



**MELLERS PRIMARY SCHOOL  
FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY  
MAY 2022**

## 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 educated in separate classrooms/units.

The Mellers foundation stage is committed to giving children the best start to their education as possible. We believe that all children are capable, imaginative and curious learners who need an environment that fosters their innate love of learning. We offer creative provocations on a daily basis by providing open ended continuous provision and high-quality staff interactions in their play. We have high expectations for all of our children and recognise that breaking the glass ceilings must begin in the foundation stage. Our nurturing and stimulating environment is complemented by regular carpet sessions which teach a holistic curriculum based on both the children's interests and the EYFS framework.

## Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the 2021 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. (EYFS)

The EYFS (2021) is based upon four overarching principles:

- 🛡 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.

## 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 2021, '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.

## **Areas of learning and the curriculum:**

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, making 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.

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. The children will learn how to use a range of small tools with increasing accuracy and skill.
- 🛡️ **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, the past, 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 and Planning:**

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.

### **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.

### **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.

### **Statutory Assessments –**

Children will complete the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) within the first 6 weeks of joining Reception, regardless of when they join the class, unless they have been assessed previously. The RBA is an age-appropriate assessment of mathematics and literacy, communication and language, that is delivered in English. It is clearly linked to the learning and development requirements of the EYFS. The purpose of the RBA is to provide an on-entry assessment of pupil attainment to be used as a starting point from which a cohort-level progress measure to the end of key stage 2 (KS2) can be created. In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, and no later than 30 June in that term, the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile is completed for each child. Practitioners must indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are not yet reaching expected levels (emerging) across the seven areas of learning contained in the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage. Each child's level of development is recorded as Emerging or Expected against the 17 Early Learning Goals.

### **Safeguarding and Welfare**

We understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements as stated in the 2021 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and other relevant legislation such as, 'Working together to safeguard children' statutory framework. We aim to:

- 🏆 To provide a setting that is welcoming, safe and stimulating where children can grow in confidence;
- 🏆 Promote good health;

- 🏡 Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs;
- 🏡 To ensure that all adults who look after the children, or who have unsupervised access to them, are suitable to do so;
- 🏡 Ensure that the setting, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for the purpose it was intended for;
- 🏡 Maintain records, policies and procedures required for the safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.
- 🏡 It is important to us that all children 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.
- 🏡 We encourage children to take risks and highlight the importance of keeping themselves safe by teaching them how to recognise and avoid hazards.
- 🏡 We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See our Safeguarding Children Policy).
- 🏡 "Intimate" care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. However, depending on a child's age and stage of development, they may need some support, for example dressing, wiping their bottom after using the toilet and changing underwear following an accident. In most cases, intimate care is to do with personal hygiene. Intimate care procedures are discussed with parents and permission is gained prior to starting school.
- 🏡 Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child. Please also refer to our schools' policy on procedures for continence/intimate care.

**Compiled by: Wendy Towle**

**Approved by: Federated Governing Body**

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