



**MELLERS PRIMARY SCHOOL
FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY
FEBRUARY 2017**

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy.

What is the Early Years Foundation Stage?

The foundation stage policy at Mellers Primary School applies to all children joining us between the ages of 3 and 5 years old. These children are all part of the Early Years Foundation Stage, and are foundation 1 until the year in which they become 5 years old, when they move onto the foundation 2 stage of their education. The foundation 1 children and foundation 2 children are now educated in separate classrooms/units since the school has begun its expansion.

There are seven areas of learning in the early years foundation stage framework and the development of all these areas are all equally important and inter-connected.

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 the **prime** areas:

Communication and Language

Physical Development

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Children are also supported through the four **specific** areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The **specific** areas are:

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the World

Expressive Arts and Design

Through the provision of exciting 'learning through play' activities, children progress through the early learning goals set out in the EYFS. The foundation staff work as a team to monitor children's progress in the seven areas of learning through making observations of each child, assessments of their individual abilities and collecting evidence of children's learning such as paintings, drawings, writing, spoken language and photographs.

As a team we use the information gained from observing and working with the children, to inform our planning and incorporate child initiated ideas alongside using the EYFS guidance to ensure we have covered every aspect of the curriculum. Overall we endeavour to ensure that we build the very foundations upon which children at Mellers pick up a love of learning to take with them throughout their education.

Philosophy

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. It is not just preparation for the next stage – it is vitally important in itself. Therefore, the foundation stage is the stage whereby children acquire and develop learning attitudes, social integration, and the skills of personal organisation and decision making. It is also the phase of education which through carefully balanced structured and child initiated play, children can be switched on to learning for the rest of their school lives. As outlined in the EYFS ‘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.’

Our approach to learning in the foundation Stage at Mellers is based upon our shared philosophy and aims. We want children to feel happy, safe, secure and inquisitive within our foundation stage learning environments. We recognise that teaching and learning are paramount, and it is the knowledge of our children which enables us to plan for activities based upon the children’s personal and curricular needs. We ensure children can experience a broad and balanced curriculum, but also develop their personal needs through opportunities to initiate their own learning; make suggestions for unplanned activities; have the opportunity to experience and consolidate skills learnt; and ultimately to become autonomous.

Aims

The education we offer our children at Mellers foundation Unit is based upon the following underlying aims:

- We provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven areas of learning, using play as the vehicle for learning.
- We promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support.
- We work in partnership with parents and within the wider context.
- We plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment both indoors and outdoors.
- We offer a rich and stimulating environment in which children feel safe and secure.

- We help children to foster a love of learning, develop enquiring minds and acquire the ability to discuss, adapt, apply and negotiate.
- We help children to feel valued, and to value their foundation friends at school.

Equal Opportunities

The foundation Stage will be taught in accordance with the present Equal Opportunities policy for Mellers Primary School. Additionally, as a multi-cultural and dynamic school, we aim to help children to develop a positive attitude towards all of their peers inclusive of ethnic group, culture, beliefs, gender and ability.

- Cultures will be shared, celebrated and experienced by all.
- Resources and learning experiences will be accessible to all children.
- Children will be given opportunity to discuss share and celebrate their ideas and experiences with their peers.

The Curriculum.

The delivery of the EYFS areas of learning are planned in a way that ensures the balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are planned by the adults. During children's play, early years practitioners interact to stretch and challenge children further.

In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice. Through effective questioning and positive interactions, all children are challenged and encouraged to extend their learning during both child initiated and adult planned activities.

The curriculum areas are outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework as follows:

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

- **Literacy** development 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.
- **Mathematics** 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 measures.
- **Understanding the world** 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.
- **Expressive arts and design** 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.

Themed Topic work

At Mellers children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which they explore, think creatively and are active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning through providing experiences that allow children to practice the characteristics of effective learning: playing and exploring, active learning, creating and thinking critically.

We write medium term plans for literacy, mathematics and topic sessions using the EYFS objectives. The choice of topic will depend on the need of the cohort in terms of the skills they need to develop, as well as from the children's personal interests. These plans then inform our short-term weekly planning, alongside our observations, which remains flexible for unplanned circumstances or children's responses.

Assessment

All children are assessed within the first 4 weeks of starting at Mellers in all 7 areas of learning. This is done through formal assessments, observations of their learning in play as well as teacher led activities. Evidence continues to be gathered by all foundation staff members on a daily basis through regular planned observations and incidental observations. This is monitored by the foundation stage phase leader to ensure that all areas of learning are evidenced for every child. Children are also assessed half termly in their reading, writing, and mathematics and their progress monitored through pupil progress meetings and team meetings throughout the school year.

Compiled by:

Approved by:

Date of review: