



Monks Orchard Primary School, Early Years and Foundation Stage Teaching and Learning Policy

Reviewed and agreed: October 2017

To be reviewed: October 2019

Introduction

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential.”
(Statutory Framework for the E.Y.F.S. 2012)

Mission Statement

To ensure children are supported through positive relationships with practitioners and an enabling environment to reach their full potential.

Vision

Our vision is for all children to:

- Become confident, secure, caring individuals who achieve personal success academically, socially and emotionally.
- Become life-long learners, through an enquiry based curriculum.

Early Years education is the foundation upon which young children build the rest of their schooling. It is a holistic education that encompasses all learning and development.

This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) at Monks Orchard Primary School and Nursery. The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of practitioners working in the EYFS setting, including both teaching and non-teaching adults.

In this policy the term ‘setting’ refers to the Early Years educational provision at Monks Orchard Primary School and Nursery.

In this policy the term ‘practitioner’ refers to the members of staff working with children within the setting.

Aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage

In the EYFS setting at Monks Orchard Primary School and Nursery we believe that all children are entitled to the best possible start in their school life both intellectually and emotionally, in order to enable them to develop to their full potential.

We aim to support each child’s welfare, learning and developmental needs by:

- Recognising that all children are unique and special.
- Understanding that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates – physically, cognitively, linguistically, socially and emotionally.
- Providing a safe, secure and caring environment where children feel happy and know that they are valued by the practitioners looking after them.
- Fostering and nurturing children’s self-confidence and self-esteem through their developing awareness of their own identity and role within the community.
- Teaching them to express and communicate their needs and feelings in appropriate ways.
- Encouraging children’s independence and decision-making, supporting them to learn through their mistakes.
- Developing children’s understanding of social skills and the values and codes of behaviour required for people to work together harmoniously.
- Supporting children to develop care, respect and appreciation for others, including those whose beliefs, cultures and opinions differ to their own.
- Understanding the importance of play in children’s learning and development.
- Providing learning experiences which reflect children’s personal interests and areas of curiosity in order to encourage and develop their natural desire, interest, excitement and motivation to learn, to promote life-long learning.
- Providing experiences that build on children’s existing knowledge and understanding in order to challenge, stimulate and extend their learning and development.

- Providing effective learning opportunities in a range of environments, inside and outside.

Teaching and Learning

Teaching in the EYFS setting is delivered in accordance with the Government's Statutory Document 'The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage' (March 2012).

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in Early Years settings.

Prime Areas:

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

Specific Areas:

- Literacy.
- Mathematics.
- Understanding of the World.
- Expressive Arts and Design.

The following "Characteristics of Learning" underpin all learning and are planned and assessed alongside the aforementioned areas of learning.

- Playing and exploring.
- Active learning.
- Creating and thinking critically.

These areas of learning and development address children's physical, cognitive, linguistic, social and emotional development. No one aspect of development stands in isolation from the others as all areas of learning and development are closely interlinked.

We recognise that young children learn best when they are active. In the EYFS setting practitioners provide both structured and unstructured 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 make sense of the world around them as they begin to understand specific concepts. Activities are also set up to provide children with opportunities to apply new acquired knowledge, demonstrating their skills and level of understanding.

Assessment and Record Keeping

Ongoing assessment is an essential aspect of the effective running of the EYFS setting. Regular, planned and focussed assessments are made of children's learning and individual needs. A record, "Learning Journey, of each child's progress in all areas of their learning is kept.

The main EYFS assessment method is through practitioners' observations of children in different teaching and learning contexts, including both adult focused activities and child initiated play. Observations take place on a daily basis (both formally and informally). Practitioners make time to carry out planned observations (both short and long) of individuals and groups of children regularly. They also make spontaneous observations in order to capture significant moments of children's learning. Observations are recorded in different formats (e.g. narrative style, post-it-notes, stickers, whole class grids, photographs). All practitioners are involved in observing children.

Practitioners use observations to support their developing knowledge of individual children. It informs them of children's abilities, needs, interests and learning styles. Observations are evaluated, children's learning priorities are identified and relevant learning opportunities are planned to support children to make the next steps and progress. The E.Y. practitioners liaise with the Inclusion Manager and outside advice/support is sought, where applicable (see the Special Needs Policy for further details).

Learning journeys record children's progress over the academic year in all areas of development of the EYFS framework. Samples of children's work are gathered, along photographic evidence and observations. Parents and carers of the children are encouraged to add their observations of their children's progress and achievements at home.

There is continuous monitoring and assessment of each child's development use the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (2012). Baseline assessment is carried out using the EYFS Profile during the children's first few weeks upon entering the setting. This is updated at least once a term to track individual progress. The data is analysed and pupil

progress meetings are conducted with SLT. At the end of the year it provides a summary of every child's development and learning achievements.

A climate of Assessment for Learning and frequent discussions about the learning with the children ensures that they make links between their experiences, play and activities and what and why they are learning. Regular "teacher/child consultations" ensure that the children are aware of their learning and next steps.

Internal moderations occur termly; through work scrutinise, to ensure consistency of judgements across the Foundation Stage; whilst external moderations are made with local schools.

Planning

The planning objectives are from the Development Matters Statements from the Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2012. The EYFS framework provides a long term plan to follow by ensuring that all Early Learning Goals are covered throughout the academic year.

The identification of individual's achievements, interests and next steps for learning forms the basis of the weekly planning.

The practitioner, often with the help of the children, develops differentiated "challenges" to engage, motivate and challenge each child, both in the indoor and outdoor classrooms. This fostering of the children's interests develops a high level of motivation for the children's learning.

Educational visits within the local community and further afield are also planned to support children's learning.

Parents as Partners

Parents/carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value being partners with them in their children's education. Through a questionnaire prior to the start of the school year and informal chats at the beginning and end of the day, practitioners encourage parents to share their unique knowledge of their child, providing insights into the child as an individual (e.g. characteristics, interests, experiences, likes, dislikes). This supports practitioners in establishing interesting and stimulating learning experiences, responding to children's needs and interests.

Parents are kept informed of what is happening in the setting through regular letters, newsletters, text messages, emails, reading records and continued informal chatting at the beginning and end of the day. This also gives suggestion of how parents can support their children's learning at home; consolidating and building on what has been covered in the setting.

We promote parental partnership through:

- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school at our induction meetings and during home visits.
- Offering both parents and children the opportunity to spend time in the Foundation Stage before starting school.
- Encouraging parents and pre-school children to attend our weekly "Stay and Play" sessions.
- Operating an open door policy for parents, to discuss any concerns and children's progress.
- Opportunities to share the children's "Learning Journals" at least twice termly.
- Weekly "Funtime" activities enable parents to reinforce the learning at home.
- Regular Reception curriculum workshops informing parents of our strategies regarding reading and handwriting.
- Termly curriculum coffee mornings.
- Weekly newsletters in Reception and half termly newsletters in Nursery and the display boards in each hallway communicate focus themes, activities and planning to parents.
- Encouraging all parent to attend the two formal parent/teacher consultation evenings per year and the half termly informal sessions.
- Sending a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of their time in Foundation Stage.

The E.Y. team liaise with pre-school settings to facilitate a smooth transition for children and families into our Nursery and Reception.

Equal Opportunities

All practitioners have a responsibility to maintain positive attitudes to diversity and difference, ensuring that inclusive practice is delivered in the EYFS setting. All children, irrespective of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture or

religion, and social circumstances, have the opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development within the EYFS setting.

See Equal Opportunities Policy for more information.

Special Education Needs

See Special Educational Needs Policy.

Risk Assessment

A risk assessment for the EYFS setting is carried out annually. This document is available from the EYFS Leader.

Cameras and Mobile Phones

See Camera and Image Policy.