

Millbrook Primary School



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Date Agreed: May 2024
To be reviewed: May 2026

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Millbrook Primary School, children can join Caterpillar Pre-school in the term after they turn 3 (provided there is space – please see Millbrook Pre-School Admissions Policy) and join Reception class in the academic year that they turn five (usually in the September). In partnership with parents and carers we enable the children to begin the process of becoming active learners for life.

We endeavour to ensure that children “learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe.” We provide quality teaching, interactions and experiences that “gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and in life.” (Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2021)

The EYFS is based upon four 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.

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, at varying rates. We understand that all children begin their time at Millbrook with a variety of learning experiences from home and other settings and our practitioners take on the rewarding task of building on this learning and experience. Children’s attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration/ sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

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Equal Opportunities

All members of the school are treated as individuals. We aim to meet the needs of all, taking account of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, special educational needs, disability, and social circumstances. All staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect cultural diversity and the need to prepare pupils for life in a diverse and multi-faith society.

Inclusion/Special Educational Needs (SEND)

All children and their families are valued at Millbrook Primary School. Children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all provisions available. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. Assessments take into account contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential special educational needs is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage and the schools SENDCO is called upon for further information and advice. Appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the school's Inclusion policy and SEND policy.

We meet the needs of all our children 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 to learn effectively;
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

(Please refer to our Inclusion policy)

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Dyslexia friendly

In order to accommodate the individual's particular learning style, lessons will be planned wherever possible in a multi-sensory way so that the various activities will cater for all pupils in the spirit of inclusion. There will also be a consideration of how to record lesson outcomes so that the pupil is offered a variety of methods and is not inhibited by any specific difficulty.

Positive Relationships

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

Parents as Partners

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 have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school during a home visit;
- giving the children opportunities to spend time with their teacher before starting school or pre-school during transition sessions;
- supporting children through the transition from pre-school to Reception with the children attending part time during the first two weeks. This is also to support staff and parents in getting to know each other as well as the children;
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school and again during the first half term of the child's Reception year in order to detail how we aim to work with their child particularly in relation to maths, reading and phonics;
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher/key worker if there are any concerns;
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress and allowing access to the children's recorded 'wow' moments;
- sharing information regarding a child's progress and next steps, offering support on how these can be practised. Written information is provided in

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the form of two mid-year and one end of year report in Reception and one end of year report in Pre-school;

- providing a formal meeting for parents twice a year in Reception and once a year in Pre-school, at which the teacher/key worker and the parent discuss the child's progress in private;
- keeping parents informed about what the children have been learning each week through the weekly blog and Class Dojo;
- providing parents an opportunity to celebrate their child's learning and development by asking them to share "wow" moments of their child which can then be used to inform planning and provision;
- providing avenues for regular written contact – e.g. email;
- ensuring all parents know who their child's key worker is (In Reception this is the child's class teacher and in Caterpillar Pre-school, key workers are assigned to a child when they begin their Pre-school journey);
- arranging a variety of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents/carers – e.g. stay and play sessions (Caterpillars), Terrific Tuesday, Fabulous Friday, celebration assemblies, opportunities for parents/carers to come into school to share information about their job/hobbies...etc;
- providing a quiet and confidential area where parents are able to discuss any concerns.

Enabling Environments

We aim to create a stimulating learning environment where children feel confident, secure and challenged. We recognise that children learn and develop well in enabling environments, where their individual needs are responded to. The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up with both continuous and enhanced provision. Effective learning builds and extends upon prior learning and following children's interest. Play-based learning is paramount and, where possible, children direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities provided by practitioners.

Both the Pre-school and Reception classrooms are set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources

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independently to follow their own interests and also complete activities which have been planned for them to practise skills.

Learning and Development

There are seven areas of learning and development of which three are “prime areas,” and four “specific areas.” The prime areas are

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

The specific areas are

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

At Millbrook, we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in our care and use this information to plan challenging and enjoyable experiences for each child in all of the areas of learning. Our practitioners have a good understanding of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching. We use a range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences and give clear explanations. Where appropriate, we run interventions and extend and develop play and talk of those children not making expected progress. If a child’s progress gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child’s parents and/or carers and agree how to support the child. This may also include a discussion with the SENDCO in order to access Special Educational Needs support.

Teaching, Observation, Assessment and Planning

We believe:

“Play is essential for children’s development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. Practitioners need to decide what they want children in their setting to learn, and the most effective ways to teach it. Practitioners must

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stimulate children's interests, responding to each child's emerging needs and guiding their development through warm, positive interactions coupled with secure routines for play and learning." (Statutory Framework for EYFS 2021)

When planning activities and provision for the children, we reflect on the different ways that children learn. At Millbrook we support children in using the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning. These 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; and
 - **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.
- (Taken from statutory framework for the EYFS 2021)

At Millbrook, we have designed our curriculum to give our children the best possible start in life so that they progress towards meeting the Early Learning Goals. Our curriculum is informed by the Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2021, Development Matters, a variety of educational programmes also used in KS1 and KS2 and our knowledge of the children. We believe being good communicators is the gateway to all learning and we are passionate about our children having a life-long love of reading and an excellent understanding of number. We understand that EYFS lays the foundations for future learning and development, and we ensure that our curriculum prepares children for the next steps in their learning journey as they move into Key Stage 1 and beyond. Due to children's different starting points and cultural capital, our curriculum changes slightly each year.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts Reception, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are meeting 'expected' levels of development or have not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). This information is shared with the child's parents/carers and Year 1 teacher and sent to the local authority. Throughout a child's journey through EYFS at Millbrook, practitioners make regular assessments of children's learning. These observations, both recorded and not recorded, help to create children's next steps and inform planning.

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At Millbrook, when we assess, we consider which skills the children have developed and what they know and can do. All practitioners working with the children are involved in the assessment process and practitioners have regular (daily/weekly) conversations as well as a termly review meeting to discuss the progress and development of each child. Using our skills and knowledge progression document, children are assessed as being 'on track' or 'not on track', with the consideration that not all children learn in a linear way. Children who are identified as 'not on track' become focus children with specific skills to work on through play (skills-led-play). This is guided by practitioners.

Safeguarding and 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)

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. At Millbrook Primary School, 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. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See Whole School Safeguarding Policy).

At Millbrook School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain safeguarding and welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2021. We understand that we are required to:

- Promote the welfare and safeguarding of children;
- Have and implement a child protection policy, and procedures, to safeguard children (See Safeguarding policy);
- Designate a member of staff to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children within our setting;
- Train all staff to understand our safeguarding policy and procedures, and ensure that all staff have up to date knowledge of safeguarding issues;
- Have regard to the government's statutory guidance for 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018' and to the 'Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales 2015';

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- Have regard to the government's 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2021) statutory guidance;
- Promote good health, including the oral health, of children preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill;
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs (See Behaviour policy);
- Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so;
- Ensure staffing arrangements meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety;
- Ensure the staff:child ratios meet the requirements for each age group of children as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2021;
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose;
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs;
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children;
- Inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person working, or looking after children on our premises.

Health and Safety

At Millbrook, there are clear procedures for assessing risk which includes procedures for keeping children safe during outings and for any aspects of the environment or provision that may require a further risk assessment. In addition to this, an annual risk assessment is conducted of the EYFS and, in the Health and Safety and Safeguarding and Child Protection policies, there is detailed information and procedures to ensure the safety of the children.

In line with the EYFS Statutory Framework 2021, at Millbrook we:

- Have a whole school medicines policy (See Supporting Children with Medical Conditions; Administering Medicines and Sickness policy);
- Ensure fresh drinking water is available at all times;
- Record children's' dietary needs and act upon these when required;
- Ensure each classroom has a snack and sink area that can provide healthy snacks and drinks;

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- Provide healthy, balanced and nutritious meals with anyone handling and preparing food to be trained in food hygiene. (See Food policy);
- Ensure at least one member of staff who has a current paediatric first aid certificate must be on the premises and available at all times when children are present, and must accompany children on outings. At Millbrook, we train all our EYFS practitioners in Paediatric first aid;
- Ensure there is a first aid box accessible at all times with appropriate content for use with children;
- Keep a written record of accidents or injuries and first aid treatment and inform parents and/or carers of any accident or injury sustained by the child on the same day, or as soon as reasonably practicable, of any first aid treatment given;
- Have a health and safety policy and procedures which cover identifying, reporting and dealing with accidents, hazards and faulty equipment. (see Health and Safety policy);
- Maintain records and obtain and share information to ensure the safe and efficient management of the setting, and to help ensure the needs of all children are met;
- Have a fire and emergency evacuation procedure and policy. (see Health and Safety policy);
- Have a safeguarding policy stating how mobile phones and cameras are to be used in the setting. (See Guidance for Safer Working Practices document). At Millbrook, a mobile phone is taken on welly walks in case of an emergency but these are stored away during all other times of the school day. Photos of children's learning and development are taken on school-owned iPads.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

Transition

To Pre-school

- Stay and Play sessions for parents and children starting at Caterpillar Pre-school.

From Pre-school /Feeder settings

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During the summer term prior to a child’s entry into the Reception year, the following procedures have been put into place to ensure successful transition:

- Parents are invited to a meeting to ensure they know about school procedures and allocation of classes and any concerns they may want to express;
- The children are invited to visit their Reception class;
- EYFS teachers from Millbrook make visits to feeder settings. The number of visits will depend on the child’s needs and how much information gathering is required in order to support the child’s transition;
- Children at Caterpillar Pre School (main feeder setting) will have visits with their key workers into school where they get an opportunity to engage with the current reception children;
- Where appropriate, children requiring extra support will have additional visits, regardless of their setting;
- EYFS practitioners make home visits as part of the induction process before the children begin school;

From Reception Class to Key Stage 1

During the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child’s knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile includes on-going observation, all relevant records held by the setting, discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

Finally...

*“The early years are not a holding period until the really important education begins, early-years education lays the foundation!”
(De Boo, 2000)*

It will be updated annually and reviewed in May 2024

Written by B. Moulding

Signed.....

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