

MOSS HALL INFANT SCHOOL

Be Kind
Work Hard
Make a Difference



Early Years Policy December 2020

Introduction

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child’s experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right and it provides the Early Years for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as the grow up”

“Early Years Stage Profile”

Department for Children, Schools and Families 2012

Principles

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- **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 and 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 and develop a positive attitude to learning.

- **Positive relationships**

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

- **Enabling environments**

We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children’s development. Through observations we assess the children’s interests, stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging and achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning.

- **Learning and development**

Reception is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where children can be active and be quieter. The classrooms are set up in learning areas where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

Early childhood is the Early Years on which children build the rest of their lives. At Moss Hall Infant School, we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure Early Years for future learning and development. However, we also believe that early childhood is valid in itself as part of life. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

The EYFS for children is from birth to five years of age. All children begin school with a wide variety of experiences and learning and it is the privilege of the adults working in Reception to accept the task of building upon the prior learning experience. This is done through a holistic approach to learning ensuring that parents and guardians and the Reception Team work together to support the learning and development of all pupils.

Aims

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. Each child is valued as an individual and teaching and learning is based on the understanding that children develop at different rates.

At Moss Hall Infant School, we aim to:

- Provide a safe, challenging, stimulating, caring and sharing environment which is sensitive to the needs of the child including children with additional needs.
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place from Early Years for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress.
- Enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence.
- Work in partnership with parents and guardians and value their contribution ensuring that all children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability.
- Provide opportunities whereby children experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development.

Learning and Development

Learning and development is categorised into three prime areas of learning:

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

Additionally, there are four specific areas of learning:

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

Characteristics of effective learning

The characteristics of effective learning underpin achievement of these prime and specific areas of learning. They describe factors which play a central role in a child's learning and in becoming an effective learner and are vital elements of support for the transition process from EYFS to Year 1. The characteristics represent processes rather than outcomes. Information describing the child's characteristics of effective learning will

provide Year 1 teachers with vital background and context when considering the child's next stage of development and future learning needs.

Playing and exploring – engagement

- Finding out and exploring
- Playing with what they know
- Being willing to 'have a go'

Active learning – motivation

- Being involved and concentrating
- Keeping trying
- Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

Creating and thinking critically – thinking

- Having their own ideas
- Making links
- Choosing ways to do things

Observation, Assessment and Planning

At Moss Hall Infant School, planning is divided into long term, medium term and short term. Long term planning states the topics to be covered for each year. Medium term plans illustrate the objectives taught each term. Short term, or weekly plans, show specific activities planned to achieve these objectives. Staff ensure that all children are encouraged to experience all areas of activity during the week, although they may not experience them each day. A mixture of directed and free choice activities are planned and children's choices are carefully monitored to ensure a balanced curriculum offer.

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. The EYFS team may alter planning in response to the needs of the children. Fostering children's interest develops a high level of motivation for the children's learning.

We make regular, on-going 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 short recorded and pictorial observations and this involves the teacher and the teaching assistant. These observations are recorded on Tapestry. Parents and carers are able to access their children's Tapestry profile to view these observations and to upload their own observations.

Parents and carers are given the opportunity to meet with the class teacher in the Autumn and Spring terms. At the end of the Summer term, we provide a written summary in relation to the children's early learning goals.

Learning Through Play

At Moss Hall Infant School, we do not make a distinction between work and play. Children learn through planned play activities and staff will decide when child-initiated or adult-led play opportunities would provide the most effective learning opportunities.

The Learning Environment

The Early Years classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, quieter, creative etc. Each classroom has defined learning areas where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The environment has an enclosed outdoor area, and children are able to free flow between the indoor and outdoor spaces. Being outdoors offers the children opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. They are able to explore, use their senses, develop their language skills and be physically active. We plan activities and resources both inside and outside enabling the children to develop in all the areas of learning.

The Outdoor environment

Learning outside the classroom supports the development of healthy and active lifestyles by offering children opportunities for physical activity, freedom and movement, and promoting a sense of well-being. It gives them contact with the natural world and offers them experiences that are unique to outdoors, such as direct contact with the weather and seasons. Outdoor play also supports children's problem-solving skills and nurtures their creativity, as well as providing rich opportunities for their developing imagination, inventiveness and resourcefulness. And, of course, the outdoor environment offers more space than indoors and therefore is particularly important to those children who learn best through active movement.

At Moss Hall Infants families are asked to provide their children with wellington boots and appropriate waterproof jackets/coats so we can learn outside whatever the weather!

The Induction Process

Parents new to Reception are invited to an information evening in the summer term to provide them with essential information for the next academic year.

During the summer term prior to starting school the following September each child and their parents/carer will be invited to a stay and play session so they can spend some time in their new class in order to familiarise themselves with the staff, the children and the environment.

A transition book and video for the class will be available to view online via our school website. Staff will make contact with the child's nursery and where possible, staff may visit the child in their nursery setting.

When children join the school in September the following procedures will apply in order for children to adjust to their new surroundings:

- Your child's Class Teacher and Teaching Assistant will visit your and your child in their home environment for a "home visit"
- Children will start school in small groups and at different times during the first week so that they can have some one-to-one time with their new teachers.
- The length of time that children stay in school will be built on gradually over 7 days.
- When settling your child into Moss Hall Infants you will be invited to work closely with staff to ensure your child feels safe and secure.
- The needs of individuals will be taken into consideration during this period; therefore, you may be asked to stay on the premises during the settling in period and you should only leave when you have reached an agreement with the teacher that your child is well settled.
- The staff in Early Years are happy to offer advice and support during this period.

Organisation of classes

In Reception we have 4 classes, each having a maximum of 30 children. All classrooms open onto a large outdoor space for use by Reception children. Children are encouraged to access activities in all of the Reception classrooms and the outdoor area. The school day starts at 8:45am and finishes at 3:05pm.

All Reception classes have a class teacher and Teaching Assistant.

Home and School Links –Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents and carers are a child's first and most enduring educators and we aim for the school and parents and carers to work together closely. This can have a very positive impact on a child's development and relies on a two-way flow of information and knowledge.

We will develop this working relationship between the school and parents and carers as follows:

- We will ask you to fill out an 'All About Me' booklet prior to starting school.
- We will hold a 'Parent's Information Evening' early in the autumn term.
- We will hold a Parent's consultation evening in November to establish how a child is settling into the school environment as well as to build on wellbeing and community cohesion.

- Through the use of Tapestry (a secure online journal), we will share observations from school of your child's learning and development.
- Through the use of Tapestry, we will ask parents and carers to share observations of the child's interests, achievements, learning and development outside of school.
- At the end of each week, we will provide an overview of the key learning that has taken place, with suggestions for simple linked activities at home.
- We will conduct workshops, online or in-person, for parents and carers to enable them to be familiar with teaching methods used in school to make it easier to emulate them at home.
- There will be opportunities for parents and carers to visit the school on a volunteer basis to assist with the children's learning for example with cooking or gardening activities or support on trips and local walks.
- We will provide another parents consultation after your child has been the weekly focus child.
- If possible, we will operate 'morning drop in' once per week that will allow parents to stay in class until 9:15am. During this time a key piece of learning for the week will be shared and parents and carers will have the opportunity to practise this skill with their child.
- If possible, 'Secret Reader' sessions will happen once per week at 2:45pm. Parents and carers will be invited to sign up and come to share their child's favourite story with the whole class.

Intimate Care

"Intimate care" is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure 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 e.g dressing, changing their underwear after an accident. 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 staff work in partnership with parents to support and individual child. No intimate care is to be given without the express written permission of the parent or guardian of that child and all parents and guardians will be asked to provide that permission when their child joins Moss Hall.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

Children with special educational needs will be supported as appropriate to enable them to fully access the curriculum. This includes children who exceed expectations and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities. Individual Learning Support Plans

identify targets in specific areas of learning for those children who require additional support.

We will provide all children, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability with equal access to all aspects of school life to ensure that every child is valued as an individual. All staff are role models and are aware of the influence they have in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical attitudes.

Safeguarding

The school takes its child protection responsibilities very seriously. Any concerns which the school has will be noted and, if deemed necessary will be reported to the relevant agency. The safety of the child is always of paramount importance. The full Safeguarding Policy is available in school and online for parents to read if they wish.

Positive Behaviour Management

Reception follows the same Behaviour policy and systems as the rest of the school. Please refer to the Behaviour Policy for more information.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS staff to follow this policy. The Senior Leadership Team will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring system.