Maharishi School

CONSCIOUSNESS-BASED EDUCATION

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

2026 - 2027

Start Date: September 2026

Review Date: September 2027

Signed by:

Headteacher	Lisa Edwards	Date	
Chair of Governors	Ian Birnbaum	Date	

Revised September 2026

Within this document, the term Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is used to describe children who are in the reception class; aged 4-5.

Admissions into reception class

Admission to Maharishi School's reception class (4-5 year olds) is organised centrally, through each child's home local authority and places are allocated in accordance with our Admissions and Oversubscription Policy. This can be located here https://www.maharishischool.com/about-us/policies-and-procedures

As with all of our classes, there are 20 pupils in the reception class. There is a full time teacher and a full time teaching assistant. The reception class occupies a purpose-built standalone classroom called the Qube that has an outdoor learning area that is separate from the rest of the school's outdoor area.

Welcoming new pupils and parents to Maharishi School.

Once new reception places have been allocated, families will receive a Welcome Pack from Maharishi School. This contains a welcome letter from the Reception teacher, outlining key information and tips to support school readiness, our Parent Handbook, the school calendar and a range of forms to complete and agreements to sign and return to the school.

Parents and carers will be invited to an Information Evening where they will meet members of the senior leadership team and the reception class staff. Information will be shared about what parents/carers and children can expect when a child joins us and there is time for parents to ask questions and talk to the class teacher. There will be an opportunity to meet our Head of Consciousness-based Education and the Transcendental Meditation (TM) teacher who will be teaching the Word of Wisdom technique to the children. Transcendental Meditation and Word of Wisdom | Maharishi School

We invite our new reception children to join us in school for three 'Stay and Play' sessions during the summer term prior to joining us in reception in September.

If additional needs are disclosed by a parent/carer or a child's previous (eg. nursery) setting, additional communication may be required to ensure that we are prepared to best support the child's needs. The reception teacher arranges parent and nursery phone calls to gain important information on the new starters learning

journey. This is then used to support curriculum and provision planning during the start of term in September. Nursery visits may be arranged in those circumstances where a child is identified as potentially having difficulties transitioning into the new school environment, and those children who have SEND needs.

Communication between the school and parents/carers

Communication is encouraged between parents/carers and school staff. Our reception staff will invite all reception parents to join Class Dojo where regular messages will be shared to keep parents informed about their child's time in school. Parents/Carers can also use Class Dojo to share information with/pass on messages to staff. ClassDojo is an online app which enables easy contact between schools and families. Please note that school staff may only read and reply to messages during school hours.

Class Dojo is used to record the class learning journey. Photographs and key information about children's learning is communicated via this app as well as home learning opportunities.

Face-to-face communication is possible at the end of the school day. If longer meetings are required, parents are encouraged to pre-book an appointment. Reception class will host termly stay and play sessions for parents to stay and engage in their children's learning.

The education of our children is a partnership based on a high level of trust and communication; a partnership within which our children can flourish and develop to their full potential.

The EYFS Curriculum

There are seven areas of learning in the EYFS curriculum. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. There are three *prime* areas that are crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning and for expanding their capacity to learn. These are:

Communication and Language

Physical Development

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

There are also four specific areas through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. These are:

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the World

Expressive Arts and Design

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

A Unique Child

Positive Relationships

Enabling Environments

Learning and Development

A Unique Child

We celebrate the uniqueness of each child by offering personalised learning opportunities and through working closely with families and professionals from other settings who have knowledge of the child. In our school every child matters.

Our skilled professionals understand the process involved in children's growth, development and learning. The curriculum and the opportunities we offer are designed to help children develop a positive sense of their own identity and culture. We recognise that children learn in different ways and at different rates and we accommodate this in the provision we offer.

Positive Relationships

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent through secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families and carers. At Maharishi School, we have a full time class teacher and full time TA support for the reception class.

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 and carers have played, and will continue to play, in educating their children.

We talk to parents about their child both before and when their child starts in our school;

- We invite parents and carers to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school;
- Where appropriate, we attend meetings with staff from a child's previous setting to discuss their needs;
- We give children an opportunity to spend time with the reception class staff before starting school during Stay and Play sessions;
- Our reception staff communicate with parents weekly via Class Dojo, an online communication platform. Parents/carers are sent a link prior to the start of their child's first day of school.
- We hold one-to-one meetings with parents in the autumn term, after their first half term in school, to discuss transition and their child's learning at home and school. Reception Baseline Assessment is shared with parents to support this conversation
- We have further 1-1 meetings with parents in the spring term to discuss individual children's progress; termly assessment information and key targets are shared with parents to support children's attainment of a good level of development, transition to year 1 and KS1 learning is also discussed;
- We provide parent's with an annual written report detailing their child's progress.

Enabling Environments

At Maharishi School, we recognise that the physical and human environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. We observe the children and assess their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging, but achievable, activities and experiences to extend children's learning.

Our learning environments are organised to enthuse children to explore and learn securely and safely. The classroom is arranged into learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. Our reception classroom has its own enclosed outdoor area and learning opportunities are reflected in both areas. Children have the opportunity to free flow between the two

environments. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. We plan activities and resources for the children to access indoors and outdoors that help the children to develop in all seven areas of learning.

Planning is based on each child's ongoing formative assessment. We also have long, medium and short term plans to ensure continuity of curriculum coverage, but these do change according to the needs of individuals and the class. Carefully thought out sequencing is used to ensure children are ready to progress to KS1.

Assessment in EYFS takes the form of observation by all adults working with the child. At the end of the Reception year, each child will be assessed against the national standard of the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELGs), each one linked to one of the seven areas of learning. Termly assessment data is recorded via phonics and maths checks and observations. ***See Appendix 1.***

The teachers will record each child's level of development against the 17 ELGs as either **emerging** or **expected**. The profile is then completed with a brief commentary of the child's skills in relation to the three key characteristics of learning (playing and exploring, active learning, creating and thinking critically).
We provide a written summary of these judgements for parents. We also give parents an opportunity to discuss these judgements with their child's class teacher.
The Wider Context We work closely with outside agencies to support children's development. Where appropriate we involve health and social care professionals, our family support worker and other relevant agencies. We attend termly meetings with other local schools, through the SHARES network, with a view to moderating our judgements when assessing children. The link with other schools also helps us to strengthen the continuity for families who join us from other schools.

Learning and Development

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 interconnected.

Through our teaching and learning we ensure that children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement. Our practitioners understand how children develop and learn, and consider this when they plan learning opportunities.

We offer children first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play. Our carefully planned curriculum helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout the reception year.

We enable children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities. Children are encouraged to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management. Learning is supported by appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment. We identify progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents.

The three characteristics of effective teaching and learning in the Early Years are:

Playing and Exploring Children's play reflects their wide-ranging interests and preoccupations. We believe that through play young children achieve their highest learning potential. Playing with peers is especially important for children's development.

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them to make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to make good choices 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. They are able to express a range of emotions in controlled and safe situations.

Active Learning

Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. We give children a degree of independence and control over their learning. As they develop

their confidence, they learn to make decisions and this provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Creativity and Thinking Critically

When children have opportunities to play and engage with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.

We give children opportunities to be creative in all areas of learning. Adults support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children access resources freely and may choose to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

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-discrimination.

● Provide early intervention for those children who require additional support.

● Work in partnership with parents and within the wider context of each child's life.

● 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.

● Provide a secure and safe learning environment, indoors and out.

Ensure comprehensive knowledge and skill development of all subjects in partnership with subject leadership to ensure reception children are equipped with a good level of development for year 1.

Observation and Assessment

As part of our daily practice, we observe and assess children's development and learning in order to inform our future plans.

Reception Baseline Assessment The Reception Baseline Assessment is a short, interactive and practical assessment of each child's early literacy, communication, language and mathematics skills when they begin school. This must be completed within 6 weeks of each child starting school in Reception. If a child joins mid-year from another country or another school, and did not take part in the Reception Baseline Assessment, we will assess them within 6 weeks of starting with us at Maharishi School.

The Reception Baseline Assessment is carried out by the class teacher and teaching assistant using an online program one-to-one with each child. Once the Reception Baseline Assessment has taken place, it will provide a helpful snapshot of where each child is when they enter reception, so they can be supported in the most appropriate way.

The main purpose of the Reception Baseline Assessment is to create a starting point to measure the progress schools make with their pupils. The data from the assessment will only be used by the Department for Education when each child has reached the end of year 6, to provide the baseline to measure the progress of each child's year group from Reception to Year 6. The data from the assessment, including numerical scores, is not shared with parents, pupils, teachers, or external bodies, including schools, and there will be no published scores at pupil, school or national level.

The Early Years Foundation Profile

The EYFS profile assessment is carried out in the final term of Reception in which a child reaches age 5, and no later than 1 July in that term. The main purpose of the EYFS profile is to provide a reliable, valid and accurate assessment of individual children at the end of the EYFS.

EYFS profile data is used to:

- Inform parents about their child's development against the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) and the characteristics of their learning.
- Support a smooth transition to Key Stage 1 (KS1) by informing the professional dialogue between reception and year 1 teaching staff.
- Help the year 1 teaching staff to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children.

The EYFS profile provides an accurate national data set relating to levels of child development at the end of the EYFS. The DfE uses this to monitor changes in levels of children's development and their readiness for the next phase of their education both nationally and locally (school level results will not be published in the performance tables).

Each child's learning and development is assessed as one of the following:

- Best described by the level of development expected at the end of the EYFS (expected)
- Not yet at the level of development expected at the end of the EYFS (emerging)

Transitions

Transitions are carefully planned for and time is given to ensure continuity of learning. At any transition, we acknowledge a child's needs and we establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child; parents/carers and, where appropriate, staff at other settings (eg. previous nurseries or childminders).

In the final term of the reception school year, year 1 and reception staff will meet to discuss each child's development against the Early Learning Goals in order to support a smooth transition and appropriate planning for the start of year 1.

During the summer term the reception class has a comprehensive transition time table where they have regular slots to meet the class teacher, see their classroom and familiarise themselves with the main school building. They then spend a 'moving up morning' with the year 1 staff in the year 1 classroom, with additional transition opportunities provided for those children who may need extra support.

Inclusion

We value all our children as individuals, 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 most of our children achieve, and some 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. In doing so, we work closely with parents and outside agencies. See separate policies:

Equality Information & Objectives Statement
SEND Policy
SEND Information Report
Whole School Curriculum Policy

Safeguarding

All safeguarding and child protection policies within the School apply equally to children in the reception class: Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

Appendix 1: 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG)

Communication and Language	Personal, Social & Emotional Development	Physical Development
Listening, Attention and Understanding: • Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions. • Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding. • Hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers. **Speaking :** • Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary.	**Self-Regulation** • Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly. • Set and work towards simple goals, being able to wait for what they want and control their immediate impulses when appropriate. • Give focused attention to what the teacher says, responding appropriately even when engaged in activity, and show an ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions. **Managing Self** • Be confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge. • Explain the reasons for rules,	**Gross Motor Skills** • Negotiate space and obstacles safely, with consideration for themselves and others. • Demonstrate strength, balance and coordination when playing. • Move energetically, such as running, jumping, dancing, hopping, skipping and climbing. **Fine Motor Skills** • Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases. • Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paint brushes and cutlery. • Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing.

• Offer explanations for why things might happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems when appropriate. • Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher.	know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly. • Manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet and understanding the importance of healthy food choices. **Building Relationships** • Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others. • Form positive attachments to adults and friendships with peers. • Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs.	

Literacy	Mathematics	Understanding the World	Expressive Arts and Design
Comprehension • Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary. • Anticipate – where appropriate – key events in stories. • Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems and during role-play. **Word Reading** • Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet	**Number** • Have a deep understanding of numbers to 10, including the composition of each number. • Subitise (recognise quantities without counting) up to 5. • Automatically recall (without reference to rhymes, counting or other aids) number bonds up to 5 (including subtraction facts) and some number bonds to 10, including double facts. **Numerical Patterns** • Verbally count beyond 20, recognising the	**The Natural World** • Explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants. • Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class. • Understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter.	**Creating with Materials** • Safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function. • Share their creations, explaining the process they have used. • Make use of props and materials when role playing characters in narratives and stories. **Being Imaginative** • Invent, adapt and recount narratives and stories with peers and their teacher.

and at least 10 digraphs. • Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by sound-blending. • Read aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent with their phonic knowledge, including some common exception words. **Writing** • Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed. • Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters. • Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.	pattern of the counting system. • Compare quantities up to 10 in different contexts, recognising when one quantity is greater than, less than or the same as the other quantity. • Explore and represent patterns within numbers up to 10, including evens and odds, double facts and how quantities can be distributed equally.	**People, Culture and Communities** • Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts and maps. • Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class. • Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and – when appropriate – maps. **Past and Present** • Talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society. • Know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class. • Understand the past through settings, characters and events encountered in books read in class and storytelling.	• Sing a range of well-known nursery rhymes and songs. • Perform songs, rhymes, poems and stories with others, and – when appropriate – try to move in time with music.