

Moorside Primary School



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



MOORSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL

PURPOSE, VISION & VALUES

Our Purpose

Moorside Primary is a school at the heart of our diverse community in the West End of Newcastle.

We pride ourselves in being a caring school community where everyone is welcome.

We strive to deliver an outstanding education for all our children.

We help everyone to become caring and active citizens

We encourage everyone to thrive and achieve their full potential.

Our Vision

We want everyone in our school to work together to make us as good as any school can be.

We want to create new opportunities for everyone to succeed.

We want to create a culture which broadens all of our horizons.

We want everyone to be able to tackle the challenges we will face in an ever changing world.

We want all of our children to effectively engage with each other and with our community.

Our values

We all believe that

Our local community deserves a school they can be proud of

We are a caring community where everyone is welcome

We all value, respect and support each other

Our community has the right to be safe and healthy.

Our children should have the chance to enjoy and be enthused by their time in our school

We all work together to make sure that

Everyone always tries their best and take pride in all that they do

Everyone demonstrates good manners at all times

Everyone respects each other and show consideration

Everyone respects and cares for our environment and resources

Everyone celebrates each other's successes and achievements

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. Our Early Years Foundation Stage accommodates children from the age of two to five years.

Aims

- To give each child a positive and meaningful start to their school life, in which they can establish solid foundations on which to develop into independent, self-motivating and enthusiastic lifelong learners.
- To provide quality learning experiences within a broad and balanced curriculum.
- To provide opportunities to enjoy and develop language (spoken and written), literature, arts, music, mathematical and scientific experiences and develop fine and gross motor skills.
- To provide a secure, calm atmosphere in which to foster confidence and independence.
- To encourage sensitivity regarding the feelings, rights and beliefs of others.
- To ensure that children learn through practical and physically interactive learning experiences.
- To provide a wide range of materials and opportunities for children to express their thoughts and ideas.
- To encourage the development of thinking and reasoning skills through interactive language activities.
- To encourage and develop good relationships with parents/carers.
- To observe, assess and record children's progress and attainment.
- To identify children with special needs at the earliest opportunity to ensure appropriate training for staff and support for children.
- To recognise learning styles to further inform practice.
- To be aware of the philosophy behind our practice and recent research into quality early years policy and practice.

Philosophy for Early Years Foundation Stage

Moorside Primary School staff and Governors, believe that the provision of a secure, caring and stimulating learning environment will enable the children to acquire the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to become confident, independent learners. In a relaxed, happy atmosphere children can develop confidence, self-esteem and respect for others, whilst reaching their own full potential emotionally, intellectually, socially, physically and spiritually. We aim to provide an enjoyable learning experience both indoors and outdoors, acknowledging the importance of outdoor provision for young children and providing quality learning experiences through a purposeful and planned curriculum. We believe that the learning environment provided, will support the development of skills and understanding, thus enabling the children to become independent learners.

We are committed to:

- Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare, including registering all children in this age group that use the setting, ensuring they do not leave the setting unaccompanied and promoting their health and well-being needs
- Ensuring suitable people, with appropriate qualifications, training, skills and knowledge operating with appropriate adult/child ratios
- with appropriate adult/child ratios
- Having suitable premises, environment and equipment, including access to outdoor space
- Having systems and plans to ensure that every child receives an enjoyable and challenging learning and development experience that is tailored to meet their individual needs.
- Maintaining documentation, including records, policies and on-going procedures required for the safe and efficient management of the settings and to meet the needs of the children.

Early Years Foundation Stage is based on four Principles

The 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. Recognising that 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

Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or other adults. All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. Each child has a class teacher (or key person in Playgroup and Nursery) that parents are encouraged to liaise with on a regular basis.

Enabling environments

The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning. We believe that a quality environment underpins effective learning and teaching. We actively support Early Years staff in establishing well-organised provision and use an extensive range of resources for key areas indoors and outdoors.

Learning and development

Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of learning and development are equally important and inter-connected. Learning through play is one of the key principles of our Early Years education. We build on children's home-based knowledge and experiences, effectively developing their natural enjoyment in play, and providing opportunities for progression, extension and challenge.

Learning and development requirements

We provide opportunities for each child to develop their full potential ensuring that quality play experiences within the indoor and outdoor environments are provided through planned and purposeful activities. The children follow the Foundation Stage Curriculum which begins with Development Matters and moves on to the Early Learning Goals. The areas of learning and development consist of three prime areas and four specific areas. The prime areas cover the knowledge and skills which are the foundations for children's readiness for and future progress in learning, and which are applied and reinforced by the specific areas.

Prime areas of learning

The Prime areas are fundamental in the early years. They work together and support development in all the other areas of learning. They are:

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- Making relationships
- Self-confidence and self-awareness
- Managing feelings and behaviour

Communication and Language

- Listening and attention
- Understanding
- Speaking

Physical Development

- Moving and handling
- Health and self-care

Specific areas of learning

The Specific areas include essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society. They provide important contexts for learning. They are:

Literacy

- Reading
- Writing

Mathematics

- Numbers
- Shape, space and measure

Understanding the World

- People and communities
- The world
- Technology

Expressive Arts and Design

- Exploring and using media and materials
- Being imaginative

The Importance of Play

We deliver learning for all of the areas through purposeful play and learning experiences, ensuring a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. ***‘Children’s play reflects their wide-ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play, children learn at their highest level.’***

We recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are inter connected.

Play is central to the process of purposeful learning in the Early Year’s curriculum. Through play children will have the opportunity to develop ideas by engaging in structured and purposeful activities. ‘A child’s experiences during their early years provide the essential foundations for life. Their development during this period influences their basic learning, educational attainment, economic participation and health’.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning and the nursery and reception teachers plan activities with these in mind. The characteristics highlight the importance of a child’s attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them. The three characteristics 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

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

Inclusion

In line with our whole school ethos, the foundation stage embraces inclusion. We recognise and respect the abilities and strengths of our children at all levels of development and the wealth of knowledge and experience that they bring from their differing backgrounds and cultures.

We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children’s range of life experiences when planning for their learning and we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of individual children, so that children are able to reach their full potential.

We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds. We aim to 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.

The Role of the Practitioner

Teachers and support staff will in Early Years will:

- value every child regardless of ability, race, gender, age or achievement
- develop children's self-esteem and positive self image through valuing all children's contributions as individuals
- actively engage in the children's learning, extending and intervening in children's play where appropriate
- provide support and enrichment through learning opportunities
- provide a quality learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, with a calm and secure atmosphere
- plan a range of stimulating activities which will be differentiated to meet the individual needs of children, extending their understanding and providing opportunities for assessment
- plan quality learning based on children's interests, extending their understanding and providing opportunities for assessment
- provide the best contexts for learning through purposeful fun and enjoyment activities
- value the relationship with parents and acknowledge them as their child's first educator
- be encouraged to develop and extend their present level of skills to meet changing circumstances

Supporting child-initiated learning

We are aware that child-initiated activity is a powerful opportunity for learning and make the most of this. We believe that the child-initiated activity is wholly decided by the child, based on their own motivation, and it remains under their control. It is guided by expectations within our Early Years setting regarding responsible use of space, time and resources.

Early Years staff maintain their focus on learning and actively use a range of strategies to support and extend learning through engagement with the children. This includes introducing new words and ideas, modelling more complex ways of speaking, posing new problems, encouraging resolution of conflicts and explaining, or demonstrating approaches. Early Years staff ensure that the learning environment offers a range of stimulating open-ended materials, outdoors and indoors, which children use and combine in their own way to meet their own purposes.

Participating in high quality play

Early Years staff communicate with children about their ideas and extend the activity through participating in the children's play. Early Years staff effectively consider the need to enter the play for a variety of purposes such as offering suggestions, introducing new vocabulary, managing behaviour or extending the activity through additional resources. They maintain playful ways of engaging by following children's directions and turning them into meaning.

Supporting play and independence

Early Years staff show children how to play and use equipment appropriately by modelling, guiding or demonstrating. They encourage children to access resources and participate in the environment independently, developing children's positive attitude to learning. Early Years staff remain alert to the qualities of play, and to the knowledge and skills that children are using and applying. They develop children's positive attitudes to learning through social play.

Adult-led Learning

We plan adult-led activities with an awareness of the children's needs and areas of strength, supporting the children's progress in all areas of learning. These activities are initiated by the adults and presented to the children in an open-ended approach with elements of imagination and active exploration that will increase the interest and motivation for children. The adults build on what children know and can do, as well as drawing on interests, use of materials or themes in child-initiated activities. As with child-initiated activities, the adults actively use a range of effective interaction strategies to support and extend the learning.

Continuous provision

The term 'continuous provision' describes all the physical areas of the setting, both in and outdoors, and includes its routines and deployment of staff. In any setting, these together create the secure environment needed to foster the children's confidence and development. Continuous provision should include learning opportunities across all areas of learning in the EYFS. Carefully chosen, well-organised and high quality resources are always available for children to access independently across every area of learning inside and outside.

Enhanced Provision

Enhanced Provision is those carefully chosen resources, photos and artefacts that can be added to areas of continuous provision to develop the theme/topic and respond to children's interests making play opportunities purposeful.

Outdoors

Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum states that being outdoors:

- has a positive impact on children's sense of well-being and helps all aspects of children's development.
- offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors.
- gives children first-hand contact with weather, seasons and the natural world.
- offers children freedom to explore, use their senses, and be physically active and exuberant.

We believe the outdoor environment is a rich, dynamic and natural space for learning and the development of children of all ages and we value it as an essential learning resource. We provide a stimulating, secure and safe outside learning environment where all seven areas of the Foundation Stage Curriculum are provided for. Children are encouraged to actively explore the world around them, developing their creativity, independence, thinking skills and ability to solve problems across the curriculum. Through a range of play based curriculum activities in the outside, children explore and develop further skills that include co-ordination, language development, problem solving, social skills, investigation and observation.

Our planning for the outside reflects the long term and medium term planning and directly links to short term planning and children's interests. There should be free-flow between the inside and the outside area during child initiated activity. During directed and initiated teaching the outside area should be used. Resources in the outside should stimulate, challenge and inspire children to engage in learning and should provide well for both the planned and unplanned curriculum.

Adults should be mindful of the elements and ensure that they and the children are appropriately dressed and protected. Parents are informed of their responsibilities regarding learning in the outside environment and the provision of appropriate footwear, clothing and sun-creams. There is a responsibility on the part of the school to ensure that access to the outside is safe and that equipment is regularly maintained. Risk assessments should be carried out in accordance with guidelines and the outside area should be checked before use to ensure safety.

Planning, Observation and Assessment

Children learn best when learning is connected. Although the curriculum has been set out under learning areas, integration is encouraged across all areas of the curriculum. Early Years staff seek to build on children's earlier learning. Early Years staff work together to ensure that the learning is broad and balanced ensuring there is continuity and steady progression in children's learning.

The planning identifies clearly the knowledge, skills and understanding that the children are expected to acquire. The curriculum is planned to take account of the children's differing stages of development, abilities and attainment to ensure that individual needs are met. The learning takes account of children's interests and experiences and activities are planned to ensure continuity and progression.

There is careful assessment of children's progress and evaluation of their responses to inform future planning. Through observing children and by making notes when necessary, Early Years staff can make professional judgments about children's achievements and decide on the next steps of learning. They can also exchange information with parents about how children are progressing. All the practitioners in the Early Years settings contribute to a system that captures observations of significant moments of children's learning and development. These moments are recorded in the child's Learning Journal, which is an ongoing record of the child's progress and development over time.

Parents/Carers as Partners

We recognise that parents/carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. Children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. Therefore, we aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents/carers are warmly welcomed into school and are:

- invited to come and help in the classroom on a regular basis
- encouraged to stay and work with their children
- invited to accompany us on out of school visits
- invited to participate with Inspire activities
- encouraged to share their child's learning and progress with staff

We recognise the role that parents/carers have played and their current and future role, in educating their children through:

- Talking to parents/carers about their child before their child starts in our school.
- Providing letters and newsletters that relay pertinent information and inform parents about the work to be covered during the half term and making suggestions for ways in which parents can support their children at home.
- Offering an appointment for practitioners to visit all children in their home setting prior to their starting school.
- Inviting both new parents/carers to induction meetings during the term before their child starts school.
- Offering parents/carers regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in nursery/reception classes and allowing free access to the children's 'Learning Journals'.
- Encouraging parents/carers to talk to staff if there are any concerns
- Arranging consultation meetings for parents/carers each term at which the teacher and the parent/carers discuss the child's progress in private.
- Providing a written report for parents/carers on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents/carers.
- Providing space in the children's 'Learning Journals' for parents to leave comments relating to the children's achievements.

Transition

We recognise that starting school and moving up classes has the potential to be a stressful time for both children and parents/carers. To this end we have established a strong procedure for transitions to ensure that our children and parents/carers are as confident and secure as they can be when facing the challenges of each year group.

We provide meetings in the summer term before the children start Playgroup, Nursery and Reception as well as main stream school. The meetings provide parents/carers with key information, school expectations, knowledge on our curriculum and assessment and advice on how they can help their child. In Nursery all parents/carers are also offered a home visit prior to their child starting school and any families joining the school throughout the year are invited to a welcome meeting prior to starting. This gives children the security of meeting with their teachers in a safe, familiar environment and gives parents/carers time to ask questions and share knowledge or any concerns they have about their child. In the summer term reception children have the opportunity to spend time meeting with their new teachers in an aim to prepare them for their next stages of education.

Safeguarding, well-being and welfare requirements

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. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance (2014) and we adhere to the school's safeguarding policy.

We are a healthy school. Our children under five receive free milk and all children have access to fresh water and free fruit from a Government scheme. Reception children who stay for lunch are eligible for free school meals or can choose to bring in a healthy packed lunch.

Each foundation stage classroom has access to their own toileting facilities and we teach the children the importance of hygiene and hand washing techniques. Throughout the year we plan cooking activities to give children experiences of a range of healthy food.

Date to be implemented	May 2019
Date to be reviewed	January 2020