



Myton Park
Primary School

*Early Years Foundation
Stage Policy*

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APPROVED BY GOVERNING BODY:	<i>Full Governing Body</i>

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Our curriculum aims for high standards whilst providing valuable and memorable opportunities for all children to learn, grow and develop the skills, knowledge and understanding relevant to their needs now and their future lives. It promotes a willingness to question and explore, widen their horizons, develop their aspirations and instil self-belief.

Introduction

This document outlines the philosophy, aims and principles of early years learning and teaching in Myton Park Primary School. The document underpins practice in all areas of provision.

“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.”

“Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage”, Department for Education, 2012

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Myton Park we greatly value the important role that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development.

The EYFS applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Myton Park the EYFS applies to children attending from the age of three years to the end of the Reception year when they are five years of age.

Aims

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

We aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to his/her full potential. Each child is valued as an individual and learning and teaching is based on the understanding that children develop at different rates.

At Myton Park we aim to:

- *provide a safe, challenging, stimulating and caring environment which is sensitive to the needs of the child, including children with additional needs;*
- *provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for future learning and development;*
- *provide opportunities for children to learn through planned, purposeful play in all areas of learning and development in the indoor and outdoor environment;*
- *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/guardians and value their contributions;*
- *ensure that all children feel valued, respected and included and that classroom resources and activities reflect the culture and language of their homes.*

The EYFS is based upon three principles which together add up to Learning and Development:

- *A Unique Child*
- *Positive Relationships*
- *Enabling Environments*

A Unique child

At Myton Park 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, 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

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of ‘differences’. All children at Myton Park Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

In our school we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children’s range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop 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*

We strongly believe that early identification of special needs is crucial in enabling staff to support the development of each child and fully meet their needs. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage in an open, honest and sensitive manner and we will always seek their support and involvement. The school's SENCO is responsible for providing additional information and advice to practitioners and parents, and for arranging external intervention and support where necessary.

For further information see our Inclusion, and Gifted and Talented Policies.

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim 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 Children Policy)

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."

At Myton Park Primary School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2012. We understand that we are required to:

- safeguard children and promote their welfare;*
- promote good health;*
- manage children's behaviour;*
- ensure the suitability of all adults who have contact with children; (see Adult Suitability policy)*
- ensure that adults looking after children have appropriate qualifications, skills and knowledge;*
- ensure that staffing arrangements keep children safe;*
- ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose (see Suitable Premises policy)*
- ensure that organisational arrangements enable all children to have appositive learning and development experience;*
- ensure facilities are safe and suitable; and*
- maintain records, policies and procedures (see information for parents / carers).*

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

Positive Relationships

At Myton Park we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful and 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 feel a successful partnership needs to be a two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise and so we aim to provide a variety of opportunities to support this.

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;
- visiting all children in their home setting prior to their starting nursery;
- providing opportunities to visit nursery and spend time playing alongside the adults and children with their parents before starting Nursery,
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our Nursery and Reception class and allowing free access to the children's 'Learning Journey' books;
- encouraging parents to talk to the staff if there are any concerns
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: class assemblies, sports day etc;
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school;
- establishing an atmosphere of trust and confidence.
- sharing information about the curriculum through meetings e.g. reading
- providing opportunities for parents/carers to attend social events e.g grandparents afternoon
- inviting parents/carers into the classroom to share expertise/interests and time to work with and help the children and staff in a variety of ways.
- meeting with parents/carers to share children's achievements and together discuss next steps for development.
- encouraging home school links through support with the home school reading programme.
- sending newsletters/leaflets home about topics, displays, informal discussions, class and general boards sharing plans and other school and community information.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them.

Key person

Young children need to develop relationships to support their emotional well being and learning. A key working approach provides the child with a special adult to enable him/her to develop a secure attachment, the opportunity for the practitioner to develop a supportive relationship with the parents/carers and share the child's progress and development. Every child in the EYFS has a named key person. In our Nursery each practitioner is a key person – parents are made aware of who their child's key person is. In Reception the teacher acts a 'Key Person' to all children, supported by the Teaching Assistant.

Enabling Environments

At Myton Park we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Effective learning builds on and extends what children know and can already do. Our planning is informed by observations we have made of the children in order to understand and consider their current interests, experiences, development and learning needs.

We aim to create an attractive, welcoming and stimulating learning environment which will encourage children to explore, investigate and learn through first hand experience. We also aim to make it a place where children feel secure and confident, and are challenged to develop their independence. Activities are planned for both the inside and outside environment. Children have opportunities to work both in and outdoors during the session.

There are three stages of planning the curriculum:

Long Term Planning

The school Nursery and Reception classes currently organise the curriculum through agreed topics based mainly on the seasons and festivals over the period of the academic year. The topics cover areas that are familiar, of interest to young children and also enable us to deliver a creative and balanced curriculum. The long term cycle planning reflects a balance of the areas of learning and development from the EYFS.

Medium Term Planning

We address particular aspects of the curriculum in more detail for each term. Possible learning objectives, assessment opportunities, activities and experiences for each area of learning and development are identified. These plans are used by the EYFS teacher as a guide for weekly planning, however the teacher may alter these in response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children. This will be indicated on weekly planning.

Short Term Planning

The weekly plan is informed in two ways. Firstly, through on going observation of child initiated or spontaneous activity and planned play opportunities (indoors and outdoors). This allows for flexibility in

response to individual children's needs and interests and for revision and modification of plans. Through this, learning objectives for the next short term plan are identified. It is informed secondly by referring to the medium term plans containing objectives and activities/experiences in the half termly topic. We use objective planning in Nursery to support the children when they are initiating their own play in the areas
Plans are monitored half termly by the Headteacher.

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 located equipment and resources independently. The EYFS 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 than when indoors. It offers the children to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all areas of learning.

At Myton Park we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are interconnected.

Effective learning and teaching is supported through:

- the partnership between staff and parents that helps our children to feel secure at school, and to develop a sense of wellbeing and achievement;
- the understanding that staff have knowledge of how children develop and learn, and how this must be reflected in their teaching;
- the range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions, and extend and develop the children's play, talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage;
- 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 space, facilities and equipment, both indoors and outdoors, including the effective use of ICT;
- the identification, through observations, of children's progress and future learning needs, which are regularly shared with parents.

Areas of Learning and Development

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning ; three prime areas and four specific areas.

The three prime areas are:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development
- Communication and Language

These areas form the basis for successful learning in the specific areas and form the key skills that children need to develop and learn effectively, and become ready for school. As children get older the balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all the areas of learning.

The four specific areas are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the World
- Expressive arts and design

While these areas provide a framework for the early years curriculum, young children's learning does not easily divide up into distinct areas. A particular experience may develop learning over several areas at any one time. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

In planning and guiding children's activities, staff are guided by the way in which children learn:

Playing and Exploring

Well planned play, both indoors and outdoors is one of the key ways in which children learn. It is the process through which children can explore, investigate, recreate and come to understand their world. It is not just imaginative play and role play but includes spontaneous, self initiated lines of inquiry and exploration. Play is a

vital component of children's lives. It is an important way skills are developed and practised. Play is essential for physical, intellectual, linguistic, emotional, behavioural and social development.

Principles of High Quality Play

- Play is an intrinsic part of children's learning and development.
- Play has many possible but no prescriptive outcomes.
- Play challenges children and offers them the chance to learn in breadth and depth.
- Play draws on what children already know and can do and enables them to master what is new.
- Play enables children to apply existing knowledge and to practise their skills
- Play encourages children to communicate with others as they investigate or solve problems.
- Play offers children opportunities to explore feelings and relationships, ideas, and materials, connections and consequences.
- Play empowers children to make choices, to solve problems and to be independent in their learning.
- Play enables children to express fears or relive anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.
- Play encourages children to struggle, to take risks and to become resilient as learners.
- Play can be supported and extended but not interfered with by adults.
- Play presents no barriers to children because of their language, cultures, abilities or gender.

At Myton Park we do not make a distinction between work and play. We support children's learning through planned play activities, through observation of child-initiated or adult-led play activities and then provide the most effective learning opportunities. We believe that it is important for adults to support children's learning through play, by getting involved in the play themselves and modelling by example.

Active Learning

'Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects. Ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods'

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfactions as they take ownership of their learning.

Creating and thinking critically

"When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions."

Children should be given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

Assessment and Recordkeeping

We analyse and review what we know about each child's development and learning, and then make informed decisions about supporting the child's progress. This enables us to plan the next steps for individuals and groups of children by providing challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning. All practitioners who interact with the child contribute to the assessment process. Staff review the tracking data termly with the EYFS Leader monitoring rates of progress and identifying strategies that address learning and teaching priorities and next steps.

Formative assessment

This type of assessment informs everyday planning and is based on on-going observational assessment of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles. Formative assessment may take the form of anecdotal and focused narrative observations, other targeted assessments, annotated examples of work, photographs, and information from parents. We plan for observational assessment when undertaking short term planning.

Summative assessment

From September 2016 the EExAT tracking system will be used to track, summarise and evidence children's progress across the Foundation Stage. Most evidence will be paperless and held remotely, parents will be able to access this using a secure password system. Mark making evidence will be collected and kept in a file (Nursery) or a Learning journey (Reception). The Stockton assessment system, based on *Development Matters* is used to summarise and record evidence across the Foundation Stage. Children are baselined within 6 weeks of starting Nursery and this is completed termly and is informed by the formative assessments undertaken and makes statements about the child's achievements. It summarises children's progress towards the early learning goals and is used to inform the child's end of year report which is shared with parents.

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teacher to follow the principles stated in this policy.

There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. This governor will discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners regularly and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion.

The Head teacher and EYFS leader will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

Reviewed Summer Term 16

Next Review Date Summer Term 18