



# Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

## Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. In our school, all children join us, full time, at the beginning of the school year in which they turn five.

## Aims and objectives

- To provide a curriculum that meets the needs of children of four to five years of age.
- To provide a variety of learning experiences that addresses the needs of the individual and the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum.
- To ensure full coverage of the Early Years Foundation Stage and to allow opportunities for children to progress to the National Curriculum.
- To use the children's own experiences and interests to develop their learning.
- To give them the skills and attitudes necessary to develop as lifelong learners.
- To offer learning inside and outside the classroom.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

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

### A Unique Child

At Mattishall 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, 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

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children at Mattishall 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 all children, 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:

- Obtaining relevant information from any pre-school/nursery provision and family members prior to the child starting at our school

- 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 take 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. (See Whole School Safeguarding Children Policy)

### *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 Mattishall 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 2021. 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 purpose
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

### **Positive Relationships**

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

### *Parents as Partners*

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, 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;
- the teacher visits all children in their pre-school/nursery setting prior to their starting school;
- the children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during whole school transition sessions;
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school;

- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our reception class
- learning shared on the home/school app Seesaw and via the home/school Sharing Book
- providing a 'Sharing Book' as a Home/School link book where parent/carers are encouraged to collect evidence from home to contribute to their child's learning
- 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 term 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 each school year;
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: Share days, Class assemblies, Sports Day etc;
- providing space in the children's 'Look What I Can Do' books for parent to leave comments relating to the children's achievements.
- providing information through meetings and leaflets, including a 'Welcome to Reception Class', Phonic/Reading and Maths workshops. These show what happens in school and demonstrates ways to help at home.
- a weekly Learning Reflection is sent home to Reception parents. This also includes ideas for helping their child at home, special dates and forthcoming events.
- Reception children take home reading and library books to share with their parents. Guidance is given on sharing the books with the children.
- weekly headteacher's reports are sent home to keep parents informed about school life.
- phonics, reading, writing and mathematics workshops are held for parents to attend.
- at the end of the year Parents are asked to complete a questionnaire about their child's and their own experience of their Reception year. These comments are used for the future planning of the EYFS setting.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At our school the Reception teacher acts as the 'Key Person' to all children in EYFS, supported by the Teaching Assistants.

We have good links with the Preschool/Nursery settings. Regular visits are undertaken by the Reception teacher and Teaching Assistants. The EYFS teacher meets with staff to discuss new intake children. Staff and children from preschool/nursery are regularly invited to school events (Share days, Christmas productions etc.).

### Enabling Environments

At Mattishall 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, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

#### **Observation, Assessment and Planning**

The Planning within the EYFS follows the schools' Long Term Plan and Medium Term Plans (MTP's), which are based around Cornerstones projects. These plans are used by the EYFS teacher as a guide for weekly planning, however the teacher may alter these MTP's in response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children. This will be indicated on weekly planning.

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, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. These observations are recorded on Seesaw and in children's individual 'Sharing Books'. They also contain information provided by parents and other settings where applicable.

At Mattishall Primary School, we record judgements against the EYFS Profile. Each child's level of development is recorded against 17 assessment scales derived from the ELG's. Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress against the ELG's and assessment scales. We give an opportunity for the parents to discuss these judgements with the EYFS teacher. All

relevant information is shared with the Year 1 teacher who will receive the children the following academic year to ensure smooth transition.

### ***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 classroom is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and located equipment and resources independently. The EYFS class has its 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 than when indoors. It gives opportunities for the children to explore, use their senses and be physically active. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all 7 areas of learning.

### **Learning and Development**

At Mattishall Primary School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are interconnected.

### ***Teaching and Learning Style***

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. 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;
- the development of children's 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 good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school;

### ***Play***

"Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development."

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

### ***Active Learning***

"Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods."

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfactions as they take ownership of their learning.

### *Creativity and Critical Thinking*

"When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions."

Children should be given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

### **Areas of Learning**

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning:

#### **The PRIME AREAS**

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

#### **The SPECIFIC AREAS**

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

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.

Information regarding individual subjects and the Early Years Foundation Stage may be found in the relevant subject policies.

### **PERSONAL. SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

The school fosters and develops relationships between home, school, children's centres and places of worship in order to make links stronger for the good of the community as a whole. Children are encouraged to learn to work, share, take turns and co-operate with others. They are encouraged to be independent and make choices for themselves. They are also encouraged to be sensitive to the needs of others and to respect other cultures and beliefs. Children are enabled to become confident and develop a positive self image.

### **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Children are given opportunities to move to music, use equipment, develop and practice their fine and gross motor skills. They develop an increasing understanding of how their body works and what is needed to be healthy. This is done in both indoor and outdoors and by working with a wide range of resources.

### **COMMUNICATION and LANGUAGE**

This covers all aspects of language development and provides the foundation for literacy skills. Children's developing competence in speaking and listening is focused on. We aim to extend and enrich the children's vocabulary through story time, rhymes, role-play and group discussions. Children are encouraged to share their own experiences through speaking and acting out events in imaginative play and talking about their own ideas. They are encouraged to take part in class activities such as working with puppets, participating in music sessions and saying rhymes and singing songs together.

## **LITERACY**

We have a variety of resources for the children to use to help them develop early literacy skills. Children are encouraged to use the mark-making areas indoors and outdoors independently, but they also take part in teacher-led activities. These activities include whole class shared reading, Read Write Inc. Phonics and Talk Through Stories sessions and small group guided reading and writing. The pre-writing work encourages correct pencil control, left/right orientation and letter formation. Children have the opportunity to develop their writing skills in accordance with their age, ability and competence.

We encourage children to treat books and other resources with respect and they are given many opportunities to listen to stories told by the staff.

## **MATHEMATICS**

We aim for children to achieve mathematical understanding and a firm foundation for numeracy through practical activities and using and understanding language in the development of simple mathematical ideas. We follow the White Rose Mathematics curriculum. Pre-number work is covered through nursery rhymes and number activities. Children are given the opportunity to learn about number, shape, space, position, pattern and measurement. Towards the end of the Foundation stage children start learning to tell the time and are given opportunities to learn about money and simple calculations.

## **UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD**

All children are given opportunities to solve problems, investigate, make decisions and experiment. They will learn about living things, their environment, the world around them and the people who are important in their lives. Children are also given opportunities to develop computing skills and to work with and use modern technology.

## **EXPRESSIVE ARTS and DESIGN**

We provide opportunities for all children to explore and share their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of art, design, technology, music, drama, movement, dance and imaginative play activities. Children are given opportunities to make paintings, drawings, collages, models and use basic musical instruments. Children also learn new songs and rhymes and enjoy singing them with each other. Colour recognition is taught, naming colours, mixing paints, sorting and matching. Through various times during the year children are given the opportunity to participate in school productions and assemblies.

## **OUTSIDE**

We have an outside learning space that children have access to each day. We have all weather clothing and ask parent/carers to provide wellies to be kept in school so children are protected and so there are no barriers to learning. The outside area is an extension of the indoor classroom and there is a variety of resources to facilitate learning. In this area EYFS staff provide planned activities for children as well as giving opportunities for them to make their own choices.

## **Monitoring and review**

It is the responsibility of the EYFS lead and teacher to follow the principles stated in this policy.

There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. This governor will discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners regularly and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion.

The Executive Headteacher of Synergy MAT, the Headteacher and subject coordinators will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

## **Equality of opportunity**

Equality of opportunity refers to treating people fairly and creating a school environment in which everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential. It means responding to different needs in different ways and focuses in particular on the need of the individual.

As a school, we ensure we meet the needs of all in relation to race, ability, disability, gender, age, religion or belief so all have access to our services.

We aim to ensure equality for all in the following ways:

- By evaluating the curriculum through subject leader monitoring of planning and lesson observations.
- As we evaluate our policies we ensure that we have equality for all.
- As we review our school's policies and procedures.

### **Induction/Transition Procedures**

- Once school places are finalised the parents/carers are invited to a welcome session in the school. The parents are told what to expect for the Reception year in a meeting held by the Headteacher and the Reception Class Teacher.
- Where possible, the Reception teacher will visit the children in their own pre-schools/nurseries in the summer term. The Class Teacher makes arrangements to visit by requesting release time granted by the Headteacher.
- Where possible at least three transition sessions in school for children eligible to start school. This takes place in the term before they are due to start. They are able to meet the Reception Class teachers, teaching assistants and make friends with the other children and get a taster of what school will be like when they start in Reception. Parents/carers stay for the first session and then for each session thereafter they are encouraged to leave their child in the school's care.
- Families are given the 'Preparing for School' booklet designed by the school in the Spring Term before entering school. This booklet indicates our expectations.
- A 'Welcome to Mattishall Primary School' booklet (Designed by current children) is given to each child that is due to start at Mattishall Primary and to each Nursery/Pre School setting in the local area.
- Each child is encouraged to complete a 'chatterbox' activity with their parent/carers at home before entering school. Children can design their own box and add things like photos, drawings, objects etc. that encourage communication between the child and staff/peers.
- Prior to the child starting the parents/carers are asked to complete an 'On Entry questionnaire'. This is used to assist discussion at a consultation in the home or in school prior to the school starting school. Where possible the reception teacher plus one other staff member completes a home visit and parents/carers to give the opportunity to discuss the 'On Entry questionnaire' and their children's individual needs and to enable smooth transition to the school.
- Where appropriate parents/carers will meet with the SENDCo to ensure any individual's child's needs are addressed and or put in place including EHCPs and care plans.

### **Teaching and Learning in the Foundation Stage**

The curriculum taught in our school covers all of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The "**Development Matters**" and the "**Birth to Five**" documents are used for planning and guidance in reception.

Activities are carefully planned and are mainly practical in nature, building on previous experiences and interests and develop the children's knowledge and abilities in the following areas:

- **Communication and Language.**
- **Physical Development.**
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development.**
- **Literacy**
- **Mathematics**
- **Understanding the World.**
- **Expressive Arts and Design**

The school uses Read Write Inc Phonics for the teaching of phonics and White Rose Mathematics for maths. Cornerstones provides projects as a guide to some areas of the curriculum such as Literacy, Understanding the World, Expressive Arts and Design. The REAL PE curriculum is used for some physical development and Charanga for music. Children are asked what they already know and given opportunities to contribute what they would like to learn about during the projects.

Teachers observe children in 'play' situations (active learning). They then decide upon the next steps the children need to take. This feeds into the planning and teaching.

The children are also encouraged to take control and responsibility of their own learning by initiating their own 'play' and activities.

The Preschool/Nurseries and Reception teachers work closely together to ensure progression, continuity and full coverage of the Early Years Foundation Stage for all children in the Early Years.

### **Assessment Procedures**

- The children in the Reception class complete the statutory DfE Baseline Assessment and our own school baseline across all areas of the curriculum within the first 4 weeks of the children starting school. The Class Teacher inputs data into the DfE Baseline. Further to this the Class Teacher tracks the children using a school Pupil Tracking Meeting form half termly.
- The class teacher meets with the Headteacher and SENDCo every half term to discuss pupil progress tracking. This addresses any progress made and any concerns that arise.
- Reception children have half termly assessments using the Read Write Inc. Phonics online assessment tool. These are completed with the Early Reading Lead.
- Relevant subject leaders are given relevant assessment information related to the EYFS curriculum.
- Ongoing assessments are made of all children within Reception. Achievements are noted and documented through observations, photographs, class lists for assessments etc. These assessments help to identify the interests and individual needs of the child and are used to inform future planning and learning for the children.
- High quality questioning and responses are used to assess understanding to move learning forward in the moment.
- Parents/carers are invited to comment on their child's learning and achievement at home. These are recorded in their home/school 'Sharing Book'.
- More detailed description of assessments in each subject can be found in each subject policy. Please see also the Assessment Policy for more detailed description of whole school assessment procedures.
- The class teacher writes an annual report about each individual child for parents/carers. This report records whether the individual children have met the individual Early Learning Goals by indicating if they are emerging or expected.

**This policy will be reviewed in full by the Governing Board on an annual basis. This policy was uploaded to Governor Hub in February 2026, to be ratified at the next meeting of the LGB. It is due for review in February 2027.**