

Morpeth First School

Treasured, Courageous, Empowered



EYFS Policy Spring 2022

Member of staff responsible:	Sarah White
Date approved by the governors:	
Date to be reviewed:	Spring 2023

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential.”

(EYFS Framework, 2021)

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.
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child is left behind.
- A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

Legislation

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

The Curriculum

Our EYFS Curriculum has been designed to reflect the core values within our school character curriculum, a love of nature and a respect for the environment and people where we live and in the wider global community.

The curriculum has been written in accordance with the education programmes within the latest version of the 'Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)' (September 2021). The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development that are important and interconnected:

- Communication and language.
- Personal, social and emotional development.
- Physical development.
- Literacy.
- Mathematics.
- Understanding the world.
- Expressive arts and design.

However, the first three areas in the list above, known as the prime areas, are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive:

We have developed the curriculum giving communication and language skills a high priority. This is in line with *Development Matters 2020*: *"The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively."*

A high priority is also given to the teaching of reading. We aim to teach children to read and develop a love of books as soon as they arrive at Morpeth First School and books are used to introduce topics and to enhance our whole curriculum.

We follow a systematic approach to phonics teaching using the Read Write Inc Phonics scheme, which continues as the children progress into KS1.

We underpin our curriculum with the Personal Social and Emotional Development of all our children. We strive to enable children to be safe, happy, confident individuals. We also encourage self-regulation as much as possible and introduce rules and boundaries through modelling good behaviour and reflection time. We teach the children the Morpeth First School character values and these underpin our whole curriculum and teaching style throughout the Nursery and Reception years. These values then follow on throughout the school.

The Curriculum is based around core books which provide opportunities to explore cross-curricular topics. Each planned book is included in the curriculum for specific reasons and we want to ensure that all children leave the Reception Year ready to start the KS1 curriculum. Planning around these topic areas is flexible allowing for learning through the childrens' interests and the needs of the cohort are considered and developed week by week.

Teaching and Learning

We believe in the importance of the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning that are set out in Development Matters 2021. These 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 achieving.

Creating and thinking critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Our curriculum is ambitious and aims to teach all children the skills and knowledge in order that they reach the seventeen Early Learning Goals described in the Early Years Foundation Stage (appendix A). We teach through a range of teaching methods including child-initiated learning, whole class teaching, group teaching, investigations and problem solving together, and independently. As many activities as possible are play-based; however, there is also a need for direct teacher-led activities to ensure children gain essential knowledge and skills from their teacher. All activities are expertly modelled and children are given sufficient time, support and resources to repeat and practise them.

Assessment

During the first term in Reception, the teacher assesses the ability of each child using a mixture of the statutory government baseline and also through teacher observations. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children. We record each child's level of development throughout the year and record whether each child is on track or not on track to meet a Good Level of Development (GLD) at the end of the year in July.

Children will be judged at either an emerging level or an expected level in each early learning goal. The exceeding level no longer applies. We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal observations and through planned activities. Assessment is completed regularly and involves both the teacher, teaching assistants, parents and children, as appropriate.

We record each child's level of development throughout the year. At the end of the final term in Reception we assess whether each child is emerging or expected in each strand within each area of learning and submit this data to the local authority. This information is also shared

with the child's next teacher who uses this information to make plans for the year ahead. We share this information at parental consultation meetings and in the end-of-year report.

Parents receive an annual written report that offers detailed comments on each child's holistic progress across all areas of learning. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs, and gives details of the child's general progress. We complete these in June, and send them to parents in early July each year. The parents also receive a copy of their children current targets in October and February.

Inclusion

All children will receive quality first teaching on a daily basis and activities will be differentiated accordingly. In addition to this, where children have been identified as having a specific need, intervention programmes will be implemented. Teachers and Teaching Assistants plan programmes together and where needed with liaison with the Special Needs Co-ordinator. Staff liaise closely with other professionals involved with individual children.

Safeguarding and welfare procedures

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. We help children to self-regulate and manage their emotions appropriately and Personal Social and Emotional Education is at the heart of everything we do.

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. We know that children learn best when they are healthy and safe, when their individual needs are met and when they have the chance to build positive relationships with the adults around them and their peers.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our suite of safeguarding policies which have been written in accordance with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021' and the local Safeguarding Board.

We are a healthy school and participate in the free fruit and milk for under-fives scheme. For our Reception children we provide the universal infant free school meal and the menu is regularly monitored with the school catering team. We cater for those children who have special dietary requirements and have robust systems in place ensuring that all children receive the correct meal. We make sure that children with allergies or other dietary requirements are catered for in conjunction with our catering providers.

Fresh water is readily available for all children and we encourage children to bring in bottles so that they can help themselves to water at any time.

At least three members of staff in the setting have a recognised paediatric first aid qualification in line with the EYFS framework 2021.

The EYFS lead is also one of the school DSLs and all staff are familiar with their role and responsibility in regards to safeguarding and of the procedure to follow if they have any concerns.

Structure and Staffing of the EYFS

The EYFS team consists of a qualified teacher for each reception and nursery class and there are also has 2 full time experienced EYFS teaching assistants in nursey and one full time and 2 part time teaching assistants in reception. PE is taught alongside the school PE specialist teacher. Extra teaching assistants are employed for children who have an Education Health and Care Plan.

Parental Involvement

We recognise that parents/carers are children's first educators and we value having a positive relationship with them in their child's education through:

- Making contact with parents/carers before their child starts school at our parent walkabouts, induction sessions, welcome packs and nursery visits.
- Inviting parents/carers and children the to attend an induction evening.
- Providing the option of a staggered start to the year if initial full time is too much for individuals.
- Inviting parents to phonic and reading workshops/ lesson observations to see how their children will begin learning and how they can support them.
- Operating an open-door policy for parents/carers with any queries or concerns. Conversely, if EYFS staff have concerns about the progress of a child, they will approach parents and carers to discuss them.
- Written contact through reading records and weekly newsletters.
- Sharing photos, updates and 'wow moments' on Seesaw and School 360 (our online communication and home learning platform).
- Offering two, parent-teacher consultation meetings per year at which their child's progress and wellbeing is discussed.
- Sending a written report on their child's attainment, progress and attitude at the end of 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 special events, workshops, Christmas productions and sports day etc.
- Offering opportunities for parents and carers to visit the school as a volunteer to assist with the children's learning e.g. hearing readers.

Transition

Starting school can be a difficult time for young children; we therefore plan this time carefully to support children with the transition and to ensure it is as smooth as possible for each child and that they settle in to their new class quickly and happily.

We have a tried and tested induction programme which includes:

- An induction evening for parents so that teachers can get to know parents and carers and ask about the individual children. The teacher gives parents practical information such as the ethos of the school, vision and values, information about equipment and uniform needed.
- Reception staff spend time in nursery during the summer term to get to know the children in their familiar setting, they also visit other settings to meet the children and liaise with their key workers.
- Stay and plays at the start of term so that the nursery children can get to know the teachers and school staff with their parent present.

When children transition into year 1 the teacher has time with the year 1 teacher to give them all the relevant welfare, academic and general information about all the children leaving the EYFS. Staff also contribute to the planning within the first half term to ensure continuity and support for those who may need it. The Year 1 teacher teaches the Reception children for at least one morning in the last half of the summer term so the children can start to get to know them. These sessions are done in the year 1 classroom so that the children see their new classroom before the summer holidays.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Early Years lead teacher every 2 years. At each review, the policy will be shared with the governing board. The head teacher and governor representative will liaise with the EYFS lead teacher annually to discuss the EYFS Action Plan and relevant Strategic School Development Plan (SSDP) sections.

Appendix A - 17 Early Learning Goals – EYFS

Communication and Language

Listening, Attention and Understanding

- 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

- 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.

Understanding the World

Past and Present

- 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

- 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

- 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.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Self-Regulation

- 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

- 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

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

Expressive Arts and Design

Creating with Materials

- 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

- 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.

Mathematics

Number

- 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

- 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.

Physical Development

Gross Motor Skills

- 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

- 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, paintbrushes and cutlery.
- Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing.

Literacy

Comprehension

- 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

- 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

- 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.