



Meadowside Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Reviewed: February 2025

Next Review: September 2026

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Meadowside Primary School, children join the Reception class in the year that they turn five. In partnership with parents and carers we enable the children to begin the process of becoming active learners for life.

“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. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.” (Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2023)

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A unique child – developing resilient, capable, confident and self-assured individuals.
- Positive relationships – supporting the children in becoming strong and independent.
- Enabling environments – where opportunities and experiences respond to the individual needs of the child by developing a strong partnership between practitioners, parents/carers and the child.
- Learning and developing – An acknowledgement that children learn in different ways and at different rates

A Unique Child

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/Special Educational Needs (SEN)

All children and their families are valued at Meadowside Primary School. Children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all provisions available. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. Assessments take into account contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential special educational needs is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage and the school’s SEND coordinator is called upon for further information and advice. Appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the school’s Inclusion policy for SEND.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- 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 taking action to provide support as necessary and providing feedback.

Welfare

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)

"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 Meadowside 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 2023. We understand that we are required to:

- Promote the welfare and safeguarding of children.
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- Promote healthy eating, for example by encouraging healthy snacks at playtime.
- 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 with a current DBS check.
- 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. Including policy, and procedures, to safeguard

children which are in line with the guidance and procedures of the relevant local safeguarding partners (LSP).

Positive Relationships

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

Parents/carers as Partners

We recognise that parents/ carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We wish to build on this important role in the education of their children through their school journey. We do this through:

- Ensuring all parents know who are their child's teacher and teaching assistant.
- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school.
- Offering home visits when possible.
- The children having the opportunity to spend time with their teacher and TA before starting school during transfer sessions.
- Supporting children through the transition from pre-school to Reception with the children attending part time during the first few weeks. This is also to support staff and parents in getting to know each other as well as the children.
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school. We provide short video tutorials for parents to explain the teaching of reading and phonics . As a school we provide information for the parents on the curriculum, maths and English periodically.
- Keeping parents informed; We make observations on the Tapestry app which are shared with the child's home. Parents can also share observations with school via the app. We also use the white board outside the classroom to tell parents what is going on in the classroom each day.
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. Staff are available both before and after school.
- There is a formal meeting for parents twice a year at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of the school year. They also receive an attendance report.
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: open afternoons, school visits etc. Parents are always welcome to come and help in the classroom on a regular or one off basis.
- Homework. Parents are encouraged to share their child's reading book with them and support them with learning of phonics by playing games with their cards. During the year they also get a range of short homework tasks using the 'learning with parents' platform. We appreciate parents involvement with this to reinforce learning that has taken place in school.

Enabling Environments

We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have daily access to indoor and outdoor environments that are set up with discrete areas of learning and with planned continuous provision.

Effective learning builds and extends upon prior learning and following children's interests. Effective planning is informed by observations of the children to ensure we follow their current interests and experiences. These observations are recorded in the children's individual learning journeys and a picture is built up on Tapestry.

Play based learning is paramount and children direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities provided by staff. Staff will enhance play and extend as needed to further individual learning. Children also take part in the planning and setting up of some areas such as role play and writing area.

Learning and Development

“This is what providers must do, working in partnership with parents and/or carers, to promote the learning and development of all children in their care, and to ensure they are ready for year 1. The learning and development requirements are informed by the best available evidence on how children learn and reflect the broad range of skills, knowledge and attitudes children need as foundations for good future progress. Early years providers must guide the development of children's capabilities with a view to ensuring that children in their care complete the EYFS ready to benefit fully from the opportunities ahead of them”. (Statutory Framework for the Early years 2023)

Teachers and teaching assistants enable the delivery of the EYFS curriculum in the Reception class.

There are seven areas of learning and development of which three are “prime areas,” and four “specific areas.” The prime areas are

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

The specific areas are

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the world
- Expressive arts and design

Through careful assessments and observations, including information provided by parents and other settings, children's development levels are assessed. A baseline assessment of each child is made before any formal teaching takes place. At the start of the year the focus will be on the three prime areas. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas. However, if a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents/carers and agree how to support the child. This may also include a discussion with the SEND coordinator in order to access Special Educational Needs support.

At Meadowside:

Planning and guided children's activities will reflect the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. At Meadowside we support children to use the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning. 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 achievements; and
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Religious Education is also taught in the Reception class in accordance with Gloucestershire guidelines.

Assessment

The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is a short assessment, taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts reception.

Children's progress is monitored against Development matters and at the end of the year judgements made on whether they have met the early learning goals. Moderation of these judgements occurs within the school and county moderation training. The Profile provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their attainment against expected levels, and their readiness for year 1. The Profile will reflect the teachers' own knowledge and professional judgement of a child. Each child's level of development will be assessed against the early learning goals. We will indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging').

Equal Opportunities

All members of the school are treated as individuals. We aim to meet the needs of all, taking account of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, special educational needs, disability, and social circumstances. All staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect cultural diversity and the need to prepare pupils for life in a diverse and multi-faith society.

Health and Safety

At Meadowside, there are clear procedures for assessing risk (see whole school risk assessment policy) which includes procedures for keeping children safe during outings and for any aspects of the environment or provision that may require a further risk assessment. In addition to this, an annual safety audit is conducted of the Reception class and daily safety checks are carried out in the outside area. Children are always encouraged to play safely and to look out for any possible dangers when working.

In line with the EYFS statutory framework 2023, at Meadowside we undertake;

- A whole school Medicines policy ensuring that there are systems in place to ensure that medicines and the systems for obtaining information about a child's needs for medication are kept up to date. Medicines will not be administered unless they have been prescribed by a doctor or dentist. Training is provided for staff where the administration of medicine requires medical or technical knowledge (eg epi-pen). Medicines (prescription) are only administered to a child where written permission for that particular medicine has been obtained from the child's parent and/or carer. In Reception a written record is kept each time a medicine is administered to a child.
- Parents/ Carers are asked to sign an intimate care consent form to give permission for staff to change children and help them with any personal care.
- Fresh drinking water is available at all times
- Children's dietary needs are recorded and acted upon when required
- The classroom has a snack table and sink area where children have access to a healthy snack in the afternoon and water at all times.
- A first aid box is accessible at all times and a record of accidents and injuries is kept (see accident policy). The Reception teaching assistant is paediatric first aid trained.
- A health and safety policy and procedures which cover identifying, reporting and dealing with accidents, hazards and faulty equipment.
- The outside area is checked on a regular basis for hazards.
- We have a fire and emergency evacuation procedure and policy
- A safeguarding policy stating how mobile phones and cameras are to be used and stored securely whilst children are in the setting. Cameras that are used in school must not be used for staff's own personal use.
- Appropriate clothing - staff are expected to wear clothing that supports them in getting to a child's level and playing and engaging with children at floor level inside and outside.

Transition

From Pre-school /Feeder settings

During the summer term prior to a child's entry into the Reception year, the following procedures have been put into place to ensure successful transition

- Parents are invited to a meeting to ensure they know about school procedures and have the opportunity to address any concerns they have.
- During the summer term parents are encouraged to complete an "all about me" booklet. It is used during the Autumn term to support transition and to inform planning.
- Members of staff from Meadowside make visits or phone calls to feeder settings. The number of visits will depend on the child's needs and how much information gathering is required in order to support the child's transition.
- Children at Little Meadows (main feeder setting) will have visits with their key people into school where they get an opportunity to engage with the current Reception children. They also join us for whole school play times.
- Children requiring extra support will have additional visits regardless of their setting. Often these children will have been identified as requiring additional support or are part of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) process.
- We also offer home visits to families before children start school.
- Children and parents come into school for a stay and play session at the beginning of the school year. Parents and children can familiarise themselves with the classroom and ask any questions.

From Reception Class to Key Stage 1

Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This informs the dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1.

The children meet their new teacher, building positive relationships. They also have several opportunities to visit the classroom to familiarise themselves with it.