

# Mendell Primary School



## EYFS Policy



Aspire    Challenge    Achieve

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

*"When we succeed in giving every child the best start in their early years, we give them what they need today. We also set them up with every chance of success tomorrow."*

*Development Matters Sept 2020*

## 2. 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 purposeful activities and experiences to extend their learning.
- Learning and development: The Foundation 1 and 2 classrooms are organised so the children can explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The classrooms are set up in learning areas where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

At Mendell Primary School we greatly value the important role that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education. We regularly encourage children to take risks, make their own decisions and to reflect on their learning.

The EYFS is for children from birth to five years of age. We offer provision from three to five through our Foundation 1 and 2 environments. We have close links with our independent onsite 2 and 3 years old private provider Piglets' Corner. All children begin school with a variety of experiences and learning. It is the privilege of the practitioners working in Early Years Foundation Stage to take on the opportunity of building upon that prior learning and experience. This is done through a holistic approach to learning, ensuring that parents and all school staff work effectively together to support children's learning and development.

## 3. AIMS

It is every child's right to grow up safe, healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and with economic well-being. At Mendell Primary School, we aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, culturally, physically, creatively and intellectually to his/her full potential. Each child is valued as an individual and teaching and learning is based on the understanding that children develop at different rates. In Foundation 1 we limit numbers to 26 children so our staff ratios ensure quality provision is offered to all children within our setting.

To meet our aims we:

- 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 firm foundations for future learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond.
- provide opportunities for children to learn through planned, purposeful play in all areas of learning and development.
- 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/Carers and value their contributions in a variety of ways.
- ensure that all children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability, have the opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development.

#### **4. PLANNING, LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

The Nursery and Reception follow the curriculum as outlined in the EYFS document. The EYFS is based on seven key features of effective practice as set out in Development Matters 2020:

- 1. The best for every child**
- 2. High-quality care**
- 3. The curriculum: what we want children to learn**
- 4. Pedagogy: helping children to learn**
- 5. Assessment: checking what children have learnt**
- 6. Self-regulation and executive function**
- 7. Partnership with parents**

As part of our best practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven areas of learning
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice
- Provide early intervention for those who need additional support
- Work in partnership with parents and where needed outside agencies
- Plan challenging learning experiences for all our children, based on the individual needs of the child
- Provide opportunities for our children to engage in adult led learning and self-initiated learning
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and outdoors
- Plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observations of children's needs, interests and stages of development across the seven areas of learning
- EYFS practitioners work closely with subject leaders to plan lessons that provide a strong basis for the children's learning throughout school and a seamless transition into Year 1

#### **5. Areas of learning**

The EYFS is made up of three **prime areas** of learning:

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

There are four **specific areas** of learning:

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

**All seven areas of learning and development are important and interconnected.**

At Mendell Primary School children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first hand experiences, in which children can explore, think creatively and are active. We provide a well -balanced curriculum and our planning ensures that each child has the opportunity to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in every area of the EYFS.

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful activities and through a mix of adult led and child initiated learning.

## **6. ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND MONITORING**

At Mendell Primary School, we undertake assessment for learning. We analyse and review what we know about each child's development and learning and then make informed decisions about the child's progress. This enables us to plan the next steps to meet their development and learning needs. All practitioners who interact with the child contribute to the assessment process.

- Assessments are made in line with the EYFS
- Daily practice includes observations of children's development and progress
- Discussions are held with all adults in EYFS about individual children's development and next steps
- **Significant** observations of children's achievements are recorded in their learning journeys which are shared with parents
- An end of year report is provided to all parents/carers on their child's development against the seven areas of learning
- At the end of Reception children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals for each area of learning

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,
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters [guidance](#) and our own in school curriculum documents) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

## **7. LEARNING THROUGH PLAY**

At Mendell Primary School, we do not make a distinction between work and play. We support children's learning through planned play activities, and decide when child-initiated or adult-led play activities would provide the most effective learning opportunities. We believe that it is important for adults to support children's learning through play by getting involved in the play themselves.

## **8. THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

We create an attractive, welcoming and stimulating learning environment which will encourage children to explore, investigate and learn through first-hand experience. We also make it a place where children feel secure and confident, and are challenged to develop their independence. Activities are planned for both the inside and outside; children have the freedom to move between the indoor and outdoor classroom throughout the school day. The learning environment is divided into different areas in order to fully support all seven areas of learning. Children are encouraged to become independent learners and to take some responsibility for initiating their own lines of enquiry and investigation.

## **9. LIAISON WITH PRE-SCHOOL SETTINGS AND INDUCTION**

At Mendell Primary School, we have close links with the onsite private provider of 2 and 3 years old provision and local nurseries. During the Summer term children who will be joining Foundation 1 the following September are given the opportunity to make at least two visits with us accompanied by parents or carers. This is followed up by another visit early in September before starting with us shortly afterwards. This allows children and families to feel secure in their

new environment and gradually build up to full morning attendance. Foundation Stage 2 practitioners visit children in their nursery setting and utilise the transfer records to inform them about each new intake. In addition, all prospective children and parents have the opportunity to visit the school and their classroom for a number of 'taster' sessions. The children are introduced to their Year 6 buddy that will help them at specific times of the year. During the final 'taster' session the children stay for their lunch with their Year 6 buddy to help them. All parents new to EYFS at Mendell are invited to attend an information morning which introduces them to the school's key personnel and its procedures and practices. Outside agencies also attend as part of the information sharing procedure. Foundation 2 children enter school full time in September and extra staff are allocated from Foundation 1 to work with them throughout the first week to settle them into the new classroom environment. Year 6 buddies help their Foundation 2 child at lunch time for the first week.

#### **10. RECEPTION TO YEAR 1 TRANSITION**

- Foundation 2 and Year 1 work together to make the transition from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 as smooth as possible.
- At Mendell Primary School children are encouraged to develop independence when dressing and undressing and when organising their personal belongings throughout the Foundation 2 year.
- Throughout the Foundation Stage the children take part in learning activities which introduce them to the foundations of each subject that have been specifically designed by each subject leader. This introduction to each subject supports future learning and is planned progressively throughout school.
- Foundation 2 practitioners plan for more structured activities to be undertaken during the Summer term, encouraging less dependence on adult support.
- During the final half term in the summer term, F2 children spend an afternoon each week in the Year 1 environment to prepare them for the transition.
- An opportunity for parents to visit the Y1 environment is offered towards the end of the academic year.
- EYFS Profiles are passed on to Year 1 teacher.
- An EYFS Profile/Characteristics of Effective Learning is passed on to the Year 1 teacher.
- Foundation 2 and Year 1 teacher meet to discuss individual needs of children in July.
- The 'Little Wandle Letters and Sounds' scheme for phonics and spelling is continued throughout Year 1 and 2.
- During the Autumn Term when the children move into Year 1 the children has continuous provision opportunities inside and outside the classroom which gradually become more formalised towards the end of the academic year.
- There is an overlap in approach and routines, e.g. timetables

#### **11. HOME/SCHOOL LINKS**

We recognise that parents are the child's first and most enduring educators. When parents and practitioners work together in Early Years settings, the results have a positive impact on the child's development. A successful partnership needs to be a two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise.

We develop this by:

- Outlining the Reception curriculum to parents during the new parents' meeting in July, to enable them to understand the value of supporting their child's learning at home.
- Parents fill out an All About Me booklet so we can get to know their child and their family.
- Parents are invited for a parents meeting with the key staff that work with their child in the first term.
- Operating an "open door" policy, whereby parents can come and discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner.
- Sharing progress at school and encouraging parents to comment on their child's Online Journals.
- Inviting parents to attend 'Stay and Play' sessions.
- Reading support sessions to explain to parents how to read with their child
- Encouraging parents to listen to their child read each night and to comment on reading progress.
- Encouraging relevant learning tasks to be continued at home ensuring that experiences at home are used to develop learning in school.
- Providing an annual written report to parents in July summarizing the child's progress against the early learning goals and EYFS assessment scales and giving an outline of their child's Characteristics of Effective Learning.
- Dojo messages

## **12. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

At Mendell Primary School we provide all pupils, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability, equal access to all aspects of school life and work to ensure that every child is valued fully as an individual. Practitioners, as role models, are aware of the influence of adults in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical ideas.

## **13. INCLUSION**

Children with additional educational needs will be given support as appropriate to enable them to benefit from the curriculum. This includes children that are more able, and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities. Additional adult support may be provided for children with special needs, thus increasing the adult/pupil ratio. The school's SEN co-ordinator is responsible for providing additional information and advice to practitioners and parents, and for arranging external intervention and support where necessary.

## **14. SAFEGUARDING AND WELFARE**

At Mendell Primary School we provide a welcoming, safe, secure and stimulating environment enabling all children to develop into independent and confident individuals. We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years through our curriculum, for example by talking to children about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth

We also teach E-safety across our EYFS in age appropriate ways.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.