

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Principles and Aims of our Early Years Foundation Stage Department

Intent

The intent of our whole school curriculum is to, “Ensure our pupils develop the necessary skills, knowledge and attitude to achieve fulfilling lives.” The mission statement at Red Marsh School is to, “Provide high quality teaching and learning in an environment where learners are cared for, valued and respected.” The EYFS department is the start of our pupils' school journey towards achieving this important intent and mission.

Therefore the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) department at Red Marsh School aims to:

1. Provide the best possible start in life for all our pupils to enable them to fulfil their individual potential and ultimately live fulfilling lives. (Taken from Curriculum Intent)
2. Provide high quality teaching and learning in a stimulating environment, where everyone is cared for, valued and respected, which reflects the age and development of the individual child. (Taken from Mission statement)
3. To continually enhance the teaching and learning of pupils with SEND within our own EYFS department and the wider community by sharing good practice. (Taken from the Vision)

Implementation

Red Marsh Schools EYFS department provides a specialist learning environment to meet the needs of children from the age of two (currently the department only has pupils from statutory school age) with learning difficulties and complex needs.

This is achieved by all the EYFS practitioners within the department following the overarching principles:

- A unique child – every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Positive Relationships – children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- Enabling Environments with teaching and support from adults – with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- Learning and Development – children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

Parents as Partners

At Red Marsh School we recognise that parents have a key role to play in the education and development of their children. We are keen to develop good relationships and information sharing with our parents and carers. This is achieved in a variety of ways.

Prior to pupils beginning school, parents are invited to visit the school.

The Early Years Lead or teacher will complete a nursery/home visit to discuss the needs and learning achievements of each child. Parents are then invited to a transition meeting to learn all about how their child will be taught and then offered a personalised meeting at a subsequent date. The Speech and Language Therapist, Physiotherapist, Occupational Therapist and the School Nursing service may also make home visits where needed.

Our home learning platform Showbie is used for regularly sharing information such as the child's Personalised, Learning Intent Targets (PLITs) and celebrating individual success. Parents/carers are also encouraged to upload pictures and messages to share achievements their children have made at home using the WOW templates provided on Showbie.

Parents are encouraged to attend the child's Education Health and Care plan review meetings where progress and targets are discussed and parental input is valued.

Parents receive a copy of their child's Personalised Learning Intention Targets (PLITS) five times a year, via the Showbie app.

At the beginning of the school year parents are invited to attend a 'Meet and Greet' evening where they have the opportunity to meet their child's key worker and see the learning environment.

Parents are invited to a parents evening later in the school year where they may discuss their child's progress, look at work produced and celebrate achievements.

Parents receive a celebration of progress report (EYFS profile), including the Characteristics of Effective learning at the end of the school year.

Liaison with other Agencies:

As our pupils may come from a range of different settings or from home into Red Marsh School, we liaise with the settings so that we are able to ease the transition into school. We will visit or have detailed conversations with the child's current setting to get to know them prior to their beginning school.

We have informal links with Blenheim Child Development Centre and use information provided by various agencies to support initial planning for a new pupil.

At Red Marsh School the Early Years Foundation Stage incorporates two rooms – Buttercups and Bluebells.

After initial assessment, children may enter Buttercups or Bluebells from the age of 2 (Currently we only have pupils from statutory school age. For pre-school children we operate ½ day sessions.

Morning sessions: 9.00am - 11.45am

Afternoon sessions: 1.00pm – 3.30pm

School sessions: Arrival between 9.05am and 9.30am – Collection between 3.00 and 3.30.

For pupils who are new to the school, we offer a phased induction with pupils initially attending part-time, before attending full-time, to support a smooth transition in the EYFS department.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

We aim to achieve our curriculum intent by providing high quality teaching and learning in an environment where everyone is cared for, valued and respected. (Mission Statement) At Red Marsh School we believe that providing a fully sequenced curriculum for each learner is an essential part of fulfilling the school's mission statement, purposes and values. We are proud that all our pupils are involved in all aspects of our broad, balanced and stimulating curriculum personalised to meet individual need.

Our EYFS curriculum ensures we are able to meet the individual needs of every child within the department. All our children have personalised targets. These targets ensure every child is working towards achieving the outcomes in their personalised Education Health and Care Plan. In the EYFS department personalised targets are developed through a curriculum that reflects the learner's age, developmental readiness, and individual needs. The principles that guide the work in the EYFS are grouped into 4 overarching principles:

- A unique child
- Positive relationships
- Enabling Environments with teaching and support from adults.
- Learning and Development

The Early Years Foundation Stage is made up of 7 areas of Learning and Development. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

The three prime areas of learning reflect the key skills and capacities all children need to develop and learn effectively. They are particularly crucial for igniting children's, curiosity, and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. The 3 prime areas of learning are:

Communication and language

This area of learning involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

Physical Development

This area of learning involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their sensory exploration, co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

This area of learning involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities; develop independent skills including how to look after their bodies.

The four specific areas of learning include essential skills and knowledge which strengthen the prime areas. The 4 specific areas of learning are:

Literacy

This area of learning involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write and develop a love of reading.

Mathematics

This area of learning involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.

Understanding the World*

This area of learning involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

Expressive Arts and Design

This area of learning involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

***RE**

The beginnings of RE lie in toleration of self, early attachments and making positive relationships with others. Children will develop these pre- RE skills during Personal, Social and Emotional Development lessons. RE is also incorporated into the area of Understanding the World through the aspect of People Cultures and Communities.

Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural development, including the promotion of British Values are at the heart of our curriculum.

Specialist teachers and dedicated support staff ensure high quality teaching and learning experiences for all children.

Children requiring additional support to meet their needs have personalised interventions, for example, sensory lifestyle interventions. Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language and Physiotherapy programmes are delivered across the curriculum.

Organisation of the Learning Environment

“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.” (Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage December 2023)

Throughout the Foundation Stage we encourage learning through play, exploration, and active involvement. We aim to provide a balance of child-initiated and adult-led play-based activities, wherever possible allowing pupils the time and freedom to find out and explore, become actively involved and develop their own ideas. We endeavour to provide a rich and varied environment to support our children’s learning and development. This includes safe, secure areas both indoors and outdoors. We plan and provide frequent opportunities for children to spend time outdoors actively engaged in purposeful activities.

Equal Opportunities

We follow the school's equal opportunities policy and place emphasis upon valuing each child and treating each child as an individual.

We provide additional support, specialist aids and equipment and use multi-sensory materials and experiences to ensure all pupils access the curriculum at an appropriate yet challenging level.

Planning

The targets for the children in Buttercups and Bluebells are highly personalised and are taken from;

- EHCP targets
- Annual review targets (which are broken down on the PLITs)
- Red Marsh's EYFS skills and knowledge curriculum
- Red Marsh's EYFS content curriculum

For our pupils who are 4 and under in the EYFS department, we set six-monthly annual review targets and for pupils who are 5 and over we set yearly annual review targets. These support children in meeting their end of key stage EHCP targets. Five times a year we use the annual review targets to set the children PLITs targets (Personalise Learning Intention Targets) the children in the EYFS department work on these targets during continuous provision and adult directed learning. The EHCP targets, annual review targets and PLITs targets are used to ensure highly personalised targets for planning.

We ensure the children in the EYFS department receive a broad and balanced curriculum that covers content from all of the 7 areas of learning and development through continuous provision and adult directed learning.

Our Long-term planning covers the themes that the children in the EYFS department will cover with links to key texts the children will explore. Buttercups and Bluebells has a three year rolling planning program (EYFS content curriculum). The carefully planned themes ensure that pupils, in their earliest stage of their learning, have the opportunities to master skills, knowledge and attitudes for effective learning relating to their everyday lives.

In Autumn the overarching theme is All About Me, allowing children to embed and develop their learning based on familiar experiences such learning about themselves, their homes, and their family (Knock, Knock ... Who's at the Door?, Me, Me, Me! And Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes). In Spring term the overarching theme is My Community supporting children in further learning about their community they live in (Buzzing Bees, Jump to the pond and Shhh... Don't Wake the Hedgehog). In Summer term the children progress to the overarching theme Wider World and learn more about world (Here Comes the Sun, We're All Going on a Summer Holiday? And Splish, Splash, Splish.)

Medium term planning is completed termly, in the form of a mind maps, it identifies what aspects of each of the seven areas of learning and development the children will be covering, for example it may outline that children will be developing their shape skills in Mathematics. The mind map also outlines a range of exciting learning experiences that the children will take part in, in order to support their progress in each of the seven areas of learning and development.

At Red Marsh School we believe that providing the appropriate curriculum for each learner is an essential part of fulfilling the school's mission statement, purposes and values. Therefore, highly

personalised short term planning is completed termly or half termly and is continually updated to reflect the changing learning needs of our pupils. Planning is completed for each child and has personalised targets for each of the seven areas of learning and development. The planning outlines individual targets for each learner, for each area of the 7 areas of learning and development (using the EHCP targets, Annual Review targets, PLITs targets and assessment of the children's next steps in learning.) The children are encouraged to be active learners and to make choices between activities wherever possible.

Impact

Assessment

Observations, assessment and recording are an integral part of teaching as they are used to provide information about pupils' progress and inform planning for children's needs. We make informal and formal observations of pupils throughout each day in school and all staff are involved in recording these observations on observation sheets or using photographs.

In the first 6 weeks of a child entering the EYFS, pupils are baselined on B-Squared. These are regularly updated to show pupil progress and are used to inform planning for setting individual targets. (*If developmentally appropriate Reception aged children will also be baselined on the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA))

Pupils' achievements, progress and enjoyment is recorded through observations in their learning journey. Parents are also able to contribute photographs or comments to their own child's learning journals, through our home learning classroom, Showbie. The learning journey will include:

- Written child led observations
- Formal adult directed observations.
- Raw evidence produced by the child
- Contributions from home

Children will have the following assessment which will contain:

- A Baseline score.
- Initial pen-portrait.
- Progress made in each area of the 7 areas of learning and development on b-squared.
- Pupils' progress towards personalised learning intention targets are assessed on an ongoing basis. These targets are reviewed each half term and new targets are set accordingly.
- Parents/Carers receive an annual report about their child's progress.

When a child is aged between two and three (pre-school age), their parents will receive an annual report which reviews their child's progress, in the prime areas. (This encompasses the Two year old progress check).

When a child is aged four and above, their parents will receive an annual report which reviews their child's progress, in the prime areas, specific areas and characteristics of effective learning. (This encompasses and forms part of the Early Years Stage Profile, a copy will also be given to the Year 1 teacher.)

- At the end of the Reception Year, in the year of the child’s fifth birthday, pupils are assessed against the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. These assessments are based on observations of the pupils during their normal daily activities. Assessments are moderated and reported to the LEA. These assessments are also shared with parents and the Year 1 teacher.

Safeguarding

Early Years Foundation staff must follow all the whole school safeguarding policies.

Update from the most recent statutory framework.

Early Years Foundation Stage staff MUST keep their mobile phones and any wearable technology with a built in cameras in a secure locked place away from the children, in a locked cabinet/cupboard or in the staffroom.

Early Years Foundation Stage staff are provided with password protected school iPads or iPods to be able to record events and take photographs throughout the day. Only School approved iPads and iPods should be used to take photographs/videos of the children, for assessment purposes.

Smart watches and Fitbits are permitted to be worn by staff but to be used only as a watch when working with children. Personal smart technology should never be used to take, store or upload photographs or videos of children.

Further details of the Early Years Foundation stage can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

This policy will be reviewed and updated as required.

Policy	
Reviewed	05.01.2025
To be reviewed	As needed