

Meadows Primary School and Nursery
Early Years Foundation Stage Policy 2017

Introduction

“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.

Principles.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

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 rewards to encourage and develop a positive attitude to learning.

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.

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 and stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging and achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning.

Learning and development. 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 rest. The seven areas of learning are defined so that children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Meadows we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying the 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.

The EYFS for children is from three 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 an holistic approach to learning ensuring that parents and guardians, support staff and the Foundation team work effectively together to support the learning and development of the children in their charge.

Aims

It is every child's right to grow up safe, healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and with economic well-being. The overarching aim of the EYFS is to help young children achieve these five outcomes.

We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically 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.

At Meadows we aim to:

Provide a safe and challenging, stimulating, caring and sharing environment that is sensitive to the needs of all children.

Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond.

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 and carers and value their contributions ensuring that all children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, gender or ability have the opportunity to reach their potential.

Provide opportunities whereby children experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development.

Provide experiences for all children, whatever their needs that are inclusive rather than parallel.

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

Maths

Understanding the world

Expressive art and design.

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

Playing and exploring

Active learning

Creating and thinking critically

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 planning shows that the principles of EYFSP 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 EYFSP is based around the children's interests. These plans are used by the EYFSP team as a guide for weekly planning. However, we may alter these in response to the needs of the children.

We make regular assessments of Children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects the identified needs. Assessment in the EYFSP 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 towards profiles that are kept on all children and shared with parents. At the end of Nursery and Reception a written report is made for each child and sent home to parents who then come to talk about their child's progress with the teacher.

Learning through play

At Meadows we do not make a distinction between work and play. Children learn through planned play activities and staff will decide when child-initiated or adult-led play activities would provide the most effective learning opportunities.

The induction process.

In Nursery new children are invited to spend a session with their parents or carers so that they can meet their new friends and have a taster session. Parents can ask any questions they may have and learn about the routines and expectations of the setting.

In Reception staff go out to meet children who have not attended our Nursery to make a first point of contact. They find out about children's likes and dislikes and preferred ways of working.

'Parents are invited to school for a meeting with the Head Teacher, Reception Teachers and the Learning mentor. They find out about school routines and expectations and staff are available to answer any questions.

When the children start school they attend half days then on build up to a full day by the end of the first week.

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 school and parents and carers as follows:

We will outline the school's expectations and curriculum offer on the school website.

We will hold parent consultation meetings three times per year to discuss progress and how the child is settling in.

Nursery staff will send home a weekly challenge for parents to do with their children and Reception will send home daily reading and weekly spelling and numeracy and literacy activities as homework.

We will publish our themes for each term on our website and on the parent notice board.

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 staff have concerns about the progress of a child, they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss them.

We will conduct workshops 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.

There will be opportunities for parents and carers to visit school on a volunteer basis to assist with the children's learning.

Intimate care

This is any care that involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. However depending on the age and stage of a child's development, they may need some support, for example, dressing, wiping their bottom after using the toilet and changing underwear and clothes following an accident.

Parents inform staff of those children likely to require such care and a discussion takes place regarding how their needs can be met as closely in school as they would be met at home. Parents provide clean clothing and are always informed when a child has needed such care.

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.

Privacy is maintained as far as possible and staff are always encouraged to change a child in the presence of another member of staff.

Intimate care is given to children who need it in line with our school policy. Parents are always informed when this care is given.

Inclusion 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.

In line with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy, we will provide all children regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability with equal access to all aspects of school life to ensure that every child is valued as an individual. All staff are role models and are aware of the influence they have in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical attitudes.

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