



Early Years Policy

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Early Years Policy

Aims

At Moredon Primary & Nursery School, we are committed to meeting every child's individual needs. We ensure that the child's welfare is paramount and that they develop as young enthusiastic learners in a safe environment.

We provide a range of opportunities for children to develop and engage through hands on learning and play opportunities. We encourage children to participate in a variety of activities; some are focused and led by an adult and others are provided to give the child a chance to be an active and independent learner. We believe this approach helps to build children's self-esteem and self-worth and increases independence and the ability to show initiative.

We strive to engage children in their learning through our creative and interesting environments, which encourage the use of both indoor and outdoor space. We encourage a strong partnership between home and school.

Our ethos promotes children's all round development and fosters positive attitudes towards learning. Inviting children to develop positive values, attitudes and relationships is supported throughout the school through our Values based approach.

Play and Active learning

At Moredon we believe play to be the means through which young children learn. It is through play that children have the opportunity to explore, develop and act out experiences, helping them make sense of the world. Play helps children build up ideas and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. Children investigate and solve problems through collaborative and individual play.

Play opportunities are available in our nursery and reception classrooms both indoors and outdoors, where the three prime areas and four specific areas of learning are offered. Due to the range of adult led activities and child initiated time we provide, we give plenty of time for play opportunities to arise.

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have 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.

Planning

The planning within the Foundation Stage takes into account the children's interests and topics are chosen which will engage and motivate the children. The children will therefore know more, remember more and do more. The weekly plans take on these topic themes and are also supported by the observations carried out of the children from the previous week. This enables



children's interests, achievements and next steps to be addressed.

We teach carefully planned themes throughout the year to ensure every child is given a variety of different stimuli. The themes are supported by the children's interests; this helps to keep the children engaged and allows them to take ownership of their learning.

We offer the children a broad and balanced curriculum which follows 'The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile 2022 - 2023.' This is delivered using the 'Development Matters 2021' document. This enables the FS1 and FS2 teachers to incorporate the seven areas of learning and development into a stimulating, creative, cross curricular approach, ensuring breadth.

The children are actively engaged in working towards the Early Learning Goals. The goals are made up of the three prime areas and four specific areas of learning, there are 17 in total:

Prime Areas

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

Specific Areas

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Within these areas they are broken down into individual aspects which eventually lead towards the Early Learning Goals. The 17 aspects are as follows:



| Prime Areas | |
|--|--|
| Personal, Social and Emotional Development | Self-Regulation |
| | Managing Self |
| | Building Relationships |
| Physical Development | Gross Motor Skills |
| | Fine Motor Skills |
| Communication and Language | Listening, Attention and Understanding |
| | Speaking |
| Specific Areas | |
| Literacy | Comprehension |
| | Reading |
| | Writing |
| Mathematics | Number |
| | Numerical Patterns |
| Understanding the World | Past and Present |
| | People, Culture and Communities |
| | The Natural World |
| Expressive Arts and Design | Creating with Materials |
| | Being Imaginative and Expressive |

Alongside this runs the characteristics of effective teaching and learning. These move through the 17 areas, they are:

- Playing and exploring,
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically.

These areas are explored through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. The child initiated opportunities are where we provide the chances for the children to be independent learners, we have often modelled or joined in the play before. The adult led activities are introducing and teaching new skills. This is where children will work with an adult, normally as part of a small group.

Activities and role play opportunities inside and outdoors provide a means through which children can independently practise, apply, and develop the skills and ideas with the support of the adults in the setting.

At Moredon, we recognise that phonics knowledge is key to reading and writing. We carry out discrete phonics sessions and follow the Little Wandle SSP. The children then apply their phonics skills each day in and around the environment. We practise speaking and listening throughout the day though circle times, show and tell sessions, helicopter story sessions and class discussions.



Assessment and observation

When children begin reception, the class teachers and nurseries share the “Moving on document” together. Along with this information and discussion, the teachers meet the children in their preschool setting and at home (if not already seen at the start of nursery) to gather information that goes towards their Baseline assessment. From September 2021, all children in reception will undertake the RBA baseline assessment from the DfE. This will continue to take place each September. In addition to the RBA baseline, practitioners within nursery and reception will carry out internal baseline assessments to create a secure judgement of all children’s starting points.

Each child’s level of development is recorded against the seven areas of learning and development using a ‘best fit model’. These lead onto the child acquiring the early learning goal in each area.

Throughout the year, the nursery and reception teachers and teaching assistants carry out high quality observations of children and record their observations on observation stickers, post it notes and take photos. This, along with pieces of work and creations the children have produced, contributes to the child’s Learning Journey. We also encourage observations from parents via ClassDojo portfolios and send home ‘News from Home’ slips for parents/carers to write in any ‘wow’ moments. These are then shared in class and stuck in the Learning Journeys.

Although adult led activities can offer insight into children’s attainment by making sure the child has the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, it is mostly evidence through observing children through their child initiated time and high quality interactions that are used as judgements for the EYFS profile.

The ongoing assessments of the children are collected and recorded into the children’s Learning Journey. They are then recorded onto our tracking system on Pupil Asset four times a year. In the final term we write a report to parents. Along with a personal comment, this will state their progress against the Early Learning Goals and the child’s Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning.

Moderation takes place within Moredon Primary School and across the WHF and schools within the local area.

The Learning Environment

At Moredon, we recognise the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children’s development. The nursery and reception classrooms which incorporate the indoor and outdoor areas is well organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active and can be quiet.

The environments are set up into learning areas where children are able to find and locate resources and equipment independently. Our learning environments operate a free flow system whereby the children can choose which area of the environment they would like to explore. This is around the adult led activities that take place throughout the day at various times.



Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and tolerate a no discrimination philosophy. All children are treated fairly, regardless of race, religion, or ability. All children and families are valued within our school. We recognise that all pupils bring different experiences, interests and strengths which influence the way they learn, and we encourage all children to succeed and do their best.

We aim to give each child the opportunity to experience success in their learning and ensure equal opportunities will be extended to all pupils. We encourage children to make their own choices and in giving reasons for decisions and actions. 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, therefore we praise and encourage as well as celebrate achievements that are made in school and at home.

Special Needs

High quality first teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have, or may have SEND. Differentiation occurs in the support and intervention provided to different pupils, through questioning, scaffolding and resources for individual pupils. This is an inclusive approach to individual learners' needs, ensuring language, questioning, concepts and ultimately, learning is accessible to all.

Safeguarding

Moredon Primary and Nursery School takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of the children and young people in its care. "The welfare of the pupil/student is paramount" (Children Act 1989).

Our staff and Governors are committed to safeguarding the pupils/students at this school and contribute to multi-agency working to keep pupils and students safe.

All adults working in our school maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here'. We recognise that staff, because of their contact with and knowledge of children in their care, are well placed to identify abuse or neglect and offer support to children in need.

Health and Safety

All safety measures are taken to ensure the safety of all children in the Foundation Stage. Locks are installed on the gates and doors. We follow the TWHF 'Health and Safety' policy which all staff and students are familiar with and we have designated people responsible for first aid in school. Within the Early Years, we have members of staff who are currently trained in Paediatric First Aid. Children are taught the safe and appropriate use of equipment and materials. Children are taught to be mindful when moving around the school and are aware of safety issues. Our health and safety policy is available on our school website. All medicines are kept in a locked cupboard at the school office or in a locked cabinet in the classroom if required and approved by



parents/carers before administration of any medicines. No hazardous substances are used within the setting.

Working in partnership with Parents/Carers

We recognise that parents/carers are children's first and enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We appreciate 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 they start school.
- Visiting all children in their home setting prior to starting school in nursery or reception.
- Providing children with the opportunity to come into school to spend time in the environment and get to know their teacher. They are invited to a transition morning or afternoon for a stay and play session in June/July before starting school.
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before they start school.
- Offering parents regular opportunities to discuss their child's progress in the class before and after school sessions or any concerns either the teacher or parent may have.
- Encouraging parents to contribute to their child's Learning Journey by writing a 'News from Home' slip or uploading photos via ClassDojo.
- Sending home a toy to come back and share their weekend.
- Inviting parents to attend open mornings/afternoons once a term where they can join in with their child's learning and look at their child's Learning Journey. These sessions tend to be around a specific theme e.g. Phonics, Maths, Art, etc.

The adults in the Early Years Team

We provide the children with a safe and secure environment. We aim to develop good relationships with all children interacting positively with them and taking time to listen. We also model and support children in forming positive relationships and friendships with one another.

All members of staff have access to continued professional development to maintain and extend their specialist expertise.

Next review date: November 2023