



William Morris Primary

EYFS Policy

Introduction

At William Morris Primary School we use the term Early Years Foundation Stage to refer to the time from when a child enters Reception (and in the future this will include Nursery) to the end of the Reception year. (Please refer to admissions/induction policy for details.) This early development and learning is a distinct phase in each child's education and should provide an essential and firm foundation for their future school life.

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.”

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile, Department for Children, Schools and Families 2012.

Principles

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

1. **A Unique Child.** 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 and recognition to encourage and develop a positive attitude to learning inside and out.
2. **Positive Relationships.** We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships and aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families.
3. **Enabling Environments.** We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Through observations we assess the children's interests, stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging and achievable activities and provision enhancements and experiences to extend their learning using natural and authentic resources.
4. **Learning and Development.** The Early Years Foundation Stage is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and think independently and in partnerships. The setting is organised into zones where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently from across the prime and specific areas.

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At William Morris Primary School we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. However, we also believe that early childhood is valid in itself as part of life. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

Approach

The EYFS for children is from birth to five years of age. All children begin school with a wide variety of experiences and learning and it is the privilege of the adults working in the Foundation Stage to accept the task of building upon that prior learning experience. This is done through a holistic project based approach to learning. We ensure parents and guardians, support staff, external practitioners and the Foundation Stage team work effectively together to support the learning and development of the children in their care, through Child Initiated opportunities for learning at all levels and across all aspects of our curriculum and forest school.

Aims

It is every child's right to grow up in a safe, healthy environment whilst enjoying their learning, achieving at the highest standards, making good progress across the curriculum and making a positive contribution to our school family. The overarching aim of the EYFS is to help young children achieve these outcomes.

- We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential.
- Each child is valued as an individual, and teaching and learning is based on the understanding that children develop at different rates.
- We provide a safe, challenging, stimulating, caring and sharing environment which is sensitive to the needs of the child, including children with additional needs.
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative based curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond.
- Provide opportunities for every child to further develop in our school specialism of Forest Schools
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress.
- Enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence.
- Work in partnership with parents, carers, families and the wider community and value their contributions ensuring that all children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability.
- Provide opportunities whereby children experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development.
- Provide experiences for all children, whatever their needs, which are inclusive rather than parallel.
- Provide opportunities for children to lead their learning and thinking, building class projects and individual projects around children's interests, questioning, talents and skills, whilst maintaining a balanced approach to the curriculum.
- Provide opportunities for children to think to learn and learn to think through engagement.

Learning and Development

Learning and development is categorised into three prime areas of learning:

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

Additionally there are four specific areas of learning:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive Arts and Design

Achievement of these prime and specific areas of learning is by:

Playing and exploring

- Active learning
- Focused support and challenge
- Creative and Critical Thinking

Observation, Assessment and Planning

Good planning is the key to making children's learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive. Effective learning builds on and extends what children know and can already do. Our objective led and weekly planning shows how the principles of the EYFS are put into practice and is always informed by observations we have made of the children, in order to understand and consider their current interests, development and learning needs. All staff who work in the Foundation Stage are involved in this process.

The planning within the EYFS is based around the children's interests. These plans are used by the EYFS team as a guide for weekly planning. However, we may alter these in response to the needs of the children and their interests as our projects and learning progress over time.

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 takes the form of long, short and recorded observations and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. These observations are recorded and used to inform the Senior Leadership Team. Parents and Carers are given the opportunity to meet formally with the Foundation Stage teacher twice a year and receive a formal report at the end of the year.

Learning Through Play

At William Morris Community School, we do not make a distinction between work and play. Children learn through planned and child led play activities and staff will decide when child-initiated or objective led activities would provide the most effective learning opportunities. In addition we always have one of our members of staff working as a play facilitator alongside children's play to move thinking and learning to the next level through questions, role modelling and/or partnership learning. We also come together at least four times a day for class based or group learning which focuses on key skills and knowledge including the teaching of Phonics for Reading and Writing and Mathematical Skills.

The Induction Process

During the Summer Term prior to starting school the following September our induction visits are conducted:

- Foundation Stage staff will visit pre-school/Nursery settings from which September's intake will be taken.
- Parents will be invited to an induction evening and receive our handbooks and welcome pack.
- Where possible, the Foundation Stage staff will visit each child in their home environment during term 6.
- Each child and their parents and carers will be invited to spend some time at William Morris Primary School for a "Stay and Play" session prior to entry.

When children join the school in September, the following procedures will apply in order that they can gradually adjust to their new surroundings:

- During the first week, children will attend for the morning session only.
- During the second week, children will attend for the morning session and lunch only.
- During the third week and thereafter, children will attend for the full school day unless Foundation Stage staff and parents or guardians agree that it is not in the best interests of the individual child.

Home and School Links

We recognise that parents and carers are a child's first and most enduring educators and we aim for the school and parents and carers to work closely together. This can have a very positive impact on a child's development but relies on a two-way flow of information and knowledge.

We will develop this working relationship between the school and parents and carers as follows:

- We will outline the school's expectations in our home school agreement.
- We will hold a parent consultation early in the year to establish how a child is settling into the school environment.

- We will send home an “All About Me” book designed to enable Foundation Stage staff and parents or carers to record outstanding achievements and add to their child’s learning journey.
- We will operate an “open door” policy that will allow parents and carers to discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner. Conversely, if Foundation Stage staff have concerns about the progress of a child, they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss them.
- We will conduct family learning events for parents and carers to enable them to be familiar with the teaching methods used in school to make it easier to emulate them at home.
- We will conduct a further parent consultation later in the year to inform parents and carers formally of a child’s overall progress and achievements.
- There will be opportunities for parents and carers to visit the school on a volunteer basis to assist with the children’s learning. We actively welcome these partnerships.
- At the end of a term, we will invite parents and carers to visit the school informally in order to fully appreciate the work that has been produced, and/or to attend celebration events/concerts.

Intimate Care (see our policy)

Intimate care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. However, depending on a child’s age and stage of development, they may need some support, for example dressing, wiping their bottom after using the toilet and changing underwear following an accident. In most cases, intimate care is to do with personal hygiene and it is good practice for the school to inform the school nurse of all children requiring intimate care. We do encourage parents and carers to ensure that their child is as independent as possible prior to entry to our Foundation Stage setting. This is to empower your child in their learning and independence for this exciting stage in their life long learning journey.

Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child. No intimate care is to be given without the express written permission of the parent or carers of that child and all parents and guardians will be asked to provide that permission when their child joins the Foundation setting at William Morris.

Inclusion, EAL and Equal Opportunities

Children with Special Educational Needs will be supported as appropriate to enable them to access the curriculum fully. This includes children that are more able and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities. Individual Education Plans identify targets in specific areas of learning for those children who require additional support commensurate with the school’s Special Educational Needs Policy. The school’s SEN Co-ordinator is responsible for providing additional information and advice to staff and parents and for arranging external intervention and support as necessary.

In line with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy and Equalities Statement, we will provide access to all aspects of learning for all children, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities or gender.

All staff are role models and are aware of the influence they have in promoting positive attitudes they use that influence to challenge stereotypical attitudes.

At William Morris Primary School we are extremely proud of our inclusive approach to teaching and learning and our partnerships with parents and the wider community to ensure the very best for all children. See SEND and EAL Policies for further information

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Executive Headteacher, Head of School and long term the EYFS leader alongside other subject leaders, are responsible for monitoring and evaluation of Early Years provision and learning. This information is used to inform teaching and learning, staff training and development and the School Improvement Plan.