

Manor Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage policy



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Contents

1. Introduction	2
2. Aims	2
3. Legislation	3
5. Principles of the EYFS	3
6. Curriculum	3
7. Assessment	7
8. Partnership with parents	8
9. Transition	9
10. Safeguarding and welfare	9
11. Equal Opportunities	9
12. Staffing	10
13. Monitoring arrangements	10

1. Introduction

Early Years education is the foundation upon which young children build the rest of their schooling. It is a holistic education that encompasses all learning and development. This is available to children who enter nursery at three years old or school in the September of the academic year in which they will turn five years old. The Reception year is the final year of the EYFS and is sometimes referred to as YR.

This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) at Manor Primary School. The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of practitioners working in the EYFS setting, including both teaching and non-teaching adults.

2. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

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

3. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the:

- [2021 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#).
- The Education Act
- The Equality Act 2010
- Keeping Children Safe in education

4. Structure of the EYFS

Early Years at Manor Primary School consists of Nursery and Reception.

Nursery

The Nursery has space for 78 children. Children begin in Nursery the term after they turn 3 and will start either in September, January or April. Places are allocated using the criteria outlined in the Nursery admissions policy. There is no opportunity for extended hours' provision in Nursery.

Reception

Children start in Reception in the September after their 4th birthday. There are currently 45 places available in Reception. Current numbers in Reception mean that there are two classes. Reception children have access to extended hours breakfast and after school club.

5. Principles of the EYFS

The guiding principles laid out in the EYFS framework (2021) shape our practice. They are grouped into four distinct but complementary themes:

- 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**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers; and
- Children **develop and learn** in different ways and at different rates.

6. Curriculum

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum (EYFS) - Learning and Development

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve and exceed the early learning goals.

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2021.

The EYFS statutory framework (2021) comprises seven areas of learning and development, all of which are equally important and included in the curriculum taught.

Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These three areas are known as the prime areas:

The Prime Areas of Learning and Development:

1. Personal, Social and Emotional Development

This area involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

2. Communication and Language

This area involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations

3. Physical Development

This area involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food

We also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied:

The Specific Areas of Learning and Development:

4. Literacy

This area involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.

5. Mathematics

This area involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measure.

6. Understanding of the World

This area involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

7. Expressive Arts and Design

This area involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

Each of the seven areas of learning has a statutory educational programme which can be viewed on page 8 of the document above. The Development Matters and Birth to Five Matters documents are used as guides to support our EYFS curriculum.

Staff working with the youngest children in Nursery will focus strongly on the three prime areas, which are the basis for successful learning in the other four specific areas. The three prime areas reflect the key skills and capacities all children need to develop and learn effectively. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as the children move through the Early Years at Manor Primary School and grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which they have opportunities to explore, think creatively and are active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development. We promote British values through everyday practice, including respect, tolerance, y=turn taking, democracy and understanding right and wrong.

Direct Teaching

At specific times in the day the children will take part in an activity that is teacher led. Such sessions include daily phonics lessons, daily maths/counting experiences, as well as teaching new skills to support their learning within the classroom environment and also in our outdoor environment. Some direct teaching occurs as a whole class and some occurs through small groups or with individuals. All direct taught sessions are carefully planned and tailored for each group using previous assessments of the children's knowledge, skills and ability. Planning is changed and tailored regularly and, in response to the result of taught sessions, ensuring all teaching and learning is relevant and challenging for every child.

Learning through play

Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. Children learn best from activities and experiences that they have initiated and play with peers is important for children's development. We carefully plan our environment and provide opportunities to reflect these interests to inspire them further, whilst also making sure that children have the opportunity to extend and practise the skills they have learned through direct teaching. Constant opportunities are provided for children to be able to make their own decisions and choices in order that they can become independent, confident and happy learners as soon as is possible for each individual child. Some children will need gentle encouragement in this step as they become for comfortable in their new setting.

Teachers maximise any opportunity to develop language in all areas of learning. For example, using talk partners throughout direct teaching or adding narrative to children's play.

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity.

When planning and guiding children's activities, staff carefully observe on the different ways that children learn and staff reflect these in our practice.

The Characteristics of Effective 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

Planning

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staff know to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas and then use the Specific areas to develop children's learning further and deeper. Long Term plans are devised to ensure that work progresses in terms of the skills and knowledge we want children to have. It is planned sequentially and so that children will be able to access Year 1 successfully. Staff take into account the individual needs, interests, and stages 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. When staff engage with a child's learning, they observe, join in and then carefully use these opportunities to embed the skills and knowledge set out in the long term plans. Staff are using key vocabulary and enabling children to learn more and remember more.

The learning environment

Staff ensure that the whole unit provides a rich, stimulating, varied and safe space for children to play, explore and learn. The environment consists of classrooms, creative areas and the outdoor garden area. Through most of the day, children are able to access all the areas of the unit. The outdoor garden is open throughout the year and only closes in extreme weather conditions. Being outdoors encourages learning in different ways. It offers the children more opportunities to be creative and explore on a larger scale as well as to be physically active. Children are encouraged to "free-flow" between the areas independently.

Resources and activities are organised and set up so that children can be independent in selecting and using them. Children know that there is an expectation that they respect their environment and resources, that they use them in a safe manner and that they tidy away when they have finished.

7. Assessment

Recording and Reporting of Progress Assessment is an essential and important part of the Early Years for children's learning and development. Assessment takes a variety of forms in order to gain an understanding of each child's level of understanding. These can be through observations, photographic evidence, examples of work, parental conversations. Assessment occurs throughout any taught session as well as during child-initiated times when children are

embedding and extending any previous learning. These assessments will then be used to shape and adapt any future learning.

The majority of assessment is completed through observing children during their play as this is when children demonstrate the skills that they have or have learnt in a meaningful situation to them. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles.

Staff make notes, take photographs or videos and these are uploaded to each child's individual Tapestry online learning journal as soon as possible after the observation has taken place. The Tapestry app allows staff to flag each area of learning. Parents have access to their child's online Tapestry learning journal and are also able to add their own observations to build a joint picture of their child's learning and development. Parents can add comments to a post or "like" them. Parents can access their child's journal via a browser or via the use of the Tapestry app, meaning that it is highly accessible using mobile phones, tablets or computers.

On entry to Nursery and Reception a baseline assessment is carried out for each child.

In Nursery, baseline will focus on the prime areas of learning. These assessments are made during children's play and are not done formally.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts reception, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). This will provide a snapshot of where pupils are when they arrive at school and will be used as a starting point to measure the progress pupils make by the end of year six.

Assessments are entered onto O Track in October (baseline), December, February and June (final assessment against the Early Learning goals for Reception).

At four points of the school year, teachers will use class based assessments to make judgements on whether each child is 'on track' to achieve the early learning goal. Teachers will carefully monitor and evaluate attainment and progress and consider the necessary next steps for individuals, groups, class or whole cohort. Plans will be put in place to support the progress of children judged to be 'not on track' and the impact of the interventions will be carefully monitored.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child. 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.

8. Partnership with parents/carers

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.

Parental involvement is actively encouraged.

- Talking to parents/carers before their child starts school at our information meetings and the child transition visits.
- Before starting in the EYFS, arranging where possible, visits by the teacher to children in their home setting or childcare provision prior to their starting school.
- Providing a handbook of information about commencing Nursery and Reception.
- Outlining the school's expectations in the Home-School agreement.
- Holding a parent consultation early in the academic year to establish how a child is settling into the school environment.
- Operating an open-door policy for parents/carers with any queries or concerns. Parents are able to email teachers or the school admin to arrange a mutually convenient time to meet regarding any concerns or questions. Conversely, if Foundation staff have concerns about the progress of a child, they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss them.
- Publishing a Newsletter detailing the areas of learning and the overarching theme of the term or half-term.
- Inviting parents to attend informal meetings about areas of the curriculum, such as phonics, reading and maths.
- Observing children regularly and adding it to the children's 'Learning Journey' on 'Tapestry' so that parents can see their child's learning. Also valuing the on-going contributions to this from parents/carers.
- Offering parent/teacher consultation meetings through the year at which their child's progress is discussed.
- Sending a written report on their child's attainment, progress and future targets during their time in reception.
- Asking parents to sign a generic permission form for visits and photographs etc.
- Parents are invited to a range of activities throughout the school year such as assemblies, 'Read with your Child' sessions, Christmas productions and sports day etc.
- Parents/carers are also warmly invited and encouraged to attend school trips.

9. Transition

Reception transition

Parents/carers of children who are offered a place in Reception are invited to a welcome meeting in June. Essential information regarding staff, visits, start dates, curriculum, school

procedures will be outlined. Parents/carers will be given a Welcome Pack which includes the Reception handbook and the admission forms to be completed as soon as possible.

- Teachers will make contact with children's feeder settings during the summer term to discuss relevant information about each child.
- Teachers will visit as many feeder settings as possible to meet the children and their keyworkers. Staff use written information sent by pre-schools to inform early planning.
- Children are offered two short visits to their new class before the summer holidays.
- Home visits or one-to-one visits at school are offered in September, prior to the children starting.
- Children attend for two or three half-day visits for the first week of term before starting full time.

Nursery transition

Parents/carers of children who are offered a place in Nursery are invited to a welcome meeting at the end of the term prior to the term they are starting. Essential information regarding staff, visits, start dates, curriculum, school procedures will be outlined. Parents/carers will be given a Welcome Pack which includes the Nursery handbook and the admission forms to be completed as soon as possible.

- A visit to Nursery, alongside their parent/carer will be arranged, prior to them starting.
- A date will be given for the child to start attending 5 sessions a week.
- Staff will endeavour to be flexible in starting arrangements to account for the individual needs of each child (e.g. children who find separation from parent/carer difficult may benefit from shorter sessions to begin with)
- Although Nursery is non-statutory, there is an expectation that children will attend for 5 sessions a week, 15 hours of provision in total, although some are entitled to 30 hour funding and attend all day. Attendance to Nursery is in line with the school's attendance policy.

10. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

Safeguarding is a priority and all staff follow our safeguarding and welfare procedures, which are outlined in the school's safeguarding policy.

11. Equal opportunities

Staff ensure that all children have equal access to the curriculum. They will be encouraged to respect similarities and differences within cultures other than their own. The school seeks to develop tolerance and concern for others.

12. Staffing

Our EYFS team consists of teachers and qualified EYPs (Early Years Practitioners) and teaching assistants. We ensure that Staff are skilled and experienced in early years teaching. All staff have appropriate qualifications, training, skills and knowledge and a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They understand the needs of the young child and how best to create an environment to enable a love of learning. Everyone works towards the same goal: to ensure every child achieves to their highest ability by learning through play and enjoyment.

13. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the governing board and the headteacher.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

All members of staff directly involved with the EYFS will be required to familiarise themselves with all processes and procedures outlined in this policy as part of their induction.

Links to other policies

Safeguarding and child protection policy

Equality policy