



Early Years Policy

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Early Years Policy

Our Early Years Policy describes how staff at Moss Lane School will deliver all aspects the Early Years Curriculum and provision in our Reception Classes. This policy should be used in conjunction with the school's policies for Teaching and Learning, Curriculum, Assessment, and SEND & Equalities and Safeguarding.

It is linked to the *Statutory Framework for the EYFS Foundation Stage* which can be found following this link:

www.foundationyears.org.uk/files/2014/07/EYFS_framework_from_1_September_2014_with_clarification_note.pdf

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is a statutory curriculum for all children, from birth to the end of the Reception year, who attend any state funded provision.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

1. A Unique Child
2. Positive Relationships
3. Enabling Environments
4. Learning and Development

Role of the EYFS Leader

It is the role of the Early Years Leader, under the line management of the Head Teacher:

- To ensure implementation of all aspects of this policy.
- To organise the planning and delivery of Early Years Curriculum to ensure good progression and development for all groups of children
- To support and monitor planning and the quality of learning and progress
To keep abreast of developments within Early Years and carry out INSET and training as required
- To monitor, review and prepare progress reports on the impact and effectiveness of provision /resources and, if required, prepare a development plan to update provision and resources, including CPD.

Our philosophy

- Every child deserves the best possible start in life to reach their full potential at Moss Lane we know and value the importance of strong Early Years educational provision. We know this will help to create a positive attitude and enjoyment of learning in the future.
- Our early year's professionals know and understand that children are unique and develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and our provision reflects this.
- We know that children learn best through play based activities and first hand experiences.
- We use children's interests and natural curiosity as the basis for learning

and development. We provide well-planned opportunities to engage children and to support learning and development in both our inside and outside learning spaces.

- We work hard to foster positive partnerships between practitioners and parents as we know this will help children to feel happy in school and will optimise their progress.

Our Objectives

- To provide a safe, secure environment with a happy, caring atmosphere for learning, reflecting individual needs and interests of children.
- To develop warm and secure relationships between children and children and adults.
- To establish good relationships with parents/carers and have effective systems of communication that enable sharing of information, between home and school, supporting children to make good progress.
- To create a high quality curriculum, in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage framework, that is stimulating and dynamic
- To encourage children to develop and understanding of our whole school values.
- To place equal value on all areas of learning as well as equally valuing learning taking place in indoor and outdoor learning spaces.
- To support children to develop a range of learning skills and attitudes so that they become self-motivated and positive, independent learners.
- To encourage children to make effective choices both for learning and in their social skills so they respect themselves, their skills and abilities and those of others and develop good self-management.
- To promote respect for, and the value of, the cultural diversity and life experiences, within our school and wider community.

EYFS Areas of Learning

The Early Years Foundation Stage is a statutory curriculum from birth to five years old for all government funded provision.

At Moss Lane we follow this curriculum which is based on seven areas of learning (3 Prime and 4 Specific) which are:

Prime Areas

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

Specific areas

- Literacy
- Mathematics

- Understanding the world
- Expressive Arts and Design

None of these areas are delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated play based activities. We set realistic yet challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning specifically to meet the interests and specific needs of different groups of children:

Personal, social and emotional development

Children are helped to learn to work, share, take turns and co-operate with others. They are encouraged to be independent, confident and to make choices for themselves. They are also encouraged to be sensitive and respond positively to the needs of others and to respect others' strengths, needs, cultures and beliefs. Children are enabled to develop a positive self-image and gradually learn to be part of a bigger social group, able to follow simple rules and understand consequences.

Physical development

Children are given opportunities to develop and practice their fine and gross motor skills. We do this through a wide range of activities which include dancing, climbing, balancing activities to using play-doh, tweezers, wheeled toys, bats and balls etc. We teach an increasing understanding of how their body works and what is needed to be healthy. This is done both indoors and outdoors and by working with a wide range of resources including our allotment.

Communication and Language

This covers all aspects of spoken and receptive language skills and provides the foundation for other literacy skills. We aim to extend and enrich the children's vocabulary and enjoyment of language through story time, rhymes, role-play, group discussions and conversations. Children are encouraged to share their own experiences through speaking and acting out events in imaginative play and talking about their own ideas. We actively support children to respond appropriately to, and to ask, pertinent questions.

They are encouraged to take part in class activities e.g. working with puppets, participating in music sessions, learning rhymes and singing songs together.

Literacy

We use a variety of resources and approaches to help children develop their early reading and writing skills. Children are encouraged to use a range of play based mark-making opportunities indoors and outdoors and they also take part in teacher-led literacy activities. Children are taught the link between letters and the sounds they represent during regular phonic lessons. Our literacy activities also include whole class shared reading and writing as well as small group guided reading and writing. These are planned and delivered according to the stage of development of each child. Our pre-writing work encourages correct pencil

control, left/right orientation and letter formation. We teach the correct use of upper/lower case letters. Children are encouraged to use books with care and to enjoy a variety of texts, both fact and fiction. We read and enjoy stories, rhymes and poetry with children on a daily basis.

Mathematics

We aim for all children to be able to think and talk mathematically and spontaneously in their play and other activities. Pre- number work is covered through nursery rhymes and number based games. We provide a firm foundation for numeracy through practical activities and using mathematical language when talking about simple mathematical ideas. We do not encourage repetitive recording of 'sums' until children have a secure understanding of the concept of numbers they are using. Mathematics provision includes the opportunity to learn about number, shape, space, position, pattern and measurement both in play activities and in adult guided sessions. Towards the end of the Foundation Stage children start learning to tell the time and are given opportunities to learn about money and to record simple calculations.

Understanding of the World

This area covers early aspects of history, geography, science and information technology. We work to develop and build on children's innate curiosity about the world around them. All children are given opportunities to experiment and investigate, solve problems, and to make choices and decisions about what and how to do things. They will learn about living things, their environment, the wider world past and present and the people who are important in their lives and in the community. Children are also given opportunities to develop computing skills and to work with, and use modern technology.

Expressive Arts and Design

We provide opportunities for all children to explore and share their thoughts, ideas, feelings and responses through a variety of art, design, technology, music, drama, movement, dance and imaginative play activities. Children have daily access to role play activities to rehearse ideas, language, vocabulary and to develop their imaginations. They have frequent opportunities to see and to create paintings, drawings, collages and models using a wide variety of media, equipment and tools. Children learn about problem solving, making choices, design, colour and texture by mixing paints, sorting, using, and choosing a variety of materials to create original products.

Children also have the opportunity to use simple percussion instruments to create rhythms and tunes. They learn to sing songs and rhymes.

Dance, and other response to music, is taught and encouraged. At various times during the year children are given the opportunity to perform through participation in school productions and assemblies.

Construction activities are regularly used to develop technical problem solving, creativity and storying as well as dexterity.

Snack bar

We have a snack bar based in the unit. This is set out daily for a set period of time. We see snack time as a social event, a time where the children enjoy a drink of milk and a piece of fruit. This time of day is the ideal opportunity to develop and enhance the children's social skills and to encourage interaction and conversation with their peers as they sit together. It also develops independence as the children are encouraged to serve themselves.

Organisation

Our provision, for all areas of learning, takes place in our outside or inside learning spaces. Both areas are equally important and staff invest time and energy in ensuring both learning spaces are equally well organized and presented.

In both learning spaces EYFS staff provide planned adult-led activities for children as well as giving planned opportunities for children to make their own learning choices at continuous provision. The Bears Unit (EYFS classes) comprises of a team of two qualified teachers and two early-years assistants. There is an intake of 60 children, who are organised into 2 registration groups (Polar Bears and Panda Bears).

Children will spend time during the day learning and playing as part of a whole class group, small groups and individually. There will be time spent inside and outside, sometimes directed by adults and other times making personal choices about what to do.

The EYFS staff work as a team within the unit. EYFS staff plan and work together to ensure continuity and progression, providing age and stage related activities to suit all our children.

Children from both registration groups have opportunities to work and play together during challenge and learn times and access shared continuous provision across all the three learning spaces.

Children are also sometimes taught within their own registration groups and are taught in a variety of ways: in whole class groups, small group work, pairs and individually. The style of teaching and delivery of the curriculum develops over the year as the children mature. Our termly broad learning 'topics' are based on a range of story books. Learning opportunities are planned with the children's involvement to ensure they have an ownership of their learning and so activities, provision and progress will differ each year to reflect the current cohort of children, their interests and needs.

Staff are professionally qualified, have a wide range of experience and expertise in caring for and educating young children. The school is committed to professional development and staff attend training courses to keep up to date and to maintain excellent knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and different aspects of child development.

All practitioners make regular, daily observations of children. These observations are then used to plan next steps in learning and to identify children's interests and schematic play so that provision can be matched accurately to stages of development and interests.

Assessment

Children's progress and development are monitored using guidance from the Development Matters document. Observations are made regarding children's learning and interests through a range of systems: written observations (2

Simple), annotated photographs and children's products (drawing, writing etc.) & videos. We endeavour to ensure 70 percent of evidence is gathered from child initiated learning as this will give a more accurate picture of what a child knows, understands and can do. Observations and evidence is summarised half termly and a judgement made against age related expectations so progress over time can be assessed. This information informs next steps and future provision and helps staff to deliver a curriculum that is specific to the children's needs. All the evidence of progress is used to complete the end of year profiles to support transition to KS1.

Transition from Pre -school to full time Education

We understand and value the importance of a good start to school life and we aim to establish a smooth and successful transition into school. This is facilitated by:

- Visits to, and discussions with, pre-school settings
- Play sessions for all children together with their parents and a Teddy Bears Picnic. All are held at the school during the summer term prior to the children starting Reception class
- A parents' welcome talk
- Liaison with professional agencies already involved with children and their families
- Completion of a starting school booklet, for parents to share information about their child with the EYFS Team
- SENCO transition forms for vulnerable children from their previous settings.

Photographs/videos/phones

At the beginning of the year parents/carers are asked to give permission for their child to be photographed/videoed during their time at school. We use these images in the classroom, on displays, in the children's individual learning journals, and on the school website. We will only use school cameras for this purpose. Except in a major emergency personal mobile phones/cameras may not be used in school when children are present.

Home and School communication

We value the involvement of parents in school and have a variety of communication systems. There are regular school newsletters, the school's website and 'classroom door' messages.

EYFS staff will make an appointment with parents to discuss any concerns. We believe it is better to talk sooner than later.

Parental involvement with school begins before children start Reception through the transition activities. We hold 10minute parent consultation meetings in the Autumn and Spring Terms. Parents are invited to discuss and share information about their child's progress with teachers. A report is sent out towards the end of the Summer Term and parents may make an appointment to discuss this report if they wish. Parents are invited to various events and functions throughout the year. These are on the school diary on the website and communicated in newsletters.

Families are asked to ensure that children have appropriate clothing and footwear so that children can use the outdoor learning opportunities in most weather conditions so children do not miss learning opportunities. School keeps some wet weather clothing for this purpose as well as spare clothing in case of toileting accidents or water play incidents etc.

Equalities and disabilities

All pupils in this school are entitled to access a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum regardless of ability, gender, race and social circumstances. The particular needs of more able children, those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), vulnerable children and children learning English as an additional language (EAL) are all considered and staff will adapt provision to suit all levels of ability and need. We will make sure that we have the resources and adapted provision so that all children can make good progress whatever their starting points. The school has a full Equality and Diversity and Equal Opportunities policy.

Special Educational Needs and Disability

Care is taken to assess the needs of each child as they start school. Should a teacher assesses that a child may have a special need the parent will be informed at the earliest opportunity. Group and individual help is provided within the school wherever possible. We have links with various agencies and when necessary their involvement may be required to support certain children. Parents will always be informed if an outside agency is assisting us to support their child. The school has a full Special Educational Needs & Disability (S.E.N.D) policy and Gifted and Talented policy.

Safeguarding and safety

The school takes its child safety and protection responsibilities very seriously. EYFS staff will regularly check EYFS resources, systems and classrooms to keep children as safe as possible in EYFS. The school has processes and procedures to ensure children are as safe as possible when they are at school.

Parents must inform the school of the named adults allowed to collect a child at the end of a day. Staff will only release a child to a named /known adult. Parents are asked to stand well away from classroom doors at the end of the school day to enable staff to see clearly that children are handed safely, one at a time, to the correct adult.

If a member of staff has any concerns about the safety or well-being of a child they have a legal responsibility to report, and record, their concerns to the designated member of staff. (Victoria Abbott) If it is then deemed necessary, the concern will be reported to the relevant external agency. The safety of the child is always of paramount importance. The full Safeguarding Policy is available in school for parents to read if they wish.