



Maple Grove Primary EYFS Policy

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to their full 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. When parents choose to use Early Years services they want to know the provision will keep their children safe and help them to thrive. The Early Years Foundation Stage is the framework that provides that assurance

At Maple Grove Primary School we believe that Early Years Education should acknowledge and build upon the wealth of learning that the children bring with them to school.

Young children learn best through first hand, direct experience and interactions with the environment. Language and play are our main vehicles for learning through which children begin to make sense of the world. As the child matures this develops onto more focused work depending on the needs of the child. The children learn at their own pace developing the skills on which their future education can be built.

At Maple Grove Primary school our visions and goals are displayed throughout the foundation stage unit which every member of staff is committed to.

Our Mission Statement

- We aim to provide a welcoming environment, where children’s first experiences are valued and staff work closely with parents as first educators to develop close and effective home school links.
- By providing a widely diverse and exciting curriculum, our Foundation Stage team work hard to help children become enthusiastic, independent and effective learners.
- We aim to provide a safe and stimulating environment which reflects and celebrates the diversity of our local community.
- We value and celebrate everyone’s achievements (both small steps and giant leaps equally).
- Through our Foundation Stage curriculum we strive to provide the holistic development of our children; socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually to enable them to be the best they can be!

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. In our school, our children join us, part time in the day care from (0-2) and the lower foundation stage (nursery) or full time in the upper foundation stage (reception) in the September term they will be turning five.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

A Unique Child

Every child is a competent learner from birth, who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

This principle celebrates the uniqueness of every child and urges practitioners to take the time to observe, listen and tune in, to understand what it is that makes each child tick. As children's strengths, interests, preferences and different developmental pathways begin to unfold, practitioners can plan responsively to capture experiences that are meaningful and tailored to individual needs.

Positive Relationships

Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person.

Creating a secure emotional environment is paramount at Maple Grove Primary school if everyone in the setting is to flourish. No-one learns effectively when they are worried or afraid and both adults and children should be able to try new experiences, explore new resources and share their thoughts and feelings in an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect. We encourage creative thinking and ensure that everyone's ideas and contributions are valued. Mistakes are seen in a positive light, as a natural part of the learning journey and an opportunity to grow and learn, rather than something to be ashamed of. A happy 'can do' attitude is infectious and everyone benefits – children, practitioners and parents.

Enabling Environments

The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning.

When the environment is right, there is a contagious sparkle in the air, the children are deeply engaged in their learning and practitioners' confidence soars as they are free to support each child constructively on their learning journey.

Learning and Development

Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of learning and development are equally important and inter-connected.

Children learn from everything they do. The EYFS affirms that young children learn best through carefully planned, play based experiences that start with their strengths, interests and capabilities. It acknowledges that young children are active learners and that they need opportunities to explore and make sense of the world, supported by knowledgeable, interested and sensitive adults.

The EYFS is made up of six areas of learning:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication, Language and Literacy
- Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy
- Knowledge and Understanding of the World

- Physical Development
- Creative Development

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

The six areas help all our foundation stage staff plan the learning environment, activities and experiences and provide a framework for the Foundation Stage curriculum. Each Foundation Stage class has the following areas of provision: reading area, writing area, numeracy area, ICT area, creative area, sand/water area, role play area and construction area. Our Foundation Stage operates a 'free-flow' system within which every child has access to all the areas of provision irrespective of their class base. The use of the different areas is modelled to the children so they use them independently, accessing the resources as they need them. There is no time allocation for each area of learning, as each area is used as part of the continuous provision. We do deliver a daily 15 -20 minute phonics, guided reading and mental number session. Foundation Stage classes have a shared outdoor area which they can access freely throughout the day. The outdoor area is used all year round. Teachers and nursery officers are on a rota to support the children's learning in the outdoor area.

Each area of learning has **early learning goals** which establish expectations for most children to reach. By the end of the Foundation Stage some children will have exceeded the goals.

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."

At Maple Grove Primary School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2008.

We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare of children.
- 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 effective learning environment by completing daily risk assessments for both inside and outside areas.
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- Maintain records, policies and procedure

We are committed to and endeavour to meet all these requirements.

Planning and Learning Opportunities

At Maple Grove Primary School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and have their own learning styles. Our policy defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in the EYFS just as much as they do to the teaching in Key Stage 1 and 2.

The 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 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;
- 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 through observations;
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school;

Our planning within the EYFS is based around half termly themes. We make regular assessments of children's learning through target tracker using Fizz books and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, special books and parent partnership. These observations are recorded in a variety of ways and used to inform the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile EYFSP.

Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress against the ELG's and assessment scales. The parents are given the opportunity to discuss these judgements with the teacher and both parents and children are encouraged to complete a feedback sheet. There are three stages of our planning process:

Long Term Planning

The school Nursery and Reception classes currently organise the curriculum through agreed half/termly learning opportunities that are linked to the children progress and data to ensure we meet the needs of the children. Our learning opportunities are familiar and aim to enhance the interests of our children and also enable us to deliver a creative and balanced curriculum. The long term cycle planning reflects a balance of the six areas of learning and development from the EYFS.

Medium Term Planning

We address particular aspects of the curriculum in more detail for each term. Learning objectives, assessment opportunities, and activities and experiences for each area of learning and development are identified.

Short Term Planning

The weekly plan is informed in two ways. Firstly, through on going observation of child initiated or spontaneous activity and planned play opportunities (indoors and outdoors).

This allows for flexibility in response to individual children's needs and interests and for revision and modification of plans. Through this, learning objectives for the next short term plan are identified. It is informed secondly by referring to the medium term plans containing objectives and activities/experiences in the half/termly topic.

All our plans are monitored termly by our SLT.

Provision and Resources

At Maple Grove Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending our children's development. Through observations we assess the children's interests, stages of development and academic needs, before planning our learning opportunities to ensure they are challenging, achievable, engaging and fun. Our Foundation stage is 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 unit is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and located equipment and resources independently. Our Foundation Stage Unit has its own enclosed outdoor

area. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers the children further opportunities to explore, use their senses, develop their language skills and be physically active. We plan activities and resources both inside and outside enabling the children to develop in all the areas of learning.

Our Principles of High Quality Play are:

- Play challenges children and offers them the chance to learn in breadth and depth.
- Play draws on what children already know and can do and enables them to master what is new.
- Play enables children to apply existing knowledge and to practise their skills
- Play encourages children to communicate with others as they investigate or solve problems.
- Play offers children opportunities to explore feelings and relationships, ideas, and materials, connections and consequences.
- Play empowers children to make choices, to solve problems and to be independent in their learning.
- Play enables children to express fears or relive anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.
- Play encourages children to struggle, to take risks and to become resilient as learners.
- Play can be supported and extended but not interfered with by adults.
- Play presents no barriers to children because of their language, cultures, abilities or gender.

Role of the adult

- To observe child-initiated play to understand and provide for their interests and needs.
- To plan and resource a challenging indoor and outdoor environment.
- To support children's learning through planned play activity.
- To extend and support children's spontaneous/self initiated play.
- To extend and develop children's language and communication in their play

Assessment and Recordkeeping

We analyse and review what we know about each child's development and learning, and then make informed decisions about supporting the child's progress. This enables us to plan the next steps for individuals and groups of children by providing challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning. All practitioners who interact with the child contribute to the assessment process. Staff review the target tracker data termly with the EYFS Leader/Senior Leadership Team, monitoring rates of progress and identifying strategies that address learning and teaching priorities and next steps.

Formative assessment

This type of assessment informs our everyday planning and is based on on-going observational assessment of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles.

Our formative assessment may take the form of anecdotal and focused narrative observations, other targeted assessments, annotated examples of work, photographs, and information from parents. We plan for observational assessment when undertaking short term planning.

Summative assessment

Within our foundation stage we use the EYFS Profile to summarise and record evidence from our formative assessments which then provides the basis of our end of year reports (Foundation Stage Record of Achievement) that we shared with our parents. During the Reception year the children are assessed against the EYFS Profile. This is a nationally employed assessment tool. This is informed by our formative assessments undertaken and makes statements about the child's achievements against thirteen scales. It summarises children's progress towards the early learning goals and is used to inform the Foundation Stage Record of Achievement that we shared with our parents. It is updated each half-term by all foundation stage staff.

Monitoring and Review

The Head of School, Assistant Head Teacher for Early Years and subject coordinators carry out termly monitoring of the EYFS through observations, book scrutiny, performance managements and learning walks and discussions as part of the whole school monitoring schedule. There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. This governor has the opportunity to discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion.

Parents as Partners

Our Foundation Stage team strongly believe that developing an effective working partnership with parents/carers has a positive impact on children's development and learning

We value parents/carers by:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school;
- showing respect and understanding for the role of parents/carers as children's first and most enduring educator.
- encouraging parents/carers to share accounts of their child's development and any concerns they may have and take action to support where appropriate.
- providing a welcoming environment by being approachable and friendly.
- Establishing an atmosphere of trust and confidence.
- inviting parents/carers to initial meetings to share information about their children and about our school.
- giving the children the opportunity to visit the Foundation Stage Unit during the half term before starting school;

- inviting all parents to an induction and presentation meeting to help parents to prepare their child for nursery or reception during the term before their child starts school;
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns.

There is a formal meeting for parents in the Autumn and Spring terms at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of the Foundation Stage

Inclusion and Diversity

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children at Maple Grove Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

In our school we believe that all our children matter. 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.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

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.

It is important to us that all children in the school are safe. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

We aim to protect the physical and psychological well being of all children.