



# **EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY 2021-2022**

**Effective Date: May 2021**

**Last Reviewed:**

**Reviewed by: Miss K Hayward**

**Next Review Date: May 2022**

## INTRODUCTION

This policy outlines the provision Moggerhanger Primary Schools offers to all its children in Chicks and Robins (aged three to five years old). Children within this age range are taught in our Pre-school or Reception Class, which follow the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## INTENT

The staff and governors at Moggerhanger Primary School are passionate about the education of all children; none more so than those children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. We believe that providing children with an excellent start to their educational journey is imperative if they are going to reach their full social, emotional, physical and academic potential in the longer term. Therefore, as in the rest of the school, we work tirelessly in order to provide the children with the best possible Early Years education.

As outlined in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, '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 can have a major impact on their future life chances.'

## **Aims of the EYFS**

The Early Years Foundation Stage seeks to provide:

- Quality and consistency in all early years, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- A secure foundation of opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each individual child and are assessed regularly and reviewed
- Partnership working between practitioners and with parents/carers
- Equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported
- Learning and development requirements covering the areas of learning, the early learning goals and the assessment arrangements at the end of reception year in school
- Safeguarding and welfare requirements that cover the steps providers must take to keep children safe and promote their welfare.

## **Four Principles of EYFS**

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based on four important principles that shape the practice in our early years setting:

- **A unique child** - Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- **Positive relationships** - Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- **Enabling environments** - 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/care

- **Learning and development** - Children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years settings, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

### **Seven Areas of Learning**

Within the 'Learning and development' theme, there are seven areas of learning, which shape the educational curriculum in our early years setting. These 7 areas are split between prime and specific areas of learning. All areas are interconnected, but there are three areas that are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, for building children's capacity for learning and to help them form relationships and thrive.

The 3 prime areas are:

- **Communication and language** - giving children opportunities to speak and listen in a range of situations and to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves
- **Physical development** - providing opportunities for young children to be active and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy food choices
- **Personal, social and emotional development** - helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

The 4 specific areas are:

- **Literacy** – encouraging children to read and write, both through listening to others reading and beginning to read and write themselves. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials – books, poems, and other written materials, to ignite their interest
- **Mathematics** – providing children with opportunities to practise and improve their skills in counting, calculating simple additions and subtractions, and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures
- **Understanding the world** – guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment
- **Expressive arts and design** - involves supporting children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

### **The Early Learning Goals**

The Early Learning Goals (ELGs) are the goals or targets for children to achieve at the end of their reception year. They will be working towards these goals throughout the EYFS. These can be found in the Early Years Foundation Stage online.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

### **Learning in the EYFS**

Children gain most from school if their learning experiences are based on their own knowledge and understanding; developed from learning that has already been established at home or in the community. Children develop learning at their own individual pace. Therefore, it is important that the curriculum is planned to support the needs of each individual child, play is a large element and is valued and seen as a vehicle for active learning. Children need this important process to develop their knowledge, and to learn and practice skills. With this in mind, we ensure that in the Early Years Foundation Stage we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the Early Years Foundation Stage, across the seven areas of learning, using play as the vehicle for learning
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice; we provide early intervention for those children who require additional support
- Provide high quality learning experiences for all children
- Work in partnership with parents/carers
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-initiated and child-initiated
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and out
- Focus on phonics and numeracy, to help their development and progress

### **Our environment**

The Early Years Foundation Stage environment must be a secure, safe, and stimulating setting where children are provided, through a variety of experiences, with an avenue to promote independent learning throughout their play.

Our Early Years Foundation Stage unit consists of two classrooms. The classrooms are adjoining and there are two toilets, one in Pre-School and one in Reception, which are shared. Within the classrooms, children have access to resources including but not limited to: two large state of the art interactive whiteboards, water tray, sand tray, role play area, small world area, construction area, mathematics area, writing area, reading area, technology including laptops and iPads, investigation area, puzzles, malleable area and fine motor skills activities, and creative area with paints, junk modelling and self-select tools and equipment. Although some areas may be labelled as a specific area, such as writing area, we also encourage key skills to be transferable across the different areas of the indoors and outdoors, such as literacy and numeracy skills.

The unit has an adjoining outside area that is purpose built and the children have free access to it during their child-initiated time. The outside area consists of a bike and scooter area, a large, bespoke covered sandpit area, suitable for the children to play in with wellies or bare feet, a purpose-built raised bed used as a mud kitchen, a safe play surface with markings and snakes and ladders board, a grassy area with beautiful low trees which form perfect shade and climbing space, and a play house. The children also have regular access to the main playground which features a large play surface with two age appropriate pirate ships featuring slides, climbing walls, climbing

nets and pole. There is also direct access to our large playing field and Forest School wooded area, as well as supervised access to our gated pond area.

The outdoor area includes the following and more: large selection of bikes, scooters, trikes, covered large sandpit, mud kitchen, play house, games area, bats, balls and balance bikes. This area includes large play equipment on safety matting, a paved area, a wild garden area, a grassed area and a covered area. The Early Years Foundation Stage has a small playground that is enclosed and used only by the children from the setting.

The children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have full access to the amenities in the rest of the school including the hall, library, before and after school clubs, and hot school dinners options provided by Innovate. All of these areas are used to provide the children with additional amenities to extend their learning, and at the same time integrate them into the main school.

### **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.

### **ADULTS**

Parents/carers are the first educators of their children. Therefore, it is essential that the relationship between home and school is of central importance. Parental involvement with school begins even before children start Pre-school, with transition meetings, opportunities to play in the Pre-school setting prior to starting and home visits.

Both Pre-school and Reception parents/carers are invited to a meeting in the Summer Term to provide them with essential information for the next academic year. Parent/carer Learning Review Meetings are held throughout the year, at which parents/carers are invited to discuss their child's attainment, progress and targets.

A report is sent out at the end of the Summer Term and parents/carers are invited into school to discuss this report if they wish. It is important to stress that if parents/carers are concerned in any way about their child they should make an appointment to discuss their concerns with the class teacher, the Early Years Foundation Stage Leader or the Executive Principal.

Parents/carers are kept informed of all events in the school by regular newsletters and emails.

## **INCLUSION/SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND)**

All children and their families are valued. Children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all the provisions made. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all. Assessments take into account contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential special educational needs and/or disabilities is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of special needs and/or disabilities is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage, as well as the SENCO.

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

All members of the school are treated as individuals. The staff aim to meet the needs of all, taking account of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, special educational needs, disability, and social circumstances. All staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect cultural diversity and the need to prepare pupils for life in a diverse and multi-faith society; this links clearly to the discrete teaching related to British Values.

## **ADMISSION**

Children will be offered a place in the Early Years Foundation Stage at Moggerhanger Primary School in the term after their third birthday.

When children start their Pre-school education, they are expected to attend every session; Monday to Friday, either for their morning or afternoons sessions (which are determined according to age).

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE LEARNING**

The characteristics of effective learning describe factors which play a central role in a child's learning and in becoming an effective learner. The characteristics of learning run through and underpin all seven areas of learning and development, representing processes rather than outcomes.

Playing and Exploring – Engagement - children will have opportunities to investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.

- Finding out and exploring
- Playing with what they know
- Being willing to 'have a go'

Active Learning – Motivation - children will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements.

- Being involved and concentrating
- Keeping trying
- Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

Creating and Thinking Critically – Thinking - we encourage and support children to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

- Having their own ideas
- Making links
- Choosing ways to do 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.

### **ASSESSMENT, RECORD KEEPING, EVALUATION**

- On entry to the Early Years setting an entry assessment of each child's achievement will be recorded in the area of Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Communication and Language, Literacy and Mathematics in each child's Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP)
- The Foundation Stage Profile is the nationally employed assessment tool that enables teachers to record their observations at the end of the Foundation Stage, and to summarise their pupils' progress towards the Early Learning Goals. It covers each of the seven areas of learning contained in the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage. We record each child's level of development against the 17 Early Learning Goals as Working towards, Expected or Exceeding. We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs
- Throughout their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage there will be continued assessment by observation and daily recordings of every child; this will be recorded formally each half term in the EYFSP
- Assessment of the child's individual progress through the curriculum areas is used to inform the planning of the curriculum
- If a child requires additional support to aid their individual progress, then this may be provided through an Individual Educational Plan. This would be discussed with parent/carer at regular intervals
- The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile will be completed at the end of the Reception year
- Parents/carers will be informed on a regular basis of the progress of their child.

### **Observation and Assessment**

As part of our daily practice, the EYFS staff observe and assess children's development and learning to inform future plans. They record observations in a variety of ways. Everyone is encouraged to contribute and discussions take place about children's attainment and progress regularly. Significant observations of children's achievements are collated in their own personal learning journey, which are shared with parents/carers.

Within the final term of each year in the Early Years Foundation Stage at Moggerhanger Primary School, the staff provide the parent/carer with a report based on their child's development against each of the Early Learning Goals and the characteristics of his/her learning. Parents/carers are given the opportunity to discuss these judgements with the teacher in preparation for the next stage on their learning journey.

### **Inclusion, including meeting the needs of SEND pupils**

In line with our Equality Policy we are committed to providing a teaching environment that promotes learning. Children are given opportunities to work with others, listen to each other and treat everyone with respect:

- We plan our classroom activities to challenge and involve all pupils appropriately, according to age and capability, ethnic diversity, gender and language background
- We are aware of different learning styles and the need to allow pupils to be able to work in their preferred learning styles for some of the time
- We use materials for teaching which avoid stereo-typing, and bias, towards race, gender, role or disability
- We deal with such issues clearly and sensitively when they arise.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, every child is unique and is entitled to every opportunity to develop to their full potential regardless of gender, ethnicity, cultural background, religious beliefs, linguistic abilities, social background, health or disability. The provision for children reflects their individual needs; it also ensures that each child has full and appropriate access to the whole curriculum. At the same time, the adults in the Early Years Foundation Stage promote the fact that all children have a right to be fully valued and included as members of our school community.

At the Foundation Stage, we have realistic and challenging expectations so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the year. Some children progress beyond this point. We do this by meeting the needs of both boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from different social backgrounds and different ethnic groups.