

MANEY HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL



EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

Reviewed by Staff:	April 2024
Governor Ratification Date:	April 2024
Next Review Date:	April 2026

INTRODUCTION

All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives, so their experiences in early years 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 provide the foundation children need to fulfil their potential.

The EYFS sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

EYFS statutory framework- for group and school-based providers (2023)

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. In our school children join us in our Reception class at the beginning of the school year in which they are five.

Four guiding principles shape our practice in our 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 and/or carers.
- importance of **learning and development**. Children develop and learn at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

THE UNIQUE CHILD

At Maney Hill 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/ sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

All children at Maney Hill Primary School are treated equally. We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'.

In our school we believe that each child matters and we ensure we give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge
- experience and interests, and developing 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

Wellbeing

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. We aim to create a high quality setting which is welcoming, safe and stimulating, and where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

We take all necessary steps to keep children safe and well. We ensure we meet the requirements set out in the statutory EYFS framework document, which requires us to: safeguard children; ensure the suitability of adults who have contact with children; promote good health; support and understand behaviour; and maintain records, policies and procedures.

We endeavour to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits. 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 wellbeing of all children.

POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

At Maney Hill Primary School we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents/carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, currently play and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school
- providing an opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during 'come and meet' sessions and our 'Buddies afternoon'
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting with the class teacher
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. Parents are invited to parents evening, at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of the school year
- providing a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: Class assemblies, Sports Day, Parent Inspire Workshops etc.

All members of staff aim to develop good relationships with all children, always interacting positively and communicating effectively, taking the time to listen to their views, needs and opinions. At our school the EYFS class teacher is the key person to all children in the Reception class, supported by the teaching assistant.

ENABLING ENVIRONMENTS WITH TEACHING AND SUPPORT FROM ADULTS

At Maney Hill Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning. This is used to plan challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

The planning within the EYFS follows the school's long term Curriculum Map which is informed by the EYFS Early Learning Goals. These plans are used by the EYFS class teachers as a guide for weekly planning, however the teachers may alter planning and topics in response to the needs, achievements and interests of the children.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation of independent work and adult directed and supported activities, and this involves the teacher and other adults observing and interacting with children through their play, to make informed assessments of their development. Children's independent work is recorded in their termly

Learning Journals. Adult directed work is recorded in their Maths and English folders during the autumn and spring terms and in Transition Books in the summer term.

At Maney Hill Primary School, we baseline our children early in their first term, to identify current strengths and next steps and to provide an accurate picture of our children on entry. We use this information to monitor progress, inform planning and set next steps for our children. During their first six weeks we also complete the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). This provides a snapshot of where pupils are when they arrive at school and measures the progress that they make by the end of year six. The RBA is an interactive and practical assessment of a child's early literacy, communication, language and mathematics skills when they begin school. The short assessment uses materials that most children of their age will be familiar with.

At the end of the year, we assess the children against the EYFS Early Learning Goals, identifying whether the child has achieved the 'expected' goal or is still working towards the goal, 'emerging'. In the final term we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress against the EYFS Early Learning Goals and also about how their children learn, through their 'characteristics of learning'.

The Learning Environment

The EYFS classroom 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 classrooms are set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The classrooms have their own enclosed outdoor area. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales. It offers the children opportunities to explore, use their senses and be physically active. Planned activities encompass all seven areas of learning.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

EYFS Curriculum

There are seven areas of learning and development that shape our curriculum. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

Three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving. These are the **prime areas**:

Communication and Language

The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. The number and quality of conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is fundamental whilst developing their confidence and skills in expressing themselves and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Children's personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world.

Physical Development

Physical activity is vital to children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives. Gross and fine motor skills develop incrementally throughout early childhood.

The curriculum also provides four specific areas, through which the prime areas are strengthened and applied. The **specific areas** are:

Literacy

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).

Mathematics

Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. The curriculum should include rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures. It is important for children to develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics.

Understanding the World

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community by observing and exploring. Wide ranging and frequent visits and visitors increases children's knowledge and sense of the world around them.

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.

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. There is an ongoing judgement to be made by practitioners about the balance between activities led by children, and activities led or guided by adults. Practitioners must 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, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

In planning and guiding our activities, we reflect on the different ways in which children learn. These are called the 'characteristics of effective learning'. They 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.

Teaching and Learning Style

Our policy on teaching and learning 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 Stages 1 and 2.

Some key features of teaching and learning in 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, extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the ELG throughout the EYFS
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, social and emotional and physical 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 indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents

THE EARLY LEARNING GOALS

The expected level of attainment (from September 2023) at the end of the EYFS is defined by the early learning goals set out below.

PRIME AREAS

Communication and Language

Listening, attention and understanding

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions;
- Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding;
- Hold conversation when engaged in back and forth exchanges with their teacher and peers.

Speaking

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary;
- Offer explanations for why things might happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems when appropriate;
- Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Self-Regulation

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly;
- Set and work towards simple goals, being able to wait for what they want and control their immediate impulses when appropriate;
- Give focused attention to what the teacher says, responding appropriately even when engaged in activity, and show an ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.

Managing Self

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Be confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge;
- Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly;
- Manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet and understanding the importance of healthy food choices.

Building Relationships

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others
- Form positive attachments to adults and friendships with peers;
- Show sensitivity to their own and others' needs.

Physical Development

Gross Motor Skills

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Negotiate space and obstacles safely, with consideration for themselves and others;
- Demonstrate strength, balance and coordination when playing;

- Move energetically, such as running, jumping, dancing, hopping, skipping and climbing.

Fine Motor Skills

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases;
- Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paint brushes and cutlery;
- Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing.

SPECIFIC AREAS

Literacy

Comprehension

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary;
- Anticipate – where appropriate – key events in stories;
- Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems and during role-play.

Word Reading

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs;
- Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by sound-blending;
- Read aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent with their phonic knowledge, including some common exception words.

Writing

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed;
- Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters
- Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.

Mathematics

Number

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Have a deep understanding of number to 10, including the composition of each number;
- Subitise (recognise quantities without counting) up to 5;
- Automatically recall (without reference to rhymes, counting or other aids) number bonds up to 5 (including subtraction facts) and some number bonds to 10, including double facts.

Numerical Patterns

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Verbally count beyond 20, recognising the pattern of the counting system;
- Compare quantities up to 10 in different contexts, recognising when one quantity is greater than, less than or the same as the other quantity;
- Explore and represent patterns within numbers up to 10, including evens and odds, double facts and how quantities can be distributed equally.

Understanding the World

Past and Present

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society;
- Know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class;
- Understand the past through settings, characters and events encountered in books read in class and storytelling.

People, Culture and Communities

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts and maps;
- Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class;
- Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and – when appropriate – maps.

The Natural World

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants;
- Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class;
- Understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter.

Expressive Arts and Design

Creating with Materials

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function;
- Share their creations, explaining the process they have used;
- Make use of props and materials when role playing characters in narratives and stories.

Being Imaginative and Expressive

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Invent, adapt and recount narratives and stories with peers and their teacher;
- Sing a range of well-known nursery rhymes and songs;

- Perform songs, rhymes, poems and stories with others, and – when appropriate – try to move in time with music.