

New Marston Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

'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

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. At New Marston Primary School children are admitted to nursery during the year in which the child becomes three. Children are admitted to reception in the September following their fourth birthday. Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At New Marston Primary School we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development.

Aims & Objectives

We aim to support all children to become independent and collaborative learners. 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.

At New Marston Primary School, we will:

- Provide a happy, safe, stimulating and challenging programme of learning and development for the children to experience as they begin their journey through school.
- Provide a curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond and enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence.
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress.
- Develop excellent relationships with parents and carers to build a strong partnership in supporting their children.
- Provide a caring and inclusive learning environment which is sensitive to the requirements of the individual child including those who have additional needs.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based on four themes:

A Unique Child
Positive Relationships
Enabling Environments
Learning and Development

A Unique Child

At New Marston 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 and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and believe that every child matters. All children at New Marston Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, gender, religion or abilities. All families are valued within our school.

We give our children every opportunity to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when we are planning for their learning.

In the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations keyed to the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage. We do this 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 learn effectively;
- Offering a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Employing resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- Planning challenging activities to meet the needs of both boys and girls, of children with special educational needs, of children who are more able, of children with disabilities, of children from all social and cultural backgrounds, of children from different ethnic groups, and of those from diverse linguistic backgrounds;
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary (such as referrals to speech therapy) as necessary.
- Working closely with parents, carers and other outside agencies to ensure all children's needs are met and we enable them to access the curriculum and make good progress.

Positive Relationships

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

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents/carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value being partners with them in their child's education through:

- Arranging, where possible, visits by the teacher to all children in their home setting or childcare provision prior to their starting school.
- Providing a handbook of information about commencing Reception at New Marston.
- Outlining the school's expectations in the Home-School agreement.
- Inviting parents/carers and children the opportunity to spend time in Reception Class for three induction visits before starting school.
- Providing an induction meeting for Reception parents/carers to meet with staff to discuss school routines, expectations and to answer any questions parents/carers may have.
- Holding a parent consultation during the first term to establish how a child is settling into the school environment.

- Operating an open door policy for parents/carers with any queries or concerns. Conversely, if Foundation staff have concerns about the progress of a child, they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss them.
- Written contact through the school newsletters.
- Sending home Wow Stars slips designed to enable parents to record outstanding achievements.
- Publishing a termly theme map detailing the areas of learning.
- Inviting parents to attend information meetings about areas of the curriculum, such as phonics or reading.
- Sharing regularly the children's 'Learning Journey' with parents/carers and valuing the on-going contributions to this from parents/carers.
- Offering three parent/teacher consultation meetings per year at which their child's progress is discussed.
- Sending a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of the academic year.
- Asking parents to sign a generic permission form for visits and photographs etc.
- Parents are invited to a range of activities throughout the school year such as workshops, Christmas productions and sports day etc.

Staff

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

Enabling Environments

At New Marston Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development, where the children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision.

Play-based learning is paramount and children have opportunities to direct their own learning with planned opportunities provided by staff.

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning and reflects the individual's interests, passions and abilities. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning. We ensure that resources and spaces are safe to use and checked regularly. All areas of the curriculum can be explored outside.

Learning and Developing

The EYFS Curriculum – Our curriculum for the Foundation Stage reflects the areas of learning identified in the Early Learning Goals.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Our children's learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skill across a number of learning areas.

They require a balance of adult led and child initiated activities in order for most children to reach the levels required at the end of EYFS. 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.

The three Prime areas are:

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

Staff will also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The four Specific Areas are:

- ✚ Literacy
- ✚ Mathematics
- ✚ Understanding the world
- ✚ Expressive arts and design

Children's development levels are assessed with a focus on the prime areas in nursery. As children move into the reception class the balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning, as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

However, if a child's progress in any of the prime areas gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents/carers and agree how to support the child.

Nursery children participate in phase 1 phonics sessions following the guidance in the "Letters & Sounds" document and in line with school policy. In reception class, children also participate in a daily phonics sessions following the Read, Write Inc scheme.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

Playing and exploring - children will have opportunities to investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.

Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

Active learning - children will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements.

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

Creating and thinking critically - we encourage and support children to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Children should be given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning. Adults can support children's thinking and help them make connections by showing interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open-ended questions. Children can access resources and move around the classroom freely and purposefully to extend their learning.

Observation, Planning and Assessment

Observations

Foundation Stage staff make regular assessments of children's learning, and use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Staff are skilled at observing children to identify their achievements, interests and next steps for learning. Relevant and significant observations are recorded in the children's Learning Journeys.

Assessment

During the first term in nursery and reception, the teacher assesses the ability of each child. These assessments are ongoing and allow us to monitor progress of individual children and groups of children, in order to adjust the teaching. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of observations, photographic evidence and through planned activities. Assessment is completed regularly and involves both the teacher and other adults, as appropriate. The teacher keeps progress records and learning journals and records examples of each child's work. These progress books contain a wide range of evidence that we share with parents at each parental consultation meeting. Tracking grids are updated at the end of each term. We record each child's level of development to be beginning to work within, comfortably working within or securely working within the Development Matters age-bands. Children are expected to achieve a Good Level of Development (GLD) at the end of reception class. In order to achieve a GLD, they need to attain Early Learning Goals in the prime areas as well as in literacy and mathematics.

The Foundation Stage Profile is the assessment tool that enables teachers to assess children's level at the end of the Foundation Stage, and to summarise their pupils' progress towards the Early Learning Goals. It covers each of the seven areas of learning contained in the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage.

We record each child's level of development against the 17 Early Learning Goals as Emerging, Expected or Exceeding.

The Foundation Stage Profile is a statutory requirement.

The child's next teacher uses this information to make plans for the year ahead. We share this information too at parental consultation meetings and in the end-of-year report. Parents receive an annual written report that offers brief comments on each child's progress in learning. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs, and gives details of the child's characteristics of effective learning. We complete these in June, and send them to parents in early July each year.

Planning

The Early Learning Goals provide the basis for planning throughout the Foundation Stage. Planning objectives within the Foundation Stage are from the Development Matters Statements from the Early Years Foundation Stage document. Our medium-term planning identifies the intended learning, with outcomes, for children working towards the Early Learning Goals, and also for those working towards National Curriculum levels.

Transition

Starting at nursery or school can be a difficult time for young children; we therefore plan this time carefully to support children with the transition and to ensure it is as smooth as possible for each child and that they settle in to their new class quickly and happily.

Starting in the Early Years at New Marston

Parents of all children starting in the next academic year will be invited to an Induction Meeting in the summer term to meet their child's new teachers and other key staff and learn more about the Early Years curriculum and expectations. The children are given opportunities to come in to school to meet their new class teacher and other children in their class. They will spend a morning in their new class. Parents can leave their child during this session. This means that before they join their new class the Reception environment is already a familiar place to them.

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 or afternoon session only.

During the second week, children will begin staying for lunch and during this week will start to attend for the full school day unless Foundation staff and parents or guardians agree that it is not in the best interests of an individual child.

Safeguarding & 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.'
(Statutory Framework for EYFS 2014)

At New Marston Primary School, we understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2014.

- To provide a setting that is welcoming, safe and stimulating where children can grow in confidence;
- Promote good health;
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs
- To ensure that all adults who look after the children, or who have unsupervised access to them, are suitable to do so;
- Ensure that the setting, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for the purpose it was intended for;
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for the safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.
- All staff are trained to be aware of radicalisation and how to prevent children from being radicalised.

Keeping Safe

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. We encourage children to take risks and highlight the importance of keeping themselves safe by teaching them how to recognise and avoid

hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See New Marston Safeguarding Policy).

Good Health

All children are provided with a healthy snack each day as well as being given the choice of milk. They have access to water at all times.

Intimate Care

“Intimate” care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out any personal needs 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. In most cases, intimate care is to do with personal hygiene. 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 guardian of that child and all parents and guardians will be asked to provide that permission when their child joins reception at New Marston.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of those working in Reception to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Headteacher and EYFS co-ordinator will carry out monitoring on EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule. The Curriculum Committee of The Governing Body will also be part of this process. This policy will be reviewed in January 2018 or as necessary.

This policy was approved by the Governing Body of New Marston Primary School at their meeting on.....

Signed..... Chair of Governors