



**DIXONS
MARCHBANK
PRIMARY**

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

RESPONSIBILITY FOR REVIEW: EY Lead

Date of review: 28.03.2023

OUR VALUES

'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)

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Dixons Marchbank we greatly value the importance that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. However, we also believe that early childhood is valid in itself as part of life. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Dixons Marchbank Primary School children are admitted to Nursery after their third birthday and to Reception in the September following their fourth birthday.

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.

THE SCOPE OF THIS POLICY

At Dixons Marchbank 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 broad, balanced, relevant and creative 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 education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- It builds on what our children already know and can do;
- It ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged;
- It offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children, and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
- It provides a rich and stimulating environment;
- It acknowledges the importance of a full working partnership with parents and carers.

PROCEDURES

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based on four themes:

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

A Unique Child

At Dixons Marchbank 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, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

At 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, skills, 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

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

- Talking to parents/carers before their child starts school at our open days and induction meetings.
- Arranging visits to all children in their home setting or childcare provision prior to their starting school.
- Providing a handbook of information about commencing Nursery and Reception.
- Outlining the school's expectations in the Home-Academy agreement.
- Inviting parents/carers and children to spend time in Nursery and Reception 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.
- 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.
- Providing half-termly class newsletters and 100% sheets detailing the areas of learning and the overarching theme.
- Sharing regularly the children's 'Learning Journey' with parents/carers on Tapestry.
- Encouraging parents/carers to contribute to their child's online Tapestry Learning Journal.
- Inviting parents to attend workshops about areas of the curriculum, such as phonics or reading.
- Offering parent/teacher consultation meetings over the year at which their child's progress is discussed.
- Sending a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of their time in Nursery and Reception.
- Asking parents to sign a generic permission form for visits, food tasting and photographs etc.
- Parents are invited to a range of activities throughout the school year such as assemblies, workshops, productions and sports day etc.
- Offering opportunities for parents and carers to visit the school on a volunteer basis to share their expertise and to assist with the children's learning e.g. hearing readers, food preparation.

Enabling Environments

The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development, where they feel confident, secure and challenged. 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.

Classroom Organisation and Resources

The organisation of the classroom reflects the importance that is placed on children learning through play and first-hand experience, developing independence and having opportunities to initiate their own activities.

The Nursery and Reception class provides the following areas:

- Small world tray for retelling stories
- Role play area
- Large and small construction
- Sand and water area
- Book corner with a range of fiction and non-fiction books
- Writing table with a range of writing resources
- Maths table with games and equipment
- Small world toys
- Interactive whiteboard
- Musical instruments
- Painting and creative equipment
- Outside classroom – a safe, fenced area including a giant sand pit, den, Maths and writing sheds, A Reading Shelter, mud Kitchen, planting areas, water trays, outside physical toys.

Nursery and Reception class also has a set of boots and waterproof clothing in order to make full use of the outside classroom.

Learning and Developing

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 and cannot be delivered in isolation from the others. 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. At specific times in the day the children will take part in an activity that is adult led. Such sessions include daily phonics lessons and daily maths/counting sessions.

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**

This area focuses on making relationships, self-confidence and self-awareness, and managing feelings and behaviour. This is critical for very young children in all aspects of their lives and gives them the best opportunity for success in all other areas of learning.

- **Communication and Language**

This area encourages developing competence in listening and attention, and in understanding and speaking.

- **Physical Development**

This area focuses on the child's developing physical control and moving and handling.

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

Specific Areas:

- **Literacy**

This focuses on reading and writing. Children are taught phonics throughout the EYFS.

- **Mathematics**

This area focuses on learning through practical activities and on using numbers and numerical patterns.

- **Understanding of the World**

This area focuses on children's developing knowledge and understanding of their own environment, through learning about people and communities, the world and past and present. It forms the foundation for later work in Science, Design and Technology, History, RE and Geography..

- **Expressive Arts and Design**

This area focuses on the development of the child's imagination and his or her ability to communicate and express ideas and feeling in creative ways. It incorporates exploring and using media and materials. Creativity is fundamental to successful learning.

Children's development levels are assessed and as the Foundation Stage progresses, 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.

Pupils participate in daily phonics sessions, following the Read, Write Inc programme documentation to meet their needs and diminish the difference between the baseline and national age-related expectations in line with school policy.

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.

Planning

The development matters statements and Early Learning Goals provide the basis for planning throughout the Foundation Stage. These can be found in the Development matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage document and the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/development-matters--2>)

Observations - Foundation Stage staff use observations as the basis for planning. Staff are skilled at observing children to identify their achievements, interests and next steps for learning. These observations then lead the direction of the planning.

Assessment and Learning Journeys

Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal Assessment is completed regularly and involves both the teacher and other adults, as appropriate. The collection of assessment data in the Foundation Stage Profile is a statutory requirement.

Each child has an online Tapestry Learning Journey which records their time in Nursery and Reception. Relevant and significant observations are recorded through photographs, written commentaries, planned activities and pieces of work throughout the year and parents have access to these through the Tapestry App. Learning Journeys record children's progress over the academic year in all Areas of Learning and Development of the EYFS framework.

Key Workers

All children have a key worker who is responsible for compiling their learning journey and who helps them to settle in. However, the class teacher has the overall responsibility of the children's progress and attainment.

Teaching & Learning Styles

The features of effective teaching and learning in our school relate to the Foundation Stage as much as they do to the teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 or 2.

The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the Foundation Stage are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, carers and other settings that helps our children to feel secure at school, and to develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this must be reflected in their teaching;

- the range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations,
- make appropriate interventions, and extend and develop the children's play, talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage;
- 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 space, facilities and equipment, both indoors and outdoors;
- the identification, through observations, of children's progress and future learning needs, which are regularly shared with parents;
- the good relationships between our school and the other educational settings in which the children have been learning before joining our school;
- the clear aims of our work, and the regular monitoring of our work to evaluate and improve it;
- the regular identification of training needs for all adults working within the Foundation Stage.

Transition

Starting 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 Nursery – As children approach their third birthday they will be invited to visit our nursery with a parent/carer. A meeting will be arranged in order to gather more information about the child so that their needs and interests can be catered for. Once a child reaches their third birthday parents/carers may leave their child for increasing lengths of time according to individual needs, up to 3 hours.

Starting Reception - 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 Reception curriculum. This is an opportunity for staff to:

- Go through the school handbook
- Explain about uniform, PE kit, book bags and school dinners/ free school meals
- Explain about holidays and absences
- Explain the arrangements for starting Reception

Transition Week – Reception children are given the opportunity to come in to school to meet their new class teacher and other children in their class. Parents may choose to leave their child during this session. This means that before they join their new class the environment is already a familiar place to them.

Arrangements are also made for the children's new class teacher to visit them in their current nursery setting or at home. Starting in Key Stage 1 (Year 1) - Throughout the Reception year, each child's involvement in whole school life will have been built upon; many of the teaching and support staff will already be familiar people to them. Children have the opportunity to meet their new class teacher and spend time in their new class during the summer term.

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)

We understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2014. (See Dixons Marchbank Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy).

- 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

Intimate Care

Where pupils require the support of a member of the class staff team to complete personal care and intimate care routines, staff will follow procedure as set out in the Personal and Intimate Care Policy and Staff Code of Conduct in line with the whole school.