



EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

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| Approved By | Local Governing Committee |
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Contents

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|---|---|
| 1. Our Vision | 1 |
| 2. Aims and Principles..... | 1 |
| 3. Planning and Organising the Curriculum | 2 |
| 4. Classroom Organisation and Resources | 3 |
| 5. Use of Whole School Resources..... | 4 |
| 6. Induction | 4 |
| 7. Transition to Year One | 4 |
| 8. Involving Parents | 4 |
| 9. Language and Literacy..... | 5 |
| Communication and Language:..... | 5 |
| Literacy:..... | 5 |
| 10. Assessment and Recording | 6 |
| 11. Monitoring and Evaluation..... | 6 |
| 12. Ratios..... | 6 |
| 13. Safety..... | 6 |
| 14. Special Educational Needs and Disability | 7 |
| 15. Safeguarding..... | 7 |
| 16. Roles and Responsibilities beyond the Class Teacher | 7 |
| Teaching Assistant | 7 |
| Headteacher..... | 7 |

1. Our Vision

Through a positive, caring environment, we provide the opportunity for every child to reach their full potential. We embrace the Christian values of the Trust and ensure all children are ready for their next steps.

Children are very aware of the high expectations that are set from the very beginning of the Early Years, enabling them to focus on the learning experiences in front of them, whilst encouraging them to broaden their capabilities and inspiring them to reach their aspirations.

Children develop their abilities to become independent and successful learners, that are fully prepared for the next stage in their education. Children in the Early Years at Mayfield Primary School develop a deep love of learning, a passion for wanting to know and learn more and build the fundamental building blocks for the rest of their school journey. They are caring, happy, inquisitive and well-rounded learners that are a credit to our school and the values to which it is built upon.

Within this document, the term 'Early Years Foundation Stage' (EYFS) is used to describe children within our Nursery and Reception classes.

"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 EYFS seeks to provide:

- quality and consistency in all early year's settings, so that every child makes good progress, and no child gets left behind.*
- a secure foundation through planning for the learning and development of each individual child and assessing and reviewing what they have learned 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"*

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, Department for Education, July 2023

EYFS classes must provide every child with a feeling of security, being valued and the confidence to explore new learning. EYFS is unique in that it sets the tone for later school life.

These are the four overarching principles which our Early Years curriculum is based upon:

- 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, parents and carers.

Importance of learning and development. Children learn at different rates and in different ways.

2. Aims and Principles

- EYFS practitioners should ensure that all children feel included, secure, and valued.
- To provide a relevant curriculum with tasks that make sense to the children and are both practical and purposeful.

- To provide opportunities for children to engage in activities planned by adults and those that children plan or initiate themselves. Practitioners must consider the individual needs and interests of each child and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience in all areas of learning and development.
- Practitioners acknowledge the holistic nature of young children's learning and natural links will be made between different areas of the curriculum, with the emphasis on learning through play and the importance of developing speaking and listening skills.
- Practitioners must create a learning environment that develops children's imagination and encourages children to explore and express their ideas and feelings.
- Practitioners must respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding development through positive interaction.
- Involve parents and carers.

3. Planning and Organising the Curriculum

The curriculum for the Early Years forms the first stage of our Whole School Curriculum.

In the EYFS at Mayfield Primary School, we have created our own 'I Can Curriculum'. Our 'I Can' Curriculum is a working document and is designed around the Statutory Framework (2021), Development Matters (2021) and Birth to Five (2021), along with the needs, starting points, progress, and development of our children.

This is a broad, balanced and language rich, sequential curriculum that ensures all children make progress and are ready as they can be for the next stage in their education. Teaching and learning is progressive, vocabulary driven and precise to the needs, abilities, and next steps of our children.

Our timetable and routines are meticulous, thorough and centre around the needs of the children and their age and stage of development. A careful balance of teacher led, and child led allows children to; engage in high quality interactions, apply previously taught learning independently, secure knowledge in a subject area, embed skills and knowledge to their long-term memory, address misconceptions and experience various forms of stimulus, both inside and outside.

There are seven areas of learning and development that provide a framework for planning, teaching, and assessing in EYFS settings. All areas of learning and development are inter-connected.

The three Prime Areas are:

- Communication and Language – children will be given lots of opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; to speak and listen in a range of situations and enhance their vocabulary and understanding.
- Physical Development – children will be provided with opportunities to be active and interactive; to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children will be taught the importance of physical activity, to take care of their personal needs and pursue healthy and active lives.
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development – help children develop a positive sense of themselves and others whilst being able to manage their own needs; forming positive relationships and develop respect for others; develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and have confidence in their own abilities.

There are also four Specific Areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied:

- Literacy – children will be taught to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children will be given access to a wide range of reading materials to ignite their interest. Children will develop their comprehension skills and understanding of various types of texts.
- Mathematics – children will be provided 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. Children will develop their mastering of number skills and use mathematical language to make comparisons and identify relationships.

- Understanding the World – Children will make sense of the physical world along with people, culture, and communities through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about the past, places, and the environment.
- Expressive Arts and Design – Children will explore and play with a 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. Children will develop the skills to choose which techniques they need for different projects.

The curriculum is planned through a series of themes that reflect and respond to the children's interests, offering experiences in all areas of the curriculum and which carry equal importance to provide a broad and balanced curriculum with opportunities for play and child- initiated activities.

The long-term plan is the I Can Curriculum. This is an overarching framework that informs all other stages of planning. It shows what we would like children to achieve at each point in the year, the range of experiences and learning opportunities that are available while children are in the early years along with key learning experiences, key vocabulary, and educational programmes.

Short term plans select activities and learning objectives from the long-term plan as deemed appropriate to meet the needs and interests of the children. Plans are extended and adapted accordingly.

A series of schemes are used in order to support our children to meet the Early Learning Goals at the end of Reception. Some of these include NCTEM Mastering Number, Little Wandle, Oldham RE Agreed Syllabus, Get Set 4 PE, Time to Talk and WellComm. Staff are currently in the process of Think Equal Training.

Planning should demonstrate a sequenced curriculum that promotes communication and language and provides a clear balance between meeting the needs of all children, building, and extending prior knowledge, along with challenging the most able children to meet the Early Learning Goals.

By the end of the Reception year, strong foundations will be in place, in preparation for children entering Year 1.

4. Classroom Organisation and Resources

The organisation of our Early Years Foundation Stage units reflect the importance that is placed on children learning through play and first-hand experience, developing independence and having opportunities to initiate their own activities.

Both our EYFS unit provide the following areas:

- Carpet areas
- Small world area for retelling and creating stories
- Role play area
- Basic skills and Funky Fingers areas
- Construction area
- Investigation Areas both seasonal and topic related
- Creative and workshop areas
- Sand and water
- Book corner with a range of fiction and non-fiction books
- Writing areas with a range of writing resources
- Phonics area
- Tabletop and small world toys
- Interactive whiteboard
- Malleable materials
- Musical instruments
- Painting and creative equipment
- Math's games and equipment

- Challenge areas
- Forest School in our Mayfield Woods
- Outside classrooms – a safe, fenced area for children to develop skills on a larger scale

EYFS also has a set of appropriate outdoor clothing in order to make full use of the outside classroom, school grounds, walks to Mayfield woods and our on-site Forest Schools area.

5. Use of Whole School Resources

- The hall, e.g.: for music, dance, drama, physical education, and assemblies.
- Use of school grounds and playgrounds.
- Forest School area (Mayfield Woods).
- The kitchen for a range of cooking activities.
- The Rainbow Room (for small group interventions)
- The Computer suite, which also contains a laptop trolley for use in classrooms.
- Large range of musical instruments.
- SEND Room
- Pastoral Room

6. Induction

We work closely with our families before they join us in Nursery and Reception. This involves Open Day events, additional visits to school and visits to outside settings.

Our EYFS lead also works closely with a range of pre-school settings and, in many cases, gets the opportunity to meet children and families before they join us.

A transition meeting to discuss children's transition records is held between staff from pre-school settings and the EYFS Lead in July, along with discussions with parents, for children who are starting our Nursery and for children who are new to our Reception class.

In June, meetings are held by the EYFS lead, EYFS teachers and Headteacher, to introduce parents/carers to the school, Nursery and Reception procedures and curriculum. Parents/carers are given a school prospectus which outlines the curriculum and school routines, as well as booklets to help them to support their child before and during their time in EYFS.

Similarly, children who are moving from the Nursery unit to the Reception unit are well supported and are given many opportunities to visit the Reception classroom, explore their new surroundings and become familiar with their teachers.

Nursery and Reception children are introduced to the life of the wider school gently as they are ready. Playtimes are separate, in the EYFS areas, allowing the children to settle with their classmates in a quiet atmosphere.

7. Transition to Year One

In the Summer term, children in Reception are supported in their preparations for entering Year One. Children have the opportunity to visit the Year One classrooms, become familiar with the surroundings and get to know their new teachers. Year One teachers will also observe Reception children in their normal routine and will regularly visit to read stories and lead carpet sessions. Reception and Year One teachers have meetings to discuss the needs and abilities of children moving up. Children also receive a transition booklet that they take home to explore with their families.

8. Involving Parents

Parents/carers are the child's first and most enduring educators. When parents/carers and practitioners work together in Early Years settings, the results have a positive impact on the child's development. A successful partnership needs to be a two-way flow of information, knowledge, and expertise. We aim to develop this by:

- Outlining how the EYFS is being delivered to parents/carers during the new parents' meeting in June, to enable them to understand the value of supporting their child's learning at home and how they can access more information.
- Curriculum letters / newsletters are sent home periodically to keep parents informed of their child's current curriculum and learning needs, with an outline of activities which could be undertaken at home to support this.
- Operating an "open door" policy, whereby parents/carers can come and discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner, and also to view children's work.
- Sharing progress at school through annotated photographs and observations in 'Online Learning Journeys' (Learning Book).
- Inviting parents/carers to accompany children on school visits.
- Discussing individual next steps and progress with parents/carers at parents' evening in Autumn and Spring terms.
- Providing an annual written report to parents/carers in July, summarising the child's progress against Development Matters, in Nursery, and the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) in Reception. An additional meeting is held for Reception parents, in the summer term, to discuss their child's progress, and characteristic of learning, at the end of EYFS.
- Workshops are provided for parents to showcase how children learn in Nursery and Reception.
- Any concerns in relations to additional needs will be discussed with parents and the Special Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENDCO) for the school.

9. Language and Literacy

Communication and Language:

Children will develop their listening and attention skills through carpet sessions, storytelling and discussions. They will increasingly be able to sit quietly and maintain concentration for longer periods of time and will be able to use new vocabulary introduced with growing confidence. Children will show understanding by answering open questions, following complex instructions and by beginning to ask their own questions about a topic. By the end of EYFS, the majority of children will be able to talk in full sentences, hold a turn taking conversation and use talk for a purpose. Children's communication, language and understanding is assessed using WellComm and interventions such as Big Book of Ideas and Time to Talk are delivered appropriately.

Literacy:

- At Mayfield, Little Wandle Revised Letters and Sounds is put into practice. In Reception, Phase Two begins as soon as the children begin the new school year. In Nursery, they begin the Foundations for Phonics in Autumn 2.
- Little Wandle (Letters and Sounds Revised) drives the teaching of reading across EYFS through the application of phonics to reading using matched decodable books. Children at Mayfield develop their fluency skills by reading fully decodable books that match their secure phonics knowledge. The Little Wandle scheme includes Reading Practice Sessions (guided read), which ensure children become fluent readers, who understand what they are reading. Reading Practice Sessions are timetabled daily and have a clear focus: decoding, prosody and comprehension. The books that are used during these sessions are very important; books are fully decodable and exactly matched to the Collins Big Cat books. Assessments are used to match the children's secure phonics knowledge in reading words to the right books, so children are successful when they learn to read
- In the first half term at school, children will begin to bring home a book so that parents/carers can support their child with the sounds he/she has learnt at school.
- The first books that children bring home to share with parents/carers will be books with simple repetitive text and rhymes, which will then extend to simple sentences based on their phonic ability. Reading for pleasure books are also taken home to allow children and parents to read together.
- Children are also able to choose a weekly library book which promotes a love of reading at home.
- Each child may also take home a range of reading games or activities that involve matching sounds and pictures; making, reading, and writing simple words that can be practiced at home.

10. Assessment and Recording

This is in line with the school Assessment Policy.

We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs and builds upon prior knowledge and learning. Assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage is where children are constantly observed and progress, attainment and learning styles are monitored closely. This is achieved through talking to children, looking at their work, observing their learning experiences and analysing data and progress by year group, class, groups and individuals using the EYFS Profile linked to the Early Learning Goals. We use this information to modify the teaching programme for individuals and groups of children and to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort of children. We share the profile information with parents at Parents' Evening in Autumn and Spring.

Observation notes, photos and samples of each child's work are kept electronically on Learning Book and analysed during the school year. Physical pieces of learning and work are placed in the children's Big Book of Everything.

This follows the school's policy on assessment and monitoring children's progress and offers opportunities to identify any learning gaps or additional needs the child may have. Progress is shared with parents to make them aware of the child's strengths and development needs and targets to give details of the child's general progress. Parents are given a record of their child's progress.

Early Learning Goals outline the level of development children should be expected to have attained by the end of the EYFS. The ELGs should not be used as a curriculum or in any way to limit the wide variety of rich experiences that are crucial to child development. The ELGs should support teachers to make a holistic, best-fit judgement about a child's development, and their readiness for Year 1.

The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is a short assessment, taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts Reception. Within Mayfield, we also undertake our own observational and written based assessment in Nursery and Reception to inform us of children's current stages of development in all areas of learning to support developing a curriculum that will enable all children to make progress.

In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, and no later than 30th June in that term, the EYFS Profile must be completed for each child. The Profile must reflect practitioners' own knowledge and professional judgement of a child to inform discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution. Each child's level of development must be assessed against the Early Learning Goals. Practitioners must indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). This is the EYFS Profile. Year 1 teachers must be given a copy of the Profile report. Early years providers must report EYFS Profile results to local authorities.

11. Monitoring and Evaluation

This is in line with the school self-evaluation procedures.

12. Ratios

Mayfield follows the 2023 Early Years Framework for adult: child ratios.

[Statutory framework for the early years' foundation stage \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/115202/Statutory_framework_for_the_early_years_foundation_stage.pdf)

13. Safety

Children's safety and welfare is vital. At Mayfield, we create a safe and secure environment based upon a curriculum that teaches children to be safe, lead their own learning and take risks. We have rigorous policies and procedures in place to ensure children's safety.

14. Special Educational Needs and Disability

Inclusion, including SEND, is at the heart of all that we do at Mayfield Primary School. Children's needs and abilities need to be met at the stage of development that they are currently at and opportunities for development are carefully planned and sequenced in order to ensure as much progress as possible.

Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff will consider whether specialist support is required, communicating with relevant services and agencies along with working in strong partnership with parents.

For further information, please see our **Accessibility Plan**.

15. Safeguarding

At Mayfield, we adhere to the Cranmer Education Trust Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

16. Roles and Responsibilities beyond the Class Teacher

Teaching Assistant

In EYFS, it is the Teaching Assistants' role to assist and support Nursery and Reception teachers as fully as possible. Teaching Assistants will collaborate with individuals and groups of children under the direction of the class teachers. They will be proactive in encouraging development in all areas of learning as well as leading interventions and aiding assessment, administration and enhancing the environment. Input and feedback to the class teachers is seen as a vital element in the education of the children.

Headteacher

The Headteacher's role is to support and challenge the EYFS lead, class teachers and Teaching Assistants, in order to secure the highest quality education to the children.