



## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy- Moorside CP Academy

**At Moorside Academy, our primary aim as educators is to ensure that our pupils are safe, happy and ready to learn. The ethos of our school is that the foundations are built firmly on peace and respect, regardless of an individual's role in the academy. Our children and their families are at the heart of everything that we do here at Moorside and our curriculum has been developed in partnership with our children to be stimulating and engaging and to promote a lifelong love of learning. Our nurturing approach ensures that our curriculum is fully inclusive for all learners and we work hard to challenge all of our children and develop in them the resilience that will accompany them on their future learning journey.**

Within this document, the term Early Years Foundation Stage is used to describe children who are in our POD, Nursery and Reception classes.

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.

### **Aim**

At Moorside Academy, we aim to provide outstanding quality care and education for all our children thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning. We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent. We value the individual child and work alongside parents and others to meet their needs and help every child to reach their full potential, parents also play a very important part in the progress of their children.

As outlined in the EYFS 'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential in their learning and social interactions. 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.' From the beginning of their time here, parents are consulted in ensuring on entry assessments are accurate and informative for future planning.

We adhere to the Statutory Framework of the EYFS and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings.

The EYFS is based upon the following overarching 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, linking to the Learning Characteristics.

### **Principles into practice**

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven areas of learning, using play as the vehicle for learning

- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support
- Work in partnership with parents and within the wider context
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-initiated and child-initiated, supported by the adult
- Have a key person approach to develop close relationships with individual children
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and out

### **Foundation Stage Curriculum**

We plan an exciting and challenging topic based curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve and exceed the early learning goals.

All the seven areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting the flame of learning and children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, therefore building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

These three areas are the **prime** areas:

**Communication and Language**

**Physical Development**

**Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

Children are also supported through the four **specific** areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The **specific** areas are:

**Literacy**

**Mathematics**

**Understanding the World**

**Expressive Arts and Design**

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which children explore, think creatively and are active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development. Underpinning this are the Characteristics of Effective Learning and practitioners carefully understanding how to tailor individual learning to the different learning styles and the way in which children learn.

As a team, we write long term and medium term plans using the EYFS based on a series of topics each of which offers experiences in all seven areas. These plans are reviewed by the Early Years coordinator and Senior Leader Team. Please see our plans for more details. These plans then inform our short-term weekly planning, continuous provision enhancements and alongside our observations, which remains flexible for unplanned circumstances or children's responses and interests.

Practitioners working with the youngest children in the POD and Nursery will focus strongly on the three prime areas, which are the basis for successful learning in the other four specific areas. The three prime areas reflect the key skills and capacities all children need to develop and learn effectively, and become ready for school. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as the children move through the Early Years at Moorside Academy and grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

Children have key worker time, small group focused activities, daily intervention groups along with one to one reading which increases as they progress through the EYFS. These activities include all aspects of the EYFS and have a strong focus on reading, mathematics, vocabulary and writing.

The curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the EYFS. Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are planned by the adults. During children's play, early years practitioners interact to stretch and challenge children further, implementing the next steps in a child's learning.

In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice whilst creating a stimulating environment to encourage children to free-flow between inside and out.

### **Observation and Assessment**

As part of our daily practice we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform our future plans. We record our observations in a variety of ways. Everyone is encouraged to contribute and discussions take place with children, staff and parents. Significant observations of children's achievements are collated in their own personal learning journey, which are shared with parents regularly. In the Autumn and Summer term, parents are invited to attend a parents evening and reports are written at the end of the year.

Within the final term of Reception, we provide the parents with a report based on their child's development against each of the Early Learning Goals. The parents are then given the opportunity to discuss these judgements with the Reception teacher in preparation for Year 1.

### **Safety**

Children's safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum, which teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. We have stringent policies, procedures and documents in place to ensure children's safety.

We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious food, following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident.

Please see our separate policies and procedures on Health and Safety, Child Protection, and the Medical policy.

### **Inclusion**

We value all our children as individuals at Moorside Academy, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meets the needs of the individual child and supports them at their own pace so that our children achieve and even exceed the Early Learning Goals. We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so, work closely with parents and outside agencies. See our separate policies on Equality of Opportunity and Learning Support.

### **Parents as Partners and the Wider Context**

We strive to create and maintain partnership with parents and carers as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child's learning. We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child's education and care in numerous ways.

Working with other services and organisations is integral to our practice in order to meet the needs of our children. At times we may need to share information with other professionals to provide the best support possible.

We draw on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on outings and inviting members of the community into our setting.

### **Transitions**

Transitions are carefully planned for and time is given to ensure continuity of learning. At any transition, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child and other settings. Children attend introductory sessions to the Pod and Nursery and also visit their new class when entering Reception to develop familiarity with the setting and practitioners. Many of our children will already be familiar with their new setting as we have mixed provision within Nursery and Reception and all children share the outdoor area making them familiar to other children and members of staff. They receive a small transition booklet and complete an 'All about me' sheet.

In the final term in Reception, the Year 1 teacher will meet with the Early Years staff and discuss each child's development against the Early Learning Goals in order to support a smooth transition to Year 1. This discussion helps the Year 1 teacher to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children.

### **Supervision for EYFS staff**

Good supervision can give staff an opportunity to reflect on their practice, explore any worries or concerns about the welfare of children in the setting and contribute towards developing confident and competent staff groups. All of these are known to be important in establishing safe organisations where children are safeguarded from harm. Supervision is a legal requirement for EYFS staff – in the revised EYFS Statutory Framework (2023). Our supervision meetings provide opportunities for staff to • discuss any issues – particularly concerning children's development or well-being; • identify solutions to address issues as they arise; and • receive coaching to improve their personal effectiveness.

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