



EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY 2023 - 2025

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Reviewed by: Mrs L Robbins & Miss M Cunningham

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Introduction

This policy outlines the provision in Early Years at Moggerhanger Primary School. For the purpose of this policy, the term 'Early Years' encompasses our two classes for children aged three to five years old, which are Chicks (Pre-School) and Robins (Reception). This policy is based on requirements set out in the [2021 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#), and also the non-statutory curriculum guidance for the early years foundation stage: '[Development Matters](#)'.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is a comprehensive statutory framework that sets the standards for the learning, development and care of children from birth to five at the end of the reception year and into the beginning of Key Stage 1. The curriculum should therefore be seen as part of a continuum of learning which begins at birth, extends throughout the years of compulsory schooling and establishes the young person as a lifelong learner. It is a holistic curriculum which encompasses all areas of learning and development.

This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of the EYFS at Moggerhanger Primary School. The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of practitioners working in the EYFS setting, including both teaching and non-teaching adults. The EYFS is a crucial stage of development as many of the basic skills and attitudes to learning and socialising are introduced to the child. It is a very important part of early learning for children which lays the foundations that later key stages build upon. It is the Early Learning Goals that set out what is expected of most children by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

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 identifies the future learning needs of each child in relation to the prime areas of learning
- it builds progressively on these skills, and seeks to relate starting points for learning to the child's own experiences
- 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.

In the Early Years setting at Moggerhanger Primary School we believe that all children are entitled to the best possible start in their school life, both intellectually and emotionally, in order to enable them to develop their full potential.

We aim to support each child's welfare, and developmental needs by:

- Recognising that all children are unique and special
- Understanding that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates across a broad range of areas – as detailed by the EYFS 2022
- Providing a safe, secure and caring environment where children feel happy and know that they are valued by the practitioners looking after them
- Fostering and nurturing children's self-confidence and self-esteem through their developing awareness of their own identity and role within the community
- Teaching them to express and communicate their needs and feelings in appropriate ways
- Encouraging children's independence and decision-making, supporting them to learn through their mistakes. Developing children's understanding of social skills and the values and codes of behaviour required for people to work together harmoniously
- Supporting children to develop care, respect and appreciate others, including those with beliefs, cultures and opinions different to their own
- Understanding the importance of play in children's learning and development.
- Providing learning experiences in play which reflect children's personal interests and areas of

curiosity in order to encourage and develop their natural desire, interest, excitement and motivation to learn

- Providing experiences which build on children's existing knowledge and understanding in order to challenge, stimulate and extend their learning and development
- Providing effective learning opportunities in a range of environments, inside and outside.

At Moggerhanger Primary School, through our planning and teaching of the EYFS, we aim to help children to learn by:

- Establishing the foundations that underpin all future learning
- Placing speech, language and communication at the heart of learning
- Placing a high importance on sensory play and hands-on activities which allow children to engage their senses and build nerve connections in the brain
- Promoting and developing personal, social and emotional well-being
- Encouraging the development of self-confidence and positive self-awareness
- Ensuring that our children have positive attitudes and dispositions towards learning
- Developing positive behaviour and social interaction skills
- Supporting the development of their self-regulation and resilience skills
- Promoting a healthy management of themselves including hygiene needs and oral dental health
- Promoting healthy and safe physical development – both gross and fine motor
- Enabling children to develop the skills of attention, concentration and persistence
- Laying the foundations for developing reading and writing
- Developing early mathematical skills and concepts
- Developing an understanding of the world in which children live
- Enabling children to be creative in their responses to their world and in their development of skills
- Developing an understanding of past and present and how things around them have changed from the past
- Encouraging children to develop their imagination through the exploration of media and materials.

Structure of the Early Years Unit

Our Early Years unit encompasses our two classes for children aged three to five years old, which are Chicks (Pre-School) and Robins (Reception). Children enter our Pre-School and/or Reception at different stages. Children are able to begin in Pre-School at three years old, but some children start later on.

Reception Class

Children enter our Reception class the September after their fourth birthday (although compulsory schooling does not begin until the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday). However, children can join Moggerhanger Primary School at any time during their primary school years if numbers allow.

Children in Reception arrive daily when the school gates are open between 8.40am and 8.50am, until pick up time at 3.15pm.

Pre-School Session Timings and Fees

The maximum hours available to children in Pre-School is 30 hours per week, which is 9.00am until 3.00pm Monday to Friday. Children can attend for a half day, depending on our session availability.

As of September 2023, our Pre-School fees are as follows:

9.00am-12.00pm - £13.50

12.00pm-3.00pm - £13.50

9.00am-3.00pm - £27.00

Wraparound Care

All children in our Early Years can access our Moggerhanger Primary School wraparound care, known as Moggies Breakfast Club and After School Club. These are available to book online; fees are as follows:

8.00am-9am - £5

3.00pm-5.15pm - £10

Please see our Moggies Before and After School Club Policy on our website for further details.

Curriculum, Planning and Teaching

As outlined in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (EYFS) 2022:

'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 have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.'

This policy aims to ensure:

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

Teaching in the Early Years setting at Moggerhanger Primary School is delivered in accordance with the government's statutory document 'The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage' (2021). This document is a principled approach to Early Years education, bringing together children's welfare, learning and development requirements through four themes. These overarching principles should shape practice in Early Years settings:

- 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.
- Importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn at different rates.

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:

- 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/carers.
- importance of **learning and development**. Children develop and learn at different rates. (See “the characteristics of effective teaching and learning” at paragraph 1.15). The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

The 7 Areas of Learning

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and interconnected. 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.

The **prime** areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

The prime areas above are strengthened and applied through 4 **specific** areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

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.

In planning and guiding what children learn, our practitioners reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and adjust their practice appropriately. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- **playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’
- **active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements

- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

Implementation

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

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.

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1.

No one aspect of development stands in isolation from the others as all Areas of Learning and Development are all closely interlinked. This ensures the delivery of a holistic, child-centred curriculum which allows children to make lots of links between what they are learning. All Areas of Learning and Development are given equal weighting and value and are delivered through a well-planned approach to teaching, leading from the children's interests as well as designing a bespoke curriculum which takes into account the school's locality, community, families and socio-economic demographics of the area.

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staff working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding children's activities, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

For each area of learning there are statutory "Early Learning Goals". These establish age related expectations for children to reach by the end of the EYFS (the end of their year in Reception class). Teaching and curriculum design should not simply be 'to' these goals, but 'around' these goals to ensure children have an in-depth knowledge and skillset ready for the transition at the end of reception into National Curriculum and Key Stage One. However, at Moggerhanger Primary School, we believe that Early Years education is important in its own right and should not be viewed simply as preparation for the next stage of children's education. We believe that the EYFS framework allows a natural progression into the National Curriculum at the beginning of Year 1 and work to ensure children are equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary for the next stage in their education.

The Learning 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 gender-neutral toilets, one in Pre-School (disabled access) and one in Reception. 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 Early Years unit has its own dedicated, fenced-in outside area. This area has been designed with our Early Years children in mind, and the children access to it during most of their child-initiated time. On some occasions, the outside area will be closed to ensure that staff ratios are appropriate for the areas in use. The outside area consists of a bike and scooter area, a large, 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 water exploration area, a construction area, and a playhouse. There are also activities that change daily such as train tracks, bubbles or seasonal activities. 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 and wooded areas.

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 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.

There are also some offsite experiences in the local and wider community, where a planned programme of appropriate activities, complementing and extending the indoor learning activities, takes place wherever possible at all times of year.

Assessment

At Moggerhanger Primary School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents/carers. Observations are recorded on children's online learning journals on Tapestry, and each parent/carer has access to their own child's individual learning journal. Observations are linked to the areas of learning, and staff will comment on the learning and development that has been observed.

When a child is **aged between 2 and 3**, staff review their progress and provide parents/carers with a written summary of the child's development in the 3 prime areas. This 'progress check' highlights the areas in which a child is progressing well and the areas in which additional support is needed.

Reception Baseline

Within the first six weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). 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) a baseline assessment. The baseline assessments are an activity-based assessment of pupils' starting points in language, communication and literacy, and mathematics. Schools are required to carry out the assessment within the first 6 weeks of pupils starting reception. No numerical score will be shared and the data will only be used at the end of Year 6 to form the school-level progress measure.

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP)

At the end of Reception, staff complete the EYFS Profile for each child. The Foundation Stage Profile is the nationally employed assessment tool that enables teachers to record their observations at the end of the Foundation Stage. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Emerging – not yet meeting the Early Learning goals
- Expected – securely meeting the Early Learning goals
- Exceeding – achieving to a greater depth and beyond the Early Learning goals

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents/carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents/carers for their child in the end of year School Report. We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters [guidance](#)) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

Working with Parents/Carers

Parents/carers are the first educators of their children. Therefore, it is essential that the relationship between home and school is of central importance. We strengthen these relationships by providing a whole range of opportunities to work together.

Transition

Parental involvement with school begins even before children start Pre-School or Reception, with transition meetings, 'settling sessions' which are opportunities to play in the Pre-School setting prior to starting,

teachers visiting the child in their previous education setting where appropriate, and home visits where appropriate.

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.

Face to Face

Children are met by members of the Early Years team at the gate every morning, along with a member of the Senior Leadership Team. All staff get to know all the children in the Early Years and will greet them by name with a warm welcome. Any messages can be passed on via the staff on the gate, and if a parent/carers needs to speak to the Pre-School or Reception teacher, we will usually be able to facilitate this. At home time, children will be shown out of the gate one at a time by their teacher, accompanied by members of the Early Years team. This is another opportunity for parents/carers to have a face-to-face discussion with the staff if needed.

If a parent/carers requires a more private conversation, appointments can be made to speak with the Pre-School or Reception teacher by contacting them via Class Dojo, or by emailing the school office.

We hold opportunities throughout the year for parents/carers to come into school and be actively involved in their children's learning, for example craft mornings, assemblies and performances.

Key Person

Each child is assigned a key person who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents/carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

ParentMail

All parents in the school are added to our online email system called ParentMail. The school communicates regularly in the form of letters home, whole school newsletters fortnightly, and class newsletters half-termly. The school will notify parents of any events which are taking place in the school, and permission forms will also be sent via ParentMail.

Tapestry

Parents/carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development through the Tapestry app. The progress check and EYFS profile helps to provide parents/carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities. Parents/carers can upload their own observations from home, so that staff within the setting can see how the children are progressing outside of school. Parents/carers and teachers can comment on observations.

Class Dojo

As a school we use the Class Dojo app as a communication tool. Parents/carers can connect to their child's account, and once connected can privately message their child's teacher. This can be used as a fantastic communication tool to discuss everyday issues and send/raise any questions you may have.

Teacher Consultation Evenings and School Reports

All children in the Early Years will be offered two parent/carers and teacher consultation evenings per year. This is usually one in November, and one in March. 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.

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. At Moggerhanger Primary School we have a full-time SENCO, Mrs Heather Smith, who is available to discuss any concerns you may have. Please contact the school office to organise an appointment. If a child requires additional support to aid their individual progress, then this may be provided through a Personal Achievement Plan, which would be discussed with the parent/carer at regular intervals.

We work closely with our colleagues at Central Bedfordshire Council the Early Years SEND department. Please see our SEND Policy for more information.

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 stereotyping, 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.

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 teaching related to our School Values and British Values. Please see our Equality Policy for more information.

Safeguarding and Welfare Procedures

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years, for example by talking to children about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth
- Having models of teeth and toothbrushes for children to explore and play with
- Having a Dentist role play area
- Inviting Dentists in to talk to children about good oral health

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our Safeguarding policy on our website.

Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy on website
Procedure for responding to illness	See Health and Safety Policy on website
Administering medicines policy	See Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy on website
Emergency evacuation procedure	See Health and Safety Policy on website
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy on website
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy on website
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See Complaints Policy on website