

Monksmoor Park CE Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Date ratified by Governors:
26th August 2018

Dates reviewed by Governors:

1. 23rd September 2020
- 2.
- 3.

Note: This document takes account of the most up to date central government information and guidance, at the time of writing (see footer). It is subject to change as guided by government policy.

1. Introduction

Note: This introduction is taken directly from the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (DfE 2017) and sets the expectations for all schools and settings with regards to the EYFS. The School's policy for EYFS is set in the context of this Statutory Framework.

- 1.1 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.
- 1.2 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. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.
- 1.3 The EYFS seeks to provide:
 - **quality and consistency** in all early years settings, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind;
 - **a secure foundation** through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each individual child and are assessed and reviewed regularly
 - **partnership working** between practitioners and with parents and/or carers;
 - **equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.
- 1.4 The EYFS specifies requirements for learning and development and for safeguarding children and promoting their welfare. The learning and development requirements cover:
 - the **areas of learning and development** which must shape activities and experiences (**educational programmes**) for children in all early years settings;
 - the **early learning goals** that providers must help children work towards (the knowledge, skills and understanding children should have at the end of the academic year in which they turn five); and
 - **assessment arrangements** for measuring progress (and requirements for reporting to parents and/or carers).
- 1.5 The **safeguarding and welfare requirements** cover the steps that providers must take to keep children safe and promote their welfare.

2. Overarching principles

2.1 Four guiding principles should shape practice in early years settings. 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.

3. The areas of learning and development

3.1 There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in early years settings. All 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, the *prime* areas, are:

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

3.2 The School will also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

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

3.3 The curriculum will involve activities and experiences for children, as follows:

- **Communication and language** development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.
- **Physical development** involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.
- **Personal, social and emotional development** involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn

how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

- **Literacy** development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.
- **Mathematics** involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.
- **Understanding the world** involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.
- **Expressive arts and design** involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

4. Planning

Note: the term “Practitioners” is used generically to refer to teachers and a range of other professionals working with children in EYFS.

In planning and guiding children’s activities, Practitioners use the Development Matters statements in Development Matters (DfE 2020) to identify next steps for each child to deepen, challenge and extend their learning. During planning sessions, discussion takes place to ensure activities allow for Characteristics of Effective Learning to be demonstrated and embedded. The characteristics of effective teaching and learning 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; and
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

- 4.1 Planning reflects children’s interests. The Long Term plans state the skills followed throughout the year. Practitioners ensure that these skills are covered throughout the year. They consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan an inclusive, challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all of the areas of learning and development. Skills based activities may be led by Practitioners in the classrooms. These activities let learning happen through a range of activities, a supportive environment and sound pedagogical understanding whilst evidencing independence, motivation, critical thinking and creativity.

- 4.2 For children whose home language is not English, the School will take steps to provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning, supporting their language development at home. Practitioners will ensure that children have sufficient opportunities to learn and reach a good standard in English language during the EYFS, ensuring children are ready to benefit from the opportunities available to them when they begin Year 1.
- 4.3 Practitioners will respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction, reflecting how they learn. Each area of learning and development will be implemented through planned and facilitated purposeful play and through a highly structured mix of adult-led, child led and child-initiated learning. Resources are provided to create rich learning opportunities. There is ongoing judgement to be made about the balance between activities led by children, and activities led or guided by adults. As children grow older, and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1.
- 4.4 A whole class focus is linked to activities within the EYFS setting. These are adapted continuously to meet the needs of the unique child. Attention to learner's adaptation of activities is encouraged and creates extended learning opportunities. Learners are encouraged to challenge themselves through self-selecting tasks and activities. The activities offer opportunities for extended learning and are structured to develop their learning. These are supported with communication aids such as talk tins which question the learners to deepen their knowledge and understanding.
- 4.5 We also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan (in line with the inclusion policy) a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate. We supply opportunities to develop and enhance the skills of gifted and talented learners within the classroom and through specific activities.

5. Outdoor Play and Learning

- 5.1 Young children thrive and their minds and bodies develop best when they have free access to stimulating outdoor environments for learning through play and real experiences. A rich, stimulating outdoor environment full of irresistible stimuli, contexts for play, exploration and talk, plenty of real experiences and contact with the natural world provides young children with one of the best possible environments in which to experience and learn new skills and make fresh discoveries.
- 5.2 The school recognises Outdoors is a dynamic, flexible and versatile place where children can choose, create, change and be in charge of their play environment. It provides the opportunity for independence, challenge and assessed risky freedom, where children can play collaborate and socialise freely and use their imagination and initiative. Young children's basic need for wellbeing and involvement, and their urge to explore and make sense of the world, is developed through high-quality

play in the outdoor environment. Well-resourced outdoor play experiences with involved adults facilitating and enabling children's interests, allow for progression in thinking and understanding.

- 5.3 Physical Development enhances the development of young children's gross motor skills, develops co-ordination, balance and body awareness, and keeps the body, heart and other organs healthy, and develops a lifelong good habit of daily exercise. Opportunities to develop these skills and enhance physical literacy are available for children across the outdoor environment.

Forest school

- 5.4 The Forest School programme enhances the children's outdoor learning across all areas of development whilst providing additional assessed risky freedom. Children in EYFS engage in dedicated Forest school sessions on a weekly basis throughout the year.

6. Assessment

- 6.1 Ongoing, formative assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process. Practitioners will observe children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations. In their interactions with children, Practitioners will respond to their own day-to-day observations about children's progress, and observations that parents and carers share.

- 6.2 We ensure that as Practitioners we:

- Observe children as they show interests, act and interact in their play, everyday activities, child initiated activities and planned activities, learning from and sharing with parents about what the child does at home;
- Consider the examples of development, observing what children can do, and identifying the stage on their developmental pathway;
- Consider ways to support the child to give challenge, strengthen and deepen their current learning and development;
- Consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care. This information is then effectively used to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all of the areas of learning and development.

- 6.3 If a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, practitioners will discuss this with the child's parents and/or carers and agree how to support the child. Practitioners will consider with the School SENDCO whether a child may have a special educational need or disability which requires specialist support. Where relevant, links will be made to relevant services from other agencies and families helped to access these.

- 6.4 When assessing communication, language and literacy skills for children whose home language is not English, practitioners will assess children's skills in English. If a child does not have a strong grasp of English language, practitioners will explore the child's skills in the home language with parents and/or carers, to establish whether there is cause for concern about language delay.

- 6.5 We use the Aspects and BASE Assessment Monitoring systems by CEM for each learner which complement our own baseline assessment for all areas of learning taken from Development Matters. In addition, on entry we assess using the Wellcomm Speech and Language toolkit. Wellbeing and Involvement is assessed using the Leuven Scales. These assessments inform us of the emotional needs, as well as the academic attainment at point of entry. This information is analysed within our EYFS team as well as being shared with SLT.
- 6.6 We then repeat this process in December and April to ensure the curriculum and activities support each child's needs. At the end of EYFS Reception we complete the EYFS profile for each child. Learners are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, including whether they are: • Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging') Meeting expected levels of development ('expected'), or Exceeding expected levels ('exceeding').
- 6.7 Practitioners will undertake assessment of attainment on entry to YR by matching evidence from observations of individual children against the criteria in the non-statutory guidance "Development Matters in the EYFS" within the first six weeks in the School. Information from this process is used to identify individual issues as well as provide an indication of how attainment of the cohort compares with age related expectations.
- 6.8 In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, and no later than 30 June in that term, the EYFS Profile will be completed for each child. Each child's level of development will be assessed against each of the 17 early learning goals, which indicate the level of progress children should be expected to have attained by the end of the EYFS. Practitioners will determine whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are exceeding expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging').
- 6.9 We ensure our end of EYFS assessments are reliable through our knowledge gained through observation and interaction, and that our assessment ensures a range of contributors e.g. parents. Moderation takes place across the EYFS team, with other local schools and Year 1.

7. Safeguarding and welfare

- 7.1 This section sets out specific safeguarding and welfare arrangements for EYFS, in the context of the School's overall Safeguarding Policy.
- 7.2 Each child will be assigned a "key person" who will normally be the class teacher. The School will inform parents and/or carers of the name of the key person, and explain their role, when a child starts attending the School. The key person must help ensure that every child's learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs. The key person must seek to engage and support parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. They should also help families engage with more specialist support if appropriate.
- 7.3 Photographs of children engaged in a range of activities are an integral part of ongoing observation and assessment activities. When children enter EYFS,

parents will be asked to sign a specific consent form. A mobile phone must not be used for taking these photographs as practitioners are provided with an iPad for such occasions.

- 7.4 Behaviour expectations in EYFS are covered by the School's Behaviour policy.
- 7.5 Outside areas will be assessed for risk and fire, in the same way as all other areas of the School (ref Health and Safety policy). An Outdoor Play Risk Assessment is attached with this policy.

8. Working with parents

We recognise that learners learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers. Parents and carers are given the opportunity to meet with their child's teacher twice a year in a formal parents meeting and receive a written report at the end of term 6 which includes their final achievements within the early learning goals.

We use 2 Simple Evidence Me to keep parents and carers updated of all achievements and observations. More informally we meet with parents throughout the school year as and when necessary to discuss their child's particular needs.

Transition to Monksmoor Park CE Primary School

Planning for a smooth and thorough transition starts as soon as possible and well in advance of the September start date.

To ensure the best possible transition we:

- Value the parent
- Make contact via either phone or visit with every pre-school/nursery feeder within our new intake to discuss essential information on every child.
- Share important information about our school during open mornings and evenings.
- Hold a series of 'stay and play' sessions for parents and learners in June/July and prior to Nursery intakes
- Recognise the importance of sharing information and meet with every parent and child joining Nursery, home visits take place before beginning school in Reception.
- Share information in a transition meeting with key adults for learners with additional needs
- Stagger entry of the Reception cohort for up to 1 week to enable successful transition as well as considering individualised transition needs
- Hold an information evening to share important information about our school to parents/carers.

The EYFS Team

Our Nursery and Reception team consists of enthusiastic teachers passionate about early years teaching. They understand the needs of the young child and how best to create an environment to enable a love of learning. Our aim is that it is hard to

distinguish between teacher and teaching assistant in our setting. Everyone works towards the same goal; to ensure every child achieves to their highest ability.

Policies which directly relate to this policy:

- Equal Opportunities
- Safeguarding Children
- Behaviour
- Health and Safety
- Forest School

This policy was ratified by the Local Governing Body on:

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This policy will be reviewed by:

..... (Date)

Lead Manager:

Sian Ellison

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