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The John Moore Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage

School Policy

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1 Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is for children from birth to five years of age.

The final year of the EYFS is referred to as the Reception year.

At The John Moore Primary School we greatly value the important role that EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for the rest of a child's school life and not simply the end of the EYFS Curriculum.

"When we succeed in giving every child the best start in their early years, we give them what they need today. We also set them up with every chance of success tomorrow"
(Development Matters, 2020).

All children begin school with a variety of experiences and learning. It is the privilege of the teachers and teaching partners working in Reception to take on the opportunity of building upon that prior learning and experience. This is done through a holistic approach to learning, ensuring that parents/carers and all school staff work effectively together to support children's learning and development.

2 Aims

To continue the learning journey for each individual child throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage.

To ensure that the four guiding principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage document underpin effective practice in our foundation stage classrooms:

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**.
- 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. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- The importance of **learning and development**, children develop and learn at different rates.

3 Curriculum

The curriculum is constructed around the three prime areas and the four specific areas of learning as defined in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The three prime areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving. The three **Prime Areas** are:

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

The three prime areas are strengthened and applied in the four **Specific Areas**:

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

(These are detailed further in Appendix 1)

4 The Learning Environment

Children learn best through playful and fun activities where they can make links in their learning. Alongside our adult-led inputs and activities, we plan opportunities for Literacy and Maths activities in the environment as well as creative and investigative activities linked to our topics. The children are given opportunities for child-initiated play, making regular use of a wide range of resources and equipment to support their learning.

The outdoor area is used as an extension to the classroom, the majority of activities undertaken inside can also be completed outside. We recognise many children are drawn to learning outside, therefore the outdoor area is used to deliver many aspects of the Foundation Curriculum.

Foundation Stage children also have regular opportunities to participate in Outdoor Learning sessions. During these sessions they learn about the environment, habitats and seasonal changes. They learn skills of co-operation and communication whilst constructing with natural materials and creating art from naturally found items. They also have many opportunities for Physical, Personal and Social development through teamwork and co-operation.

5 Planning

- Coverage of the Educational Programmes is achieved through the delivery of topics, as identified in the long-term plan. Literacy and Maths are linked to topics whenever possible.
- Weekly plans are completed for Literacy, Maths and topic-related work through teacher-led activities, and teacher-directed tasks. The opportunities for child-initiated play are detailed on these plans. This is organised in a way that will ensure that there is a balance of activities over a period of time.
- Children are encouraged to be as independent as possible by being given responsibility for finding and tidying away resources. The time involved in the early stages preparing children to be independent is well spent, as it lays a good foundation for the way they will work throughout the school.

6 Induction of Reception children

6.1 Induction Meeting

- Parents/carers are invited to a Welcome Meeting which takes place during the Summer Term to welcome and provide all the necessary information for starting school.
- Children are provided with a number of items as a gift from the school in preparation for them starting school.

6.2 Prior to starting school

- In the Summer term, the Foundation Stage leader will make contact with the pre-school settings to discuss any key information which they may wish to pass on.
- Once places have been officially allocated and accepted, visits will be offered during the second half of the summer term, for children to spend time in the Reception classroom with the Teacher and Teaching Partner.
- During the summer term, parents/carers will be offered a home visit from the Reception Teacher and Teaching Partner. This will provide an opportunity for the teaching team to build relationships with both the child and their parent/carer in their own environment. An appointment in school is offered as an alternative if preferred.

6.3 Autumn term intake

- The children's entry to school will be staggered over approx. 7 days; the class will be divided into two groups according to age, starting with the oldest children.
- The entry timetable is constructed so that each group attends separately for half-day sessions in the mornings or the afternoons. The children's time in school will be lengthened to include lunch and lunchtime play, and then the whole school day. Baseline assessments will be carried out during that time.
- Some children may require a longer induction period into school. This will be discussed on an individual basis between school and parents/carers.
- There will be a Reception Curriculum Evening for all parents/carers to offer an insight into the way learning is structured and to share ideas on how they can best support their child's learning at home.

6.4 Why is there a shorter induction period?

- It enables the Reception team to begin delivering the curriculum and support children to start learning routines more quickly.
- Some children will be used to full days from full-time attendance at pre-school settings as well as supporting working parents/carers.

- Children will be able to start developing friendships with their peers.

7 Assessment and Record Keeping

7.1 Assessment through Observation

Children give indications of their learning all of the time through what they say, what they do, how they approach activities etc., and it is primarily by observing children that judgements are made to inform records and planning. Observations take place each day through adult-directed activities in Literacy and Maths, child-initiated activities and interactions with the children. These observations are recorded in a variety of ways e.g. photographs, post-it notes, annotations on work and in the child's electronic Learning Journey (Tapestry). Parents/carers are also encouraged to share their observations and experiences of their child at home via Tapestry.

7.2 Baseline Assessment

As a school we carry out the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment which is a short assessment in the areas of early mathematics, literacy, communication and language. This data will be compared to Key Stage 2 outcomes to form an overall progress measure.

We also carry out our own baseline assessments for all children to ensure we can address specific next steps for each child and ensure that they make continued progress throughout their Reception year and subsequent school years. The data is collected through various methods such as activities and observations by the adults involved with the child during their school day.

7.3 Record Keeping

- Records of each child's progress within the educational programme will be kept in accordance with county policy, ensuring that there is continuity of record keeping between settings. The Reception teacher will record their findings on Insight Tracker each term.
- Pupils' progress during the year is shared at Parents' Evenings which are held in the Autumn and Spring terms, with an optional evening in the Summer term. The end of year school report shows whether pupils are Emerging or Expected for each of the Early Learning Goals in the seven areas of learning by the end of the Foundation Stage.
- The profile data is discussed with the Year 1 teacher so that he/she can continue to help the children to achieve the Early Learning Goals if they have not done so before they can access the Key Stage 1 Curriculum.

8 Parents as Partners

We hope to encourage a strong partnership between home and school, so that parents/carers feel involved in their child's learning. We provide opportunities for parents/carers to join their child in their learning at school with special events such as Phonics and Maths lessons and a weekly Sparkle Spot session. Likewise we would like to recognise children's personal achievements at home with Sparkle Vouchers, that both teachers and parents/carers can use to recognise a child's achievements.

- A Starting School booklet will be available with all the practical details concerning the children's induction into school.
- There will be opportunities to attend various Curriculum sessions throughout a child's time at our school, with a specific Reception Curriculum Evening in the Autumn term.
- Parents/carers will be provided with an 'Overview' each term which details the topics and areas of learning we will be covering in class.
- In Reception we use 'Tapestry' for our online learning journey which we encourage parents/carers to participate in and share their experiences from home (more information about this is given out once their child has started school).
- Each year group uses ClassDojo as a way to share their class' story with parents/carers at home. It allows parents/carers to gain an insight into their child's learning and class events.
- We welcome and encourage parents/carers to talk to staff at a mutually convenient time if they have concerns about any aspect of their child's progress in school.
- Staff will involve parents/carers in behavioural and academic issues as they arise.

9 Equal Opportunities

At The John Moore Primary School we provide all pupils, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability, equal access to all aspects of school life and work to ensure that every child is valued fully as an individual. Staff, as role models, are aware of the influence of adults in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical ideas.

10 Inclusion

Children with additional educational needs will be given support as appropriate to enable them to benefit from the curriculum. This includes children that are more able, and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities. Additional adult support may be provided for children with special needs, thus increasing the adult/pupil ratio. The school's Inclusion Manager is available to provide additional information and advice to practitioners and parents/carers, and for arranging external intervention and support where necessary.

11 Safeguarding and 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." (DfE, 2014)

At The John Moore Primary School we provide a welcoming, safe, secure and stimulating environment enabling all children to develop into independent and confident individuals. Please also refer to the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Health and Safety Policy.

12 Other linked policies

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy (including Local Offer)
- Behaviour in Schools Policy
- Attendance Policy
- First Aid Policy

Appendix 1

The areas of learning and development support, foster, promote and develop children's development, as detailed in the Educational Programmes:

Prime Areas

- 1. Communication and Language** – The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. Through conversation, story-telling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.
- 2. Personal, Social and Emotional Development** – Children's personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently. Children should be supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary. These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.
- 3. Physical Development** – Physical activity is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being. Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination, which is later linked to early literacy.

Specific Areas of Learning

- 1. Literacy** – It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).
- 2. Mathematics** – Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. By providing frequent and varied opportunities to build and apply this understanding - such as using manipulatives, including small pebbles and tens frames for organising counting - children will develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary from which

mastery of mathematics is built. In addition, it is important that the curriculum includes rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures. It is important that children develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, ‘have a go’, talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.

3. **Understanding the World** – Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range of children’s personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them as well as listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world. Enriching and widening children’s vocabulary will support later reading comprehension
4. **Expressive Arts and Design** – The development of children’s artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. The quality and variety of what children see, hear and participate in is crucial for developing their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate through the arts.

DfE (2021) *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage*