

Menston Primary School



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy (STATUTORY)

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Menston Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Introduction

This policy is written for teaching and non-teaching staff, parents, supply teachers, trainees and governors. This policy should be read in conjunction with the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021*, practice guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage, the Values and Ethos Statement and all other relevant policies.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Framework (EYFS) is a single quality framework for children from birth to the end of the school Reception year. At Menston Primary the Foundation Stage is FS2 (Reception Year).

Rationale

This policy aims to ensure that:

- children access a broad and balanced curriculum which gives them the range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- there is quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- a close working partnership exists between staff and parents and/or carers
- every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

At Menston Primary School our intention is to provide a high-quality early years' experience. It is essential that children are made to feel secure and valued in their surroundings and that they are prepared in both their knowledge and self-confidence for their future school years.

Ethos

Our ethos in Foundation is to support the children so that they:

- love coming to school
- are kind, respectful and tolerant of all others
- are independent and able to take care of their own needs
- are curious, excited and committed learners
- look after the school environment including our resources
- have a passion for the natural world
- make good or better progress from their starting point
- have a developing awareness of the past and life outside Menston Primary.

Foundation staff at Menston Primary:

- provide a stimulating and secure learning environment
- strive hard to ensure children feel happy and safe and know they are highly valued as individuals
- offer learning experiences that are exciting, purposeful and relevant to the children
- provide a well-resourced and carefully planned play-based curriculum, building on what the children already know, a curriculum which takes into account the interests of the children and which will help children to achieve the expected level (age-related) at the end of Reception
- encourage children to take an active part in their learning in order to develop a positive attitude to learning
- monitor the development of all children to ensure that progress is being made and to identify and provide support for any difficulties the children encounter

- provide a balance between adult-led and child-initiated learning.

Curriculum

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Menston Primary School, the EYFS is our Reception year (4-5 year-olds).

The EYFS is based upon four overarching principles:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments with teaching and support from adults
- Learning and Development

A Unique Child

Here at Menston 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.

Positive Relationships

At Menston Primary School we recognise that children learn to be independent from secure relationships. We work hard to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families. All staff involved with the EYFS aim to foster good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At our school the EYFS teacher acts a 'Key Person' to all children in their class, supported by the Teaching Assistants.

We have strong links with Menston Pre-school and other local pre-school providers. Before children start school, EYFS teachers speak to all current settings about the children coming to school so that they can support the new intake as soon as children begin.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. 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 children and parents *before* they start school
- offering a new parent Welcome Evening in Summer 2
- offering children a Stay and Play transition session in Summer 2
- writing directly to children in Summer 2 as part of their transition and sending them 4 newsletters in July
- offering a Foundation Curriculum Evening to new parents in Autumn 1
- offering two EYFS celebration of learning assemblies over the year, one halfway through the year and one in July
- regularly sharing children's learning with parents via their online learning journey on Tapestry
- welcoming contributions from families in children's learning journeys
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns.

Enabling Environments

Here at Menston Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning. Children learn well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents/carers.

The Learning Environment

The EYFS classrooms are 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 classrooms are set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The EYFS has its own enclosed outdoor area. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than that provided indoors. It enables the children to explore the natural world, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. During continuous provision times, we offer a free-flow system where children can move freely between indoor and outdoor areas.

Learning and Development

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.

Teaching and Learning Style

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in all phases, including the EYFS. Features that relate to the EYFS are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement
- the understanding that teachers have of how young children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching
- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS
- 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 indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school.

Play

"Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults" (*Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2021*).

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and 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. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Planning and provision takes account of the **Characteristics of Effective Learning**:

- Playing and Exploring
- Active Learning
- Creating and Thinking Critically

Playing and Exploring

Children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'. Through play, our children are able to investigate, explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas and learn how to control themselves and follow basic rules to keep themselves and others safe. They have opportunities to think creatively with other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

Active Learning

Children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements. Active learning occurs when children are both motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make their own decisions. Children experience a sense of pride as they take ownership of their learning.

Creating and Thinking Critically

Children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things. Children should be given opportunities to be creative through all areas of learning, not just the arts. Adults are able to support children's thinking by helping them to make connections and by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas (known as the Prime Areas) are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

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

The four Specific Areas of Learning are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design.

In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELGs) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

The Prime Areas are fundamental throughout the EYFS. Specific Areas include essential skills and knowledge and provide important contexts for learning. We plan topics which reflect the children's interests and that offer opportunities to extend children's ideas and interests. Learning experiences are thoughtfully and purposefully planned to ensure all children have access to a rich and stimulating curriculum with due emphasis given to quality play experiences.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

We assess children in all areas of learning through observation, questioning, interactions with children and adults, examples of work, collecting information from parents, carers, childcare providers and local pre-school settings. The ways of recording and reporting assessments and observations we do include baseline assessments (including the Reception Baseline Assessment), observations, and teacher knowledge assessment linked to progress and the end of year ELGs.

In June, teachers complete the EYFS Profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 ELGs, indicating whether they are:

- meeting expected levels of development
- not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging').

End of year outcomes are shared with Bradford Authority (who have a statutory duty to send end of EYFS data to the government), parents and Year 1 teachers. We work with other local schools to ensure consistency of assessment.

Verbal reports are given to parents at Parents' Evenings and through progress reports over the year. A final written report is shared with parents in July.

Organisation of Teaching

Children are grouped in a variety of ways depending upon the learning experiences being provided including whole class, small groups and individual. An integrated day is operated so that children's needs and interests are catered for. We run intervention programmes for children who need aspects of learning to be reinforced, for example in phonics, number, early writing and motor skills. We work with SEND professionals to make sure that specific programmes such as speech and language therapy interventions are delivered appropriately.

Equal Opportunities

All pupils are given equal opportunities to reach their full potential throughout the Foundation Stage, regardless of their race, gender, cultural background, ability or of any physical or sensory difficulty. Children with specific needs are identified with support from school SEND co-ordinator and appropriate intervention is provided.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children in our care are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school. 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.

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.

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 the EYFS, 2021).

We promote good oral health as well as good health in general at Menston Primary.

At Menston Primary School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements and we understand that we are required to:

- be alert to any issues of concern in the child’s life at home or elsewhere, following our Child Protection procedures where concerns are raised
- ensure that staff have up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues and are equipped to respond to concerns in a timely and appropriate way
- 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 the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so
- ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
- ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs
- maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

Monitoring and Evaluation

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teachers 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 other senior leaders will carry out monitoring of the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

This policy is written with reference to the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021* and will be reviewed and updated annually or when statutory guidance changes.

Next review due: November 2025