

Moss Hey Primary School

Early Year Foundation Stage Policy 2016



Purpose

The Early Years Foundation Stage is for children from birth to five years of age. The final year of the EYFS is referred to as the Reception year. At Moss Hey, we greatly value the important role that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. All children begin school with a variety of experiences and learning and it is the privilege of the practitioners working in the Foundation Stage to take on the task of building upon that prior learning and experience.

This document outlines the philosophy and principles of early years teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage (Year R) at Moss Hey Primary School.

The importance of the Foundation Stage

'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.'

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all Early Years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life'.

(Early Years Foundation Stage Framework, September 2014).

At Moss Hey we will:

- Provide a happy, safe, stimulating and challenging programme of learning and development for the children to experience as they begin their journey through school.
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond and enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence.
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress.
- Develop excellent relationships with parents and carers to build a strong partnership in supporting their children.
- Provide a caring and inclusive learning environment which is sensitive to the requirements of the individual child including those who have additional needs.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- **The Unique Child**
- **Positive Relationships**
- **Enabling Environments**
- **Learning and Development**

The Unique Child

At Moss Hey Primary School 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 and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Positive Relationships

We recognise that children learn to be independent confident learners through secure relationships with their peers and adults. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Enabling Environments

Additionally we believe that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Through observation we assess the children's interests, stages of development and learning needs, before planning challenging, achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning. We also plan and consider the Learning Environment. The classroom and outdoor area is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. It is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

Learning and Development

The Early Learning Goals and the educational programmes are set out in the "Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage" document (DFE, 2012). The seven areas of learning and development are:

Prime:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)
- Communication and Language (CL)
- Physical Development (PD)

Specific:

- Mathematics (M)
- Literacy
- Understanding of the World (UW)
- Express Arts and Design (EAD)

At Moss Hey Primary School we believe that once the children are secure in the Prime areas of learning they will be prepared to access the specific areas. However, all areas are important to ensure the development of the 'whole child'. We aim to deliver all the areas through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

Learning through play

“Play is essential for children’s development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults.” (“Early Years Foundation Stage”, DFE, 2012)

At Moss Hey Primary School we support children’s learning through planned play activities, and decide when child-initiated or adult-led play activities would provide the most effective learning opportunities. We believe that it is important for adults to support children’s learning through play, by getting involved in the play themselves and modelling by example.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

Good planning is the key to making children’s learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive. Effective learning builds on and extends what children know and can already do. Our planning shows how the principles of the EYFS are put into practice and is always informed by observations we have made of the children, in order to understand and consider their current interests, development and learning needs. All practitioners who work in the Foundation Stage at Moss Hey are involved in making observations of the children’s new learning.

In planning and guiding children’s activities, practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. Three characteristics of effective teaching and 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; and
- **Creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

(Early Years Foundation Stage Framework, September 2015).

The planning within the EYFS is based around the children’s interests and development needs. These plans are used by the EYFS team as a guide for weekly planning; however they may alter these in response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children.

We make regular assessments of children’s learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of recorded observations (written or photographed) as well as teacher’s professional’s judgement. These are tracked using the development stages set out in the document ‘Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage’.

From September 2015 Reception children will be assessed during the first 6 weeks of school against learning statements in maths, literacy and PSED to determine a baseline, or starting point, for their future learning. This is a statutory assessment which will be reported by the end of the children’s first half term in school. Judgements will be based on the adults’ observations of children during activities and play. There will not be any form of testing and parent’s views on their child as a learner will be taken into account.

2015/16 is the final year for the statutory reporting of the Foundation Stage Profile, the end of year assessment of children’s achievements in all areas of learning. Observational evidence and samples of children’s work throughout the school year will be used to assess children as ‘emerging’, ‘expected’ or ‘exceeding’ based on their understanding and achievement of the Early Learning Goals set out in the EYFS curriculum.

From September 2016 our children’s knowledge, skills and understanding will continue to be tracked throughout the foundation stage and assessed against the ELG’s at the end of re-

ception to establish an end of foundation stage achievement and learning profile for each child in preparedness for their transition to key stage one.

Staffing

Reception – 1 class teacher and 1 Teaching Assistant plus specifically appointed staff to support children with additional needs. All staff in the Foundation Stage aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them.

The Learning Environment

The EYFS classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. We have our own large enclosed outdoor area. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children the ability to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all areas of learning.

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 Stepping Stones meeting to ensure they know the teacher and the school.
- The children are invited to a number of visits during the summer term to their Reception class. This allows the children to feel secure in the new environment and with the teacher.
- The class teacher at Moss Hey will make links to feeder settings. The number of meetings/visits will depend on the child's needs and how much information gathering is required in order to support the child's transition.

During the induction period in September, children are split into two groups. They begin part-time sessions for the first week, and have lunch on one of these days before starting full time on the second week.

A 'Meet the Teacher' evening is held in the first week of the children's first term by the class teacher to introduce parents/guardians to the school and reception procedures. Through this meeting the school's expectations and routines are communicated as well as ways in which parents can help their child.

From Reception Class to Key Stage 1

During the final term in Reception, assessments are completed for each child. This provides parents and carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. The Data includes on-going observation, all relevant records held by the setting, discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

Each child's level of development is assessed against the Early Learning Goals. The data indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are exceeding expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the data 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.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- A Stepping Stones evening for parents in the Summer term where they receive the Reception Information booklet and the School Prospectus which highlights school start and finish times, uniform and informs the parents of the schools vision and aims. New parents are also given an opportunity to talk to the Head teacher, the Reception teacher and representatives from other areas of school life, .eg PTA and Governors
- Parent Interviews where parents can discuss their child including their likes, dislikes and any concerns they may have
- Meet the Teacher evening
- Family Workshop event where parents are invited in each half term to explore, create, play and learn with their child
- Operating an "open door" policy, whereby parents/guardians can come and discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner.
- Parents Evening twice a year at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher.
- Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.
- Organising a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents / carers: Class assemblies, Easter Show, Sports Day etc.
- Inviting parents / carers to make comments on our observations through the on-line learning journal 'Tapestry.'
- Offering parents / carers regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our reception class and allowing free access to the children's 'Learning Journey' booklets and classroom displays
- Parents / carers are made aware of the topic of the week through Tapestry.
- Our School Learning Platform provides parents with curriculum guidance booklets relating to the half-termly letters and useful games they could play with their child.

Safeguarding & Welfare

'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.'

(Statutory Framework for EYFS 2014)

At Moss Hey Primary School, we understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2014.

- 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.

Keeping Safe

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 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 Moss Hey's Safeguarding Children Policy).

Mobile phones

Please see our Staff Handbook, updated annually, which states 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 own personal use.

Health

At Moss Hey we promote the good health of children attending the setting. We provide:

- Fresh drinking water is available at all times.
- Children's' dietary needs are recorded and acted upon when required.
- Milk and fruit are available during the morning session.
- A first aider is accessible at all times and a record of accidents and injuries is kept.

Medicines

We ensure that all information about a child's needs for medication are kept up to date. Medicines (both prescription and non-prescription) are only administered to a child where written permission from a child's parent/carer has been obtained, and the appropriate paperwork is completed for this. Training is provided for staff where the administration of medicine

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, 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.

Inclusion

All children and their families are valued at Moss Hey 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.

The Designated Officer is the Head teacher: Tabitha Smith

The Deputy Designated Officer is the SENCO: Laura Gibson