

New Marston Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. At New Marston Primary School children are admitted to Nursery during the year in which the child becomes two or three. Children are admitted to Reception in the September following their fourth birthday. New Marston takes both funded and paid 2 year olds.

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At New Marston Primary School we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development.

Aims & Objectives

We aim to support all children to become independent and collaborative learners. We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential.

At New Marston Primary School, 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 curriculum that will set in place the right foundations for further learning and development as children progress through the school.
- Provide a caring and inclusive environment which enables choice and decision making, fosters independence and promotes 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.

The Early Years Foundation Stage has four guiding principles that shape our practice at New Marston:

A Unique Child
Positive Relationships
Enabling Environments
Learning and Development

A Unique Child

At New Marston 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 and at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and believe that every child matters. All children at New Marston Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, gender, religion or ability. All families are valued within our school.

We give our children every opportunity to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when we are planning for their learning.

In the Foundation Stage, we set realistic but challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, so that all achieve their personal best, with most achieving a good level of development (GLD) by the end of the stage. We do this 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 learn effectively;
- Offering a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Employing resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- Planning challenging activities to meet the needs of both boys and girls, of children with special educational needs, of children who are more able, of children with disabilities, of children from all social and cultural backgrounds, of children from different ethnic groups, and of those from diverse linguistic backgrounds;
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary (such as referrals to speech therapy).
- Working closely with parents, carers and other outside agencies to ensure all children's needs are met and we enable them to access the curriculum and make good progress.

Positive Relationships

At New Marston Primary School we recognise that children learn to be strong, confident and independent through secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents/carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value being partners with them in their child's education through:

- Communicating learning and personal development via Tapestry (online platform)
- Providing a handbook of information about commencing Reception at New Marston
- Outlining the school's expectations in the Home-School agreement.
- Inviting parents/carers and children the opportunity to spend time in Reception Class for stay and play sessions before starting school.
- Providing an induction meeting for Reception parents/carers to meet with staff to discuss school routines, expectations and to answer any questions parents/carers may have.

- Operating an open door policy for parents/carers with any queries or concerns. Conversely, if Foundation staff have concerns about the progress of a child, they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss them.
- Written contact through the school newsletters and Dojo.
- Publishing a termly topic web detailing the areas of learning.
- Inviting parents to attend information meetings about areas of the curriculum, such as phonics or reading.
- Sharing key moments in the children's 'Learning Journey' with parents/carers and valuing the on-going contributions to this from parents/carers.
- Actively encouraging contributions from parents as part of the 'Focus Child' assessment cycle.
- Offering regular parent/teacher consultation meetings to listen to and share their child's learning journey and progress.
- Providing a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of the academic year.
- Asking parents to sign a generic permission form for visits and photographs etc.
- Inviting parents to a range of activities throughout the school year such as workshops, Christmas productions and sports day etc.

Staff

All staff in the Foundation Stage aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen and tailoring their care and learning opportunities to meet the child's needs.

Enabling Environments

At New Marston Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development, so that they feel confident, secure and challenged. Play-based learning is central to learning in the early years and children are encouraged to direct their own play through planned opportunities provided by staff.

Children have daily access to both the indoor and outdoor environment, with planned continuous provision to support learning in all seven areas of learning and development. Both our indoor and outdoor environment, reflects the children's interests, passions and abilities and challenges children in their learning. We use materials, resources and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage children to lead their own play and invite them to explore the learning environment independently so that they build confidence, play with others, set their own goals and solve problems. Resources and spaces are available for all children to access independently. They are safe to use and checked regularly.

Learning and Developing

Our Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum is shaped by the seven areas of learning and development. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Our curriculum is carefully sequenced and develops children's learning over time. The curriculum recognises the unique child at New Marston and provides activities and experiences that are driven by children's interests enabling them to develop knowledge and skills across the curriculum.

Children require a balance of adult led and child initiated activities in order for most children to reach a good level of development at the end of EYFS. Three prime areas are particularly crucial for igniting

children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The three Prime areas are:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

Staff will also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The four Specific Areas are:

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

In Nursery, children's interests are stimulated by developing positive relationships and routines, with a focus on the prime areas of development. As children move into Reception there is a greater focus on teaching the skills and knowledge in the specific areas of learning.

In Reception class, children participate in daily phonics sessions following the Read, Write Inc scheme. This is introduced in a less formal way during their time in Nursery

If a child's progress gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents/carers and agree how to support the child both in school and at home.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

We recognise that children learn and develop at different rates. However, we ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

Playing and exploring - children will have opportunities to investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.

Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, learn how to set their own goals and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

Active learning - children will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements.

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence, they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Creating and thinking critically - we encourage and support children to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Children should be given the opportunity to explore all areas of learning. Adults can support children’s thinking and help them make connections by showing interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open-ended questions. Children can access resources and move around the classroom freely and purposefully to extend their learning.

Observation, Planning and Assessment

Observations

Foundation Stage staff make regular assessments of children’s learning, and use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Staff are skilled at observing children to identify their achievements, interests and next steps for learning. Relevant and significant areas of attainment are recorded in the children’s online Learning Journey.

Assessment

Assessment is a process that allows teachers and other adults to notice what children know and what they can do. Assessment is always based on the unique child and their learning so that teachers can create a learning environment that continues to stimulate and challenge.

Our ongoing assessment process at New Marston is outlined in the table below. Each week we identify a small number of children who we observe closely. Adults in school reflect on their progress and record any notable areas of attainment on Tapestry. Teachers will also identify how we can further support children’s learning and development. In line with the current Early Years Foundation Stage Framework, observations will not necessarily include lengthy paperwork. We spend time during observations interacting with pupils and time after the observation reflecting with our colleagues.

A strong partnership with parents is vital to enable children to thrive in the EYFS. As part of our ongoing assessment process we invite parents to share their child’s learning and development at home. During week 1 parents are invited to identify their child’s strengths, interests and areas for development. Teachers use this feedback to support children’s learning and development through activities and enhancements in provision during week 2. During week 3, parents are invited to discuss their child’s progress with the class teacher. This cycle enables parents to review their child’s progress at regular points in the year and to work with our setting to understand how they can best support their child in their learning.

Week 1	Children identified for focus observations. Communication with parents, including parent form to identify strengths, interests and areas for development.
Week 2	Quality interactions with children, guided by curriculum, interests and parent feedback. Notable areas of learning and development -Wow moments - are added to Tapestry with a brief reflection from an adult in the setting. Parents share Wow moments from home (added to Tapestry), which will be shared with the child in school.
Week 3	Parents are invited to meet class teachers and discuss progress

	observed during Week 2.
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Although we formally observe only a small number of children each week in this way, all children will continue to receive the support and guidance that they need to succeed through enabling environments, play, interactions, guided learning and direct teaching. Throughout the year, we also invite parents to continue to share their child's learning journey at home on Tapestry.

The Foundation Stage Profile is the assessment tool that enables teachers to assess children's development at the end of the Foundation Stage. The profile summarises an assessment of children's outcomes in relation to the 17 early learning goals.

The Foundation Stage Profile is a statutory assessment at the end of the early years foundation stage.

The profile is used to support transition to KS1 by informing year 1 teachers about each child's strengths and their learning needs and enables them to plan a curriculum that continues to meet the needs of all children. The EYFS profile is shared with parents in July each year.

Transition

Starting at nursery or school can be a big change 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 every child so that they settle into their new class quickly and happily.

Starting in the Early Years at New Marston

Parents of all children starting in the next academic year will be invited to an Induction Meeting in the summer term to meet their child's new teachers and other key staff, to learn more about our Early Years curriculum and to learn about our school routines and expectations. The children are given opportunities to come into school to meet their new class teacher and other children in their class through stay and play sessions so that the environment is already a familiar place to them before they formally start in September.

When children start school in September children who are new to the setting begin on the very first day. This allows a smaller group of children in the setting and also enables staff to get to know them. The following day all children join us for the full day. We are able to offer a more staggered start for those who need it, which usually lasts no more than 2 weeks.

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 2021)

At New Marston 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 2021.

- 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.
- All staff are trained to be aware of radicalisation and how to prevent children from being radicalised.

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 New Marston Safeguarding Policy).

Good Health

All children are provided with a fruit snack each day as well as being offered milk. They have access to water at all times.

Intimate Care

“Intimate” care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out any personal needs 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. In most cases, intimate care is to do with personal hygiene. 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. If a child requires ongoing regular care, this forms part of a health care plan or EHCP. For more information, please see the school’s Intimate Care policy.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of those working in Reception to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Headteacher, Assistant Headteacher and EYFS Leads will carry out monitoring on EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule. The Curriculum Committee of The Governing Body will also be part of this process.

This policy will be reviewed in December 2024 or as necessary.

This policy was approved by the Governing Body of New Marston Primary School at their meeting on 7th December 2022.