy

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The Mulberry Primary School
EYFS Policy

Introduction

At The Mulberry Primary School, we are committed to providing a high quality early years' education which gives children a secure and confident start to their school life and nurtures a life-long love of learning – no excuses; no compromises. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception Year. In our school, the EYFS applies to children from three (in our Nursery) to the end of Reception. Early Education matters. We know from the UK EPPE Project and many other research sources that high quality early years education makes a life-long, positive difference to children.

We are fully committed to the purpose and aims of the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation (2021)* which clearly states: that “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.”

At The Mulberry Primary School, we work hard to meet the individual needs and interests of all our children by adopting an approach to planning which encompasses child initiated and adult led activities. We provide opportunities through play and more structured activities, which encourages children to develop emotionally, socially, intellectually and physically. We promote good standards of behaviour as we know that learning and interactions can only happen once the right climate has been achieved in our classes. Calm, focussed children can learn with greater ease and will make better progress.

We put communication and language at the heart of all our provision and our environment is rich in purposeful interactions between adults and children and between children and their peers. In our setting, every child must become a talker and we deliberately set up opportunities for new language and vocabulary to be learned on a daily basis.

When parents and carers choose The Mulberry Primary School, we want them to be confident that we will keep their children safe and help them to thrive.

Aims

Our Early Years Foundation Stage aims to:

- Build confident communicators
- Create a happy, caring, secure and stimulating environment for all children;
- Encourage confidence, independence and a desire to learn;
- Support children’s development in all areas by valuing and building on their previous experiences and responding to their individual needs;
- Work in partnership with parents and carers;
- Develop in children an enquiring mind, an interest in learning and an enthusiasm for the next stage of school life;
- Provide good foundations for later learning;
- Encourage good social relationships, developing self-esteem and respect for other.

At The Mulberry Primary School, we will help every child to grow up feeling confident about their own identity, in a spirit of friendship, understanding fairness and the rights of others, valuing diversity, and ready to be a British citizen.

The Four EYFS overarching principles

The statutory framework is based on four guiding principles which shape practice early years settings. These are:

- A Unique Child;
- Positive Relationships;
- Enabling Environments;
- Learning and Development

A Unique Child

At The Mulberry Primary School, we recognise that every child has great potential, and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others. We use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration / sharing circle times and rewards to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of differences. All children are treated fairly regardless of race, religion, gender, nationality or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

In our Nursery and Reception classes, we believe that all of our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences, interests, needs and stages of development when planning for their learning. Therefore, input from our families is essential and we ask all parents to commit to this partnership when joining our EYFS classes.

In the EYFS, we set realistic and challenging expectations which meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls; children with special educational needs; children who are higher attaining; children with disabilities; children from all social and cultural backgrounds; children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds. Within all areas of our continuous provision, we aim to provide 3 levels of challenge to meet the needs of all children. We will provide enhancements in some areas to develop their interests and developmental needs.

We meet the needs of all our children by :

- Planning opportunities which build upon and extend children's knowledge, experiences and interests and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- developing '3 levels of challenge' in our continuous provision areas;
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- Differentiating for all children's needs to ensure progression in their learning and development;
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- Ensuring all learning opportunities, experiences and resources are challenging for all, inclusive and enable children to learn together;
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary;
- Working closely with parents and carers, other professional adults such as speech therapists and specialist teachers as part of the learning process.

It is important to us that all children in the school are safe. We teach our children to respect boundaries, rules and limits. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

Positive Relationships

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent through secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

Parents and carers are our children's first and foremost enduring educators and we are committed to working in close partnership with them in order to enable each child to achieve his / her potential. Young children are eager learners and all adults have an important role in sustaining that eagerness. All parents will have an opportunity to interact and contribute to their children's learning by agreeing to attend specific curriculum workshops, creating and being active on Tapestry and by supporting children with any home learning set. We highly value the contribution that parents and carers make and seek to maintain an effective partnership between home and school by:

- Demonstrating that we value and respect the role of the parents / carers as the first educators by listening to accounts of their child's development and any concerns and aspirations they have;
- Ensuring that parents and carers are provided with detailed information prior to admissions, enabling them to feel confident about the transition process;
- Visiting all EYFS children in their home setting prior to them starting school, to allow practitioners and parents to discuss their children's circumstances, interests, skills and needs and for children to meet their teacher / key worker;
- Inviting all EYFS parents to an induction meeting during the term before their children starts school;
- Children having an opportunity to spend time with their new teachers during 'Moving Up Days';
- Demonstrating that we value linguistic diversity and provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning;
- Welcoming parents and carers into the classroom to share their expertise and enrich the learning opportunities provided;
- Ensuring parents and carers are kept well informed about the curriculum and school life via parent's notice boards, letters, leaflets and the school website;
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress and allowing access to their child's Interactive Learning Diary;
- Providing opportunities for parents to add comments and observations relating to their child's achievements in their Interactive Learning Diary;
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between children, school and parents / carers, eg sports days, trips, themed activity days, class assemblies etc.;
- Other partnerships include: phonics and Tapestry workshops; weekly 'Family Phonics' in reception; 'Sharing Stories' session in nursery
- Sharing information regarding a child's progress and achievements and how parents and carers can support the next stage of learning through workshops, formal meetings, leaflets and reports.

All staff involved in the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with children, interacting positively with them and taking the time to listen to them. At The Mulberry Primary School, we have a key worker system where each child is assigned a key adult; one of our teachers or Early Years' Practitioners. A key worker approach provides the child with a special adult to enable him / her to develop a secure attachment; the opportunity for the practitioner to develop a supportive relationship with the parents / carers, as well as helping to track and share the child's progress and development through their Interactive Learning Diary, ensuring that every child's learning is tailored to meet their individual needs. We require all parents to get involved by activating their Tapestry account and playing an active role in their lifelong learning at home.

Enabling Environments with teaching and support from adults

We recognise that 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 carers. Staff work closely with parents and carers to observe the children's interests, learning and development and use the information gathered to plan challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

The EYFS learning environments, both inside and out, are carefully organised into learning areas, where children are enabled to find and locate equipment and resources independently. Children are supported to explore and learn securely and safely and are helped to develop across all seven areas of learning.

Each EYFS class has access to an outdoor space, which is an essential part of the EYFS curriculum and has a significantly positive impact on children's learning and development. Children will have the opportunity to be outside in all weathers. Being outdoors offers opportunities to doing things in different ways and on different scales. It offers the children the opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active.

Learning Through Play

Well planned play, both indoors and outdoors, provides key opportunities for young children to learn with enjoyment and challenge. We recognise the importance of adult support and a secure environment in ensuring effective high quality, purposeful play.

Effective high quality play opportunities involve:

- Planning and resourcing a challenging environment;
- Supporting children's learning through purposefully planned play activities;
- Extending and supporting children's spontaneous play;
- Extending and developing children's language and communication in their play.

The secure environment and adult support in play enables children to:

- Explore, develop and represent learning experiences which help them to make sense of the world;
- Practice and build up ideas, concepts and skills;
- Be alone, be alongside others or co-operate as they talk or rehearse their feelings;
- Take reasonable risks, making and learning from mistakes;
- Think creatively and imaginatively;
- Communicate with others as they investigate or solve problems.

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning. Children are given opportunities to be creative through all areas of learning. Adults can support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offer encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the setting to extend their learning.

Learning and Development

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 learning and development requirements are informed by the best available evidence on how children learn and reflect the broad range of skills, knowledge and attitudes children need as foundations for good future progress.'* (1.1 Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2021)

The Mulberry Primary School's Teaching and Learning Policy defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. Features which relate to the EYFS are :

- The partnership between staff and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- The understanding that staff have, of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;
- The range of approaches used, which provide first-hand experiences; give clear explanations; make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play, talk or other means of communication;
- The carefully planned curriculum which helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout their time in the EYFS;
- The provision for children to take part in activities which build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- The encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- The support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- The identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents and carers.

The Early Years Curriculum/Educational Programmes

The level of progress children should be expected to have attained by the end of the EYFS is defined by the early learning goals. The curriculum is carefully planned to ensure progression and continuity of skills in seven areas of learning. These areas of learning depend on each other to support a rounded approach to early years' development. All the areas will be delivered through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. This is how children learn best

Prime Areas of Learning in EYFS

These three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving

- **Communication and language (Listening, Attention and Understanding; Speaking)**
- **Personal, social and emotional development (self-Regulation; Managing Self; Building Relationships)**
- **Physical Development (Gross Motor Skills; Fine Motor Skills)**

Specific Areas of Learning in EYFS (through which the prime areas are strengthened and applied)

- **Literacy (Comprehension; Word Reading; Writing)**
- **Mathematics (Number; Numerical Patterns)**
- **Understanding the World (Past and Present; People Culture and Communities; The Natural World)**
- **Expressive Arts and Design (Creating with Materials; Being Imaginative and Expressive)**

The statutory early learning goals outline the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS. By the end of the EYFS, some children will have exceeded these goals. Other children, depending on their individual needs, will be working towards some or all of the goals – particularly some younger children, some children with learning difficulties and disabilities and some who are learning English as an additional language.

Planning

Planning incorporates a balance between adult and child initiated activities, and experiences which take account of children's individual needs, stages of development and interests. Planning incorporates all areas of learning and development and puts the principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage into practice. *'Practitioners must consider the individual needs, interests, and development of each child in their care, and must use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all areas of learning and development.'* (1.11 Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2021)

Planning always follows the same pattern: observation, analysis and using information about the children to plan for the next steps in their learning. Through careful planning we aim to:

- Provide a carefully structured curriculum, building on and extending children's knowledge, experiences, interests, stages of development and skills;
- Provide a wide range of well planned, purposeful, challenging activities that utilise the children's interests, needs and previous knowledge;
- Support and develop children's involvement and concentration in order for them to learn effectively;
- Present activities in many ways and use a range of teaching strategies;
- Develop self-esteem and confidence in their ability to learn;
- Provide a safe and secure learning environment, where each child is valued and where racial, religious and gender stereotypes are challenged;
- Monitor children's progress, identifying areas of concern/next steps and taking action to provide support;
- Give opportunities for self-assessment and reflection.

Assessment and Recording

On-going assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process. We make regular assessments of children's learning and use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. These observations are recorded onto the children's interactive learning diaries (Tapestry) and should be supported by information provided by parents, carers and other professionals.

Staff ensure that they:

- Make systematic observations and assessments of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles;
- Use these observations and assessments to identify learning priorities, next steps, interests and to plan relevant and motivating learning experiences for each child;
- Match their observations to the expectations of the Development Matters and Early Learning Goals;
- Assessment does not entail prolonged breaks from interaction with children.

We use the Development Matters and the Early Learning Goals to help assess the children in the Foundation Stage. In each learning area, the Development Matters and Early Learning Goals define the expectations for most children.

Practitioners are acutely aware of the individual progress of each child as they grow and develop. As the child progresses through the EYFS, staff will make judgements based upon their observations of the child in all seven areas of learning. These informal judgements will inform future planning with next steps being identified for all children.

During the Reception year, the children are assessed against the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. This is also informed by the observations, assessments, discussions with parents/carers and other professionals and each child's level of development is recorded against the 17 scales derived from the Early Learning Goals.

During the year, there are formal opportunities to feedback information to parents and carers through parent / carer consultations in the Autumn, Spring and Summer Terms. Parents and carers are vital partners in the assessment process. Towards the end of the academic year, a written report, covering the seven areas of learning, will be given to parents and carers indicating whether children are meeting ***expected*** levels of development or whether they are still working towards those goals meaning they are ***'emerging'***.

Transition Across the EYFS

At The Mulberry Primary School, we value the importance of our pupil's wellbeing and confidence when entering a new year group and class. We understand that this could be a challenging and apprehensive time for pupils and

that this can subsequently affect their wellbeing and academic achievement. Therefore, we aim to ensure that pupils feel safe, secure and settled in their new environment by effectively implementing a transition plan across the Early Years Foundation Stage. There are many strategies taken to aid effective transition including parental involvement, environment planning and plenty of opportunities for new teachers and pupils to meet in a familiar context.

Nursery to Reception Transition

We start the transition within our schools in the spring term by arranging visits in small groups (stay and play sessions). We also hold a welcome event in the summer term for all new parents and carers and (where risk assessments allow), offer a home visit to every child.

Reception to Year 1 transition

Reception practitioners prepare children for more formal learning and the introduction of the National Curriculum in Year 1 by:

- encouraging independence and self-care
- offering an increasingly structured timetable towards the end of the summer term

The transition from the EYFS to KS1 is made as smooth as possible by

- starting 'Letters and Sounds' phonics in the EYFS and continuing in KS1
- sharing individual learning diaries (Tapestry) and EYFS profiles with Year 1 teachers
- Reception and Year 1 teachers meeting to discuss each child's stage of development and learning needs, to assist with the planning of activities and ease transition into Year 1
- Reception children being introduced to Year 1 teachers during assemblies, playtime and other whole school activities
- children visiting their new classroom and teachers during 'moving up days' in summer term

Safeguarding and Welfare procedures

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.