

# Menston Primary School



## **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy (STATUTORY)**

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## **Menston Primary School**

### **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

#### **1. 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 *Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework*, practice guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage, the school's 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).

Menston Primary is a member of the Moorlands Learning Trust. EYFS practitioners within the Trust work together to develop best practise and moderate assessments.

#### **2. Aims**

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/guardians
- 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.

#### **3. 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 most 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.

#### 4. Structure

At Menston Primary School, the EYFS is our Reception year (4-5 year-olds). There are two classes, each with their own class teacher and at least one teaching assistant. Children and staff across the year group work very closely together.

#### 5. Principles

The EYFS is based upon four overarching principles:

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

##### 5.1 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.

##### 5.2 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.

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
- offering children transition session where they access the classrooms
- writing directly to children and sending them 4 newsletters in July
- offering a Foundation Curriculum Evening to new parents in Autumn 1
- offering learning-based workshops to parents
- 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.

### 5.3 Enabling Environments

Here at Menston Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Adults begin 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/guardians.

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 more physically active and exuberant. During continuous provision times, we offer a free-flow system where children can move freely between indoor and outdoor areas.

## **6. The Curriculum Teaching and Learning**

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 children have access to a rich and stimulating curriculum with due emphasis given to quality play experiences.

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. 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, which are shared through communications with parents
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school.

Children learn through a mixture of adult-led inputs, small group work, 1:1, child-initiated activities and from peers. Much of the planning is bespoke to Menston but we do follow schemes of work for some areas of learning:

- Phonics: Essential Letters and Sounds, Oxford Owl
- Maths: National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Maths, Mastery Scheme
- Art and Design: Kapow
- RE: Believing and Belonging
- PSED: Coram Life Education and My Happy Minds

## **7. Play**

Play is essential for children's development. 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 relieve anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

## **8. Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning**

Planning and provision takes account of the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning, defined by the non-statutory curriculum guidance *Development Matters* as:

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

### 8.1 Playing and Exploring

Children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'. Our children will begin to realise that their actions have an effect on the world, they will plan and explore, grow in independence, develop their own areas of interest and respond positively to new learning experiences.

### 8.2 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. Our children will learn how to follow routines. They will keep trying when things are difficult, work towards goals and any correct mistakes they have made. Our children will experience a sense of pride as they take ownership of their learning.

### 8.3 Creating and Thinking Critically

Children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things. Our children are given opportunities to be creative through all areas of learning, not just the arts. They will become increasingly confident in their own ideas and make links between different ideas.

### **9. 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 (the Statutory Reception Baseline Assessment and bespoke assessments), observations, and teacher knowledge assessment linked to progress and the end of year ELGs. Data is moderated internally, and with local schools and those in our Trust. Staff used *Development Matters* guidance when making their decisions.

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.

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.

### **10. Organisation of Teaching and Learning**

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.

### **11. 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.

### **12. 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.

### **13. Safeguarding and Welfare**

Children are the most effective learners when they feel safe, secure and happy in school, when they have developed positive relationships with those around them and when their needs have been met.

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
- comply with infant class size legislation and have at least 1 teacher for 30 children
- ensure that there is at least 1 qualified paediatric first-aider on site at all times, and a qualified paediatric first-aider accompanies all trips
- 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.

### **14. 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 and provide feedback to the whole governing body as required.

The Head teacher and other senior leaders will carry out monitoring of the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

Next review due: May 2025