

North Marston CE School

Early Years Policy



'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'

EYFS Statutory Framework 2021

The EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. In our school, children join us full time from the September of the academic year in which they turn five.

The EYFS is based upon four key principles:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environment
- Learning and Development

These principles combine through the Characteristics of Effective Learning with are:

- Playing and Exploring - engagement
- Active Learning - motivation
- Creating and Thinking Critically - thinking

A Unique Child

'...children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time.'

EYFS Statutory Framework 2021

At North Marston CE School we are aware that children develop in the context of relationships and the environment around them. This is unique to each family and reflects individual communities and cultures. Planning in the EYFS reflect this, taking into account the gender, social and culture background, term of birth and personality of all children; as well as children with special educational needs, disabilities, English as an additional language and children who are more able.

Positive Relationships

At North Marston CE School we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent individuals through secure relationships. All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting politely with them and taking time to listen to them. At our school the EYFS lead teacher acts as a 'key person' to all children in the EYFS supported by a teaching assistant.

We aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children their families. We do this through:

- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the half term before their child starts school
- Giving the children the opportunity to spend time in the Reception classroom during the half term before they start school
- Encouraging parents to talk to their child's teacher if they have any concerns
- Inviting parents to come to open day events, to discuss and share their child's work with them and to give their child the opportunity to show them around the learning environment

Parents receive a written report during the second half of the year detailing their child's progress and attainment based around the Characteristics of Effective Learning. At the end of the Foundation Stage parents receive information on their child's attainment against the Early Learning Goals. Parents are given the opportunity to discuss these judgements with the teacher and both parents and children are encouraged to complete a feedback sheet.

Enabling Environments

At North Marston CE School we recognise that the environment plays a key role supporting and extending children's development. Through observations we assess the children's interests, stages of development and learning needs, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend all children's learning

The planning within the EYFS is based around termly themes. These plans are used by the class teacher as a guidance for weekly planning, however they may be altered in response to the needs, achievements and interests of the children. Any changes are indicated on weekly planning.

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 take the form of observations carried out by the teacher and other adults as appropriate. These observations are recorded in a variety of ways and are used to track the children's progress against the Development Matters age band area and the Early Learning Goals.

Reception is organised to allow the children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet or rest. The class is set up in learning areas where children can locate equipment and resources independently. Reception has its own outdoor area. Being outdoors offers children further opportunities to explore, use their sense, develop their language skills and be physically active. We plan activities and resources both inside and outside; enabling the children to develop in all areas of learning.

Outdoor learning is further supported in weekly Forest School sessions that all children in the Early Years Foundation Stage attend.

Safety in the Environment

It is important to us that all children in the school are safe. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and help them to understand why these exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skills. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children while allowing them to manage age-appropriate risks.

At North Marston CE School, we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework of Early Years Foundation Stage.

We understand that we are required to:

- Promote the welfare of children
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs
- Ensure all adults who look after children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so
- Ensure that premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning experiences that are tailored to meet their individual needs
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for the safe and efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

Learning and Development

At North Marston CE School, we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and have their own learning style. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are often linked.

The EYFS is made up of three prime areas of learning:

- Personal Social and Emotional Development (making relationships, self-confidence and self-awareness, managing feelings and behaviour)
- Physical Development (Moving and handling, health and self-care)
- Communication and Language (listening and attention, speaking, understanding)

And four specific areas of learning

- Literacy (reading, writing)
- Mathematics (Number, Space shape and measure)
- Understanding the World (People and communities, the world, technology)
- Expressive Arts and Design (Being imaginative, exploring and using media and materials)

Children should be given opportunity to be creative through all areas learning, not just 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.

None of the areas can be developed in isolation from the others. All areas are developed through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities.

Play

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They have the opportunity to practice skills, develop ideas and think creatively alongside other children as well as individually. The children communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They have the opportunity to express fears and process anxious experiences in a controlled and safe environment.

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have independence and control of their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions, providing children with a sense of satisfaction and ownership of their learning.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of the Reception teacher to follow the principles stated in this policy. There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. This Governor has the opportunity to discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion.

The head teacher and subject coordinators carry out monitoring of the EYFS through observation and discussion as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

Sam Manser - Reception teacher 2022

Date for review - September 2023