

MANEY HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL



EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

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INTRODUCTION

'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. The Early Years Foundation Stage 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.'

- Statutory Framework for the EYFS (September 2014)

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. In our school children join us in our Reception class at the beginning of the school year in which they are five.

Four guiding principles shape our practice in our setting:

- **unique child** - every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- **positive relationships** - children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships;
- **enabling environments** - 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
- **learning and development** - 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.

THE UNIQUE CHILD

At Maney Hill Primary School we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways and 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 assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

All children at Maney Hill Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'.

In our school we believe that each child matters and we ensure we give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge
- experience and interests, and developing their self-esteem and confidence
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs
- 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
- planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary

Welfare

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. We aim to create a high quality setting which is welcoming, safe and stimulating, and where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

We take all necessary steps to keep children safe and well. We ensure we meet the requirements set out in the statutory EYFS framework document, which requires us to: safeguard children; ensure the suitability of adults who have contact with children; promote good health; manage behaviour; and maintain records, policies and procedures.

We endeavor to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. 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.

We aim to protect the physical and psychological well being of all children. (See Whole School Safeguarding & Child Protection policy and Looked After Children policy)

POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

At Maney Hill Primary School we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school
- providing an opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during 'come and meet' sessions and our 'Buddies afternoon'
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our Reception class and allowing free access to the children's 'Learning Journey' folders
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents each term at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: Class assemblies, Sports Day etc
- encouraging parents to come in to school to talk about their jobs, cultures or major life events eg. having a new baby

All members of staff aim to develop good relationships with all children, always interacting positively and communicating effectively, taking the time to listen to their views, needs and opinions. At our school the EYFS Teacher acts as the 'Key Person' to all children in our Reception class, supported by the Teaching Assistant(s).

ENABLING ENVIRONMENTS

At Maney Hill Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning. This is used to plan challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

The planning within the EYFS follows the school's Long Term Plan and Medium Term Plans, based around half-termly themes. These plans are used by the EYFS teacher as

a guide for weekly planning, however the teacher may alter planning and topics in response to the needs, achievements and interests of the children. This will be indicated in teacher planning files.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS primarily takes the form of observation, and this involves the teacher and other adults observing and interacting with children through their play, to make informed assessments of their development. These observations are recorded in children's 'Learning Journey' books as well as on our electronic 2Simple software to capture photos and observations of our children.

At Maney Hill Primary School, we baseline our children early in their first term, to identify current strengths and next steps and to provide an accurate picture of our children on entry. We use this information to monitor progress, inform planning and set next steps for our children.

At the end of the year, we assess the children against 17 Early Learning Goals (ELGs) [See Appendix], identifying whether a child has met the 'expected' goal, has 'exceeded' the goal or is still working towards the goal, 'emerging'. In the final term we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress against the ELGs and also about how their children learn, through their 'characteristics of learning'.

The Learning Environment

The EYFS classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The classroom is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The EYFS class has its own enclosed outdoor area. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales. It offers the children opportunities to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities which encompass all seven areas of learning.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

EYFS Curriculum

There are seven areas of learning and development that shape our curriculum. 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. Below is an overview of these three **prime areas**:

- **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.

The rest of our curriculum encompasses four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. An outline of these **specific areas** is as follows:

- **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.

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. There is an ongoing judgement to be made by practitioners about the balance between activities led by children, and activities led or guided by adults. Practitioners must respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. 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.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

In planning and guiding our activities, we reflect on the different ways in which children learn. These are called the 'characteristics of effective learning'. They 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
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Teaching and Learning Style

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in the EYFS just as much as they do to the teaching in Key Stages One and Two.

Some key features of teaching and learning in the EYFS are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement
- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching
- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions, extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the ELG throughout EYFS
- the provision for children to take part in activities that 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

APPENDIX

The Early Learning Goals

The level of progress children should be expected to have attained by the end of the EYFS is defined by the early learning goals set out below.

The prime areas

Communication and language

1. **Listening and attention:** children listen attentively in a range of situations. They listen to stories, accurately anticipating key events and respond to what they hear with relevant comments, questions or actions. They give their attention to what others say and respond appropriately, while engaged in another activity.
2. **Understanding:** children follow instructions involving several ideas or actions. They answer 'how' and 'why' questions about their experiences and in response to stories or events.
3. **Speaking:** children express themselves effectively, showing awareness of listeners' needs. They use past, present and future forms accurately when talking about events that have happened or are to happen in the future. They develop their own narratives and explanations by connecting ideas or events.

Physical development

4. **Moving and handling:** children show good control and co-ordination in large and small movements. They move confidently in a range of ways, safely negotiating space. They handle equipment and tools effectively, including pencils for writing.
5. **Health and self-care:** children know the importance for good health of physical exercise, and a healthy diet, and talk about ways to keep healthy and safe. They manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs successfully, including dressing and going to the toilet independently.

Personal, social and emotional development

6. **Self-confidence and self-awareness:** children are confident to try new activities, and say why they like some activities more than others. They are confident to speak in a familiar group, will talk about their ideas, and will choose the resources they need for their chosen activities. They say when they do or don't need help.
7. **Managing feelings and behaviour:** children talk about how they and others show feelings, talk about their own and others' behaviour, and its consequences, and know that some behaviour is unacceptable. They work as part of a group or class, and understand and follow the rules. They adjust their behaviour to different situations, and take changes of routine in their stride.
8. **Making relationships:** children play co-operatively, taking turns with others. They take account of one another's ideas about how to organise their activity. They show sensitivity to others' needs and feelings, and form positive relationships with adults and other children.

The specific areas

Literacy

- 9. Reading:** children read and understand simple sentences. They use phonic knowledge to decode regular words and read them aloud accurately. They also read some common irregular words. They demonstrate understanding when talking with others about what they have read.
- 10. Writing:** children use their phonic knowledge to write words in ways which match their spoken sounds. They also write some irregular common words. They write simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others. Some words are spelt correctly and others are phonetically plausible.

Mathematics

- 11. Numbers:** children count reliably with numbers from 1 to 20, place them in order and say which number is one more or one less than a given number. Using quantities and objects, they add and subtract two single-digit numbers and count on or back to find the answer. They solve problems, including doubling, halving and sharing.
- 12. Shape, space and measures:** children use everyday language to talk about size, weight, capacity, position, distance, time and money to compare quantities and objects and to solve problems. They recognise, create and describe patterns. They explore characteristics of everyday objects and shapes and use mathematical language to describe them.

Understanding the world

- 13. People and communities:** children talk about past and present events in their own lives and in the lives of family members. They know that other children don't always enjoy the same things, and are sensitive to this. They know about similarities and differences between themselves and others, and among families, communities and traditions.
- 14. The world:** children know about similarities and differences in relation to places, objects, materials and living things. They talk about the features of their own immediate environment and how environments might vary from one another. They make observations of animals and plants and explain why some things occur, and talk about changes.
- 15. Technology:** children recognise that a range of technology is used in places such as homes and schools. They select and use technology for particular purposes.

Expressive arts and design

- 16. Exploring and using media and materials:** children sing songs, make music and dance, and experiment with ways of changing them. They safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function.
- 17. Being imaginative:** children use what they have learnt about media and materials in original ways, thinking about uses and purposes. They represent their own ideas, thoughts and feelings through design and technology, art, music, dance, role-play and stories.