



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy 2015

'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 EYFS 2014)

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. At Martenscroft we use the EYFS for all children from birth until they leave us to go to primary school. We use the EYFS to ensure the children are taught and learn a broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based upon four overarching principles: 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 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; and
- **children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.**

The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

Ethos

We believe young children learn best through play and that the foundation stage is important in providing a solid foundation for all future learning. At Martenscroft we aim to make sure that all children experience the very best possible start to their education to ensure that they enter primary school having established a solid foundation on which they can build to help them flourish throughout their school career and beyond.

Rationale

All school policies form a corporate, public and accountable statement of intent. At Martenscroft Nursery School we feel it is important to create a whole school approach of which staff, children, parents, governors and other agencies have a clear understanding. This policy is a formal statement of intent for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Aims

Our aim is to provide a high quality integrated early education experience for all children. We believe that the foundation stage makes a positive contribution to children's early development and learning. Children develop rapidly during this time physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially. During the Foundation stage children develop key listening skills such as listening, speaking, concentration, persistence, and learn to work together and cooperate with other children. It is also about developing early communication, literacy and numeracy skills that will prepare children for Key Stage 1 and The National Curriculum.

Our **aims** are:

- To help children meet and deal with the challenges of school and everyday life by building self-confidence and self esteem.
- To develop each child's individual potential physically, emotionally, intellectually, socially and creatively (All these areas are related to and dependent on one another and are of equal importance in the child's development).
- To value each child and his or her contribution to our group. (The dignity and worth of each child must be respected and enhanced).
- Each child is unique and should have the opportunity to develop his/her abilities.
- To provide a rich variety of experiences and activities to promote self awareness and awareness of others. (The child has a natural curiosity that results in an eagerness to learn – providing opportunities that stimulate this curiosity is important).
- To develop concentration through story time and structured activities.
- To give daily opportunities for children to communicate and speak with confidence to both children and adults
- To establish good relationships with parents and carers to ensure home/school communication is effective in promoting children's learning.

We work towards these aims by planning according to the three prime and four specific areas of learning as specified in the EYFS:

The three prime areas, are:

- communication and language;
- physical development; and
- personal, social and emotional development.

The specific areas are:

- literacy;
- mathematics;

- understanding the world; and
- expressive arts and design.

Provision

Children will be given a wide variety of structured play and practical experiences in all areas of the curriculum. They learn best when they are happy, safe and secure. To achieve this, consideration is given to the organisation of the setting and areas of learning. Every effort is made to encourage self-motivation and develop intellectual ability and aptitudes, taking into account ethnic origin and family backgrounds. It is important that continuity and progression are built into the experiences provided for each child, this also ensures that the transition into primary school is as smooth as possible.

Children should:

- Develop a range of communication skills, including speaking and listening and writing experiences.
- Develop self-confidence and security.
- Develop appropriate attitudes to learning. The experiences given to the child are intended to develop skills, concepts and attitudes. The skills include the social, practical and physical, communication, study and investigative skills. Attitudes are expressions of values and personal qualities that determine behaviour in a variety of situations. These include respect, tolerance, independence, perseverance and curiosity.
- Develop an understanding of themselves in relation to people in their immediate environment and progressing to those in the wider world.
- Acquire mathematical concepts such as sorting, matching, size, shape, number, counting and comparison.
- Have the opportunity to work with computers and programmable toys. Choose and use tools and materials, exploring their potential for cutting, folding, joining and comparing.
- Be encouraged to explore, question, predict, observe and investigate the world around them near and far, and their environment, past and present.
- Acquire gross and fine motor skills through a range of experiences provided by indoor and outdoor play. Physical games and activities, music and movement, provide structured opportunities to improve gross motor control, self confidence and co-ordination.
- Develop and extend their imaginative and creative abilities through the media of art, music, dance, stories and role-play.
- Develop an awareness of personal safety and hygiene through structured play.

Children are offered a range of experiences, some of which are adult led. Activities are structured and show progression. Groups are flexible in size and include individual, small group or larger groups, depending on the task in hand, and the children's stages of development.

Beginning our Nursery School

Many of our children join us at the age of three when they enter our Nursery Class. However some children enter our Nursery having already attended Martenscroft child care provision. All new children who attend our school at the beginning of the school year will receive a home visit. These are in addition to planned events in school including induction evenings and visit days in the summer term prior to their child coming to join us in the September. Parents and carers are given details about school procedures as well as an insight into what their children will experience during their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage. An induction pack is given during the induction, which includes a school prospectus and other pertinent information such as details about routines, school dinners etc.

Strategies for Learning

In the beginning, the main emphasis is placed upon the basic skills of socialising and developing linguistic and mathematical attributes and concepts.

When children first arrive we work closely with parents as part of our gradual admission procedure and give them time to adapt to our school and the room they are based in. Children are encouraged to access and use resources independently and to take responsibility for clearing them away. The nursery class and our child care provision provide a stimulating, secure, happy environment conducive to learning and developing.

Planning and Assessment

We use the Early Years Foundation Stage to plan and assess children's learning experience.

A child-led, theme-based approach is used to enhance all learning provision and possibilities. The themes are overarching and flexible according to the interests and needs of the children in both nursery class and child care. All those working in the Early Years Foundation Stage work collaboratively together as a team to ensure parity across and within the EYFS.

The development of the long, medium and short term planning is undertaken along with any relevant teaching support in response to children's needs which is reflected in the planning and objectives.

Assessment for learning is regarded as an integral part of teaching and learning and is a continuous process. We strive to make our assessment purposeful, allowing us to plan accurately, match the correct level of learning and provision to the needs of the children, thus ensuring progress. It is the responsibility of all key workers to continually observe and assess all children in their groups.

Assessment undertaken at Martenscroft

- Individual Observations which are child-initiated play based. These are used to inform the next steps for individual children which in turn are used to inform daily and weekly planning.
- Whole group assessment/observations for key objectives during focused/directed activities. Next steps identified and used to inform planning.
- Use of sticky labels or slips for anecdotal notes for each child. These are recorded and annotated under the 7 areas of learning and used to monitor individual progress.

- Photographic and video evidence which are printed and annotated in learning journals.
- Weekly evaluations.
- Phase 1 Letters and Sounds observations and assessments.
- Tracking according to EYFS ages and stages each term - Making Children's Learning Visible (MCLV)
- Use of baseline assessment to help set targets for autumn term and track progress.
- Learning journey folders with annotated work using EYFS curriculum.
- Home/School links including proformas for parents to use and complete as they wish.

See our assessment policy for more information.

Strategies for Teaching

It is recognised by early years staff at our school that our children learn best through a combination of continuous provision structured play, firsthand experience, and adult- directed focus teaching opportunities. We also recognise the value of free choice and spontaneity as a means of developing and expanding children's immediate interests, with the adult role being to exploit those interests in order to broaden the children's experiences and provide appropriate teaching and learning opportunities.

The Adult Role

We see our role as adults in the setting to identify;

- Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes in each area that we feel the children should be entitled to and which meet their individual needs whilst they are in our Nursery (EYFS as guide).
- Organising and resourcing the learning environment to give the greatest possible access to learning.
- Planning stimulating activities and experiences, which will support and extend specific learning intentions – where next? Assess the stage of development and intervening in play to support the individual to move them forwards.
- Our role as an adult in supporting and extending learning, including specific language support. Spending time in the areas of provision as a focus as well as direct teaching- to allow ourselves to respond to and get involved with child's play spontaneously. Sometimes initiating, supporting, extending, demonstrating and combining all as appropriate.
- The use of key questions and observations to guide assessment in each of the areas of learning. We use observation to identify next steps. The behaviour of the child tells us about them - behaviour clues in their play informs us how we can teach them in the best way. We allow time for this - both planned and incidental, which can be written or verbal. We look for what they can do, know and understand, and how they approach their learning and may track this over time. We may focus on a specific area in the classroom or just an area of learning.

Equal Opportunities

We endeavour to give children equal access to all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage regardless of gender, race or disability. Whenever appropriate we present positive images of all cultures.

All children will be offered equal opportunities in terms of access to the curriculum. The needs of any children from other religious denominations and cultures are catered for appropriately in consultation with their parents.

- Materials will be chosen to meet the interests of both boys and girls to counteract the stereotypical images, enabling all children to demonstrate equal worth and capability.
- It is essential that all children have equal access to materials, time and adult support.

Special Educational Needs

Appropriate assistance will be provided in a variety of ways including:

- Using a range of learning styles
- Using children's ideas and motivations as a starting point for learning
- Adjusting the conceptual demand of the task as appropriate for the child.

See our SEN policy for more information.

Parental Involvement and Home/School Links

At Martenscroft Nursery School we encourage parents to be involved by:

- Employing an open door policy.
- Regular communication through home/school diaries and learning journal's.
- Our school website.
- Daily interactions when children are brought to school and picked up at the end of the day.
- Home Feedback sheets.
- Induction process including home visits for the children.
- Inviting parents into school at least twice a year to discuss the progress of their child.
- Inviting parents into school in the Summer Term to discuss the annual report.
- Inviting parents to open afternoons/special events/curriculum and induction days and evenings.
- Regular information booklets/newsletters/letters to inform parents of curriculum coverage and activities in nursery.
- Encouraging parents to volunteer to help at Martenscroft in a range of capacities including special event days, projects and with educational visits.
- Close working links with Martenscroft Parent groups.

This active partnership with parents works well in developing a good relationship between parent, key worker and school as well as giving the child a sense of security.

Strategies for Ensuring Continuity and Progression

The senior leadership team meets weekly and regularly evaluates the needs of all Early Years children to promote continuity and progression throughout the nursery and children's centre.

This is achieved by:

- Working closely with the whole team – including weekly meetings (see minutes)
- Developing personal expertise in order to keep abreast of new developments.
- Attending relevant training and courses, and disseminating information as appropriate.
- Providing in-service training and performance management through appraisal to all staff working at Martenscroft.
- Monitoring and moderating planning, assessment and children's work in the Early Years as a team and with other Early Years Staff from other settings when appropriate (including methods of assessment and record keeping).
- Developing and interpreting the EYFS to meet the needs of the children in our school.

Role of the Key Workers

- To identify training needs and take advantage of training opportunities.
- To plan effectively for the foundation Stage and liaise with the SLT as necessary.
- To inform parents of children's progress, achievements and attainments.
- Organise the environment so that activities may take place safely.
- Encourage independence (while remaining aware of potential hazards).
- Provide a variety of stimuli, resources, conversation and activities which will be appropriate to the children's age and stage of development.
- Evaluate progress and appreciate the children's effort.
- Encourage and praise, instilling moral values, spiritual awareness and reward children as appropriate.
- Help all children feel part of the school as a whole.

Technology

Children will be encouraged to use and have continual access to a wide variety of information sources. Children have full-time access to computers and software within their everyday learning environment as well as a range of other programmable toys and resources such as listening stations, interactive boards, cameras and video cameras.

Health and Safety

- All children have a safe and secure outdoor learning environment. There is always a member of the staff team outside to support children's learning.
- Children should be treated with respect and dignity with regard to personal hygiene and toilet arrangements. The children are introduced sensitively to the procedures in going to the toilet/hand washing etc.

- Apparatus and equipment is regularly checked and repaired, washed etc as required.
- We always have healthy snacks available for the children. We reinforce healthy eating habits with fresh fruit, milk and water available only.
- With regard to the administration of medicines please see our school policy for the administration of medicines. All medicines and inhalers are stored safely in lockable cupboard out of reach of the children.
- We have trained members of staff to carry out first aid.
- There is additional lunch-time supervision by lunchtime organisers for the nursery class children.
- Arrival and departure arrangements for all children are carefully noted and children sent home with their parent/carer one at a time. Any change from this routine i.e. a different adult collecting a child, must be reported to the key worker or person in charge, either in person or by telephone.
- Risk assessments are carried out as needed, including for outdoors.

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