



## **Muswell Hill Primary School Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy**

Reviewed: November 2019  
Next review: November 2021

**Muswell Hill Primary School is a Rights Respecting School, based upon the UNICEF Convention of the Rights of the Child.**

**We believe that all children should grow up aware of these rights and respect these rights for themselves and for others. Being a Rights Respecting School underpins policies throughout the school. As policies are reviewed within the cycle they are adapted to demonstrate this. Reviews started in the academic year of 2019/20. The school received the Bronze Award in July 2020 and is currently working towards the Silver Award.**

## **Introduction**

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfill their potential. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.' (Early Years Foundation Stage profile, 2012)

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. Every child at Muswell Hill Primary School in Early Years will be provided with the best possible start to life with the provision of high quality learning in a safe, healthy and secure environment which will enable them to achieve their full potential in life. Their parent/family/carer will feel valued, be listened to and encouraged to contribute through good parenting to the overall aims and objectives of the Early Years.

The Early Years and Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum is based on the understanding that children develop rapidly during this stage of their learning – physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially. It forms the basis on which children build the rest of their lives and it is not viewed as simply a preparation for the next stage of development. Pupils in the Foundation Stage learn best through staff providing experiences that build on and extend children's home interests and experiences. Pupils are influenced by everything in their environment, they use their senses to explore and make sense of the world around them. They learn best through imaginative and meaningful play, which is most productive when inspired by their own interests. At Muswell Hill Primary School we recognize that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions towards learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and believe that every child matters. All children at Muswell Hill Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, gender, religion or abilities. All families are valued within our school.

## **EYFS Overarching Principles**

<b>Unique child</b>	Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
<b>Positive relationship</b>	Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships
<b>Enabling environments</b>	Children develop in environments in which their experiences are matched to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers
<b>Develop &amp; learn in different ways and rates</b>	The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities

## **Early Years Education Pedagogy**

The early years experience builds on what children already know and can do and planned, purposeful activities engage children in the learning process.

The Early Years team:

- structure the curriculum to children's individual needs;
- create a learning environment that is well-planned and organised;
- ensure that children feel secure, included and valued;
- provide rich and stimulating experiences;
- value parental cooperation;
- initiate planned activities;
- value child-initiated activities.

## **Teaching and Learning**

There are seven key areas of learning, three Prime areas and four Specific areas, in addition to the three characteristics of effective learning. All staff develop pupils by ensuring challenging, playful opportunities across the 'Prime' and 'Specific' areas of learning and development. The Prime areas begin to develop quickly in response to relationships and experiences, and run through and support learning in all other areas. We aim to support all children to become independent and collaborative learners. We provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to achieve their full potential. In addition to child-initiated activities and small focus groups with adults in the setting, Reception children participate in daily phonics and Maths sessions. They also read at least once a week with the class teacher. Please see the school's Teaching & Learning policy for more information on whole school approaches to teaching and learning.

### **Prime Areas**

The prime areas are fundamental to a child's development throughout the EYFS. They are:

#### **1. Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

Self confidence and self-awareness  
Making relationships  
Managing feelings and behaviour

#### **2. Physical Development**

Moving and handling  
Health and self-care

### **3. Communication and Language**

Listening and attention

Understanding

Speaking

## **Specific Areas**

The specific areas include essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society. They are:

### **Literacy**

Reading  
Writing

### **Mathematics**

Numbers  
Shape, Space and Measure

### **Understanding the World**

People and Communities  
The World  
Technology

### **Expressive Arts and Design**

Exploring and Using Media and Materials  
Being Imaginative

## **The Characteristics of Effective Early Learning**

The characteristics of effective learning are the factors which play a central role in children's development. They are vital elements which support the transition process from Nursery to Reception and from there into Year One.

### **Playing and exploring – engagement**

Finding out and exploring  
Playing with what they know  
Being willing to 'have a go'

### **Active learning – motivation**

Being involved and concentrating  
Keep trying  
Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

### **Creating and thinking critically – thinking**

Having their own ideas  
Making links  
Choosing ways to do things

## **Enabling Environments.**

It is through a stimulating environment and the process of play that children explore, investigate, recreate and understand the world in which they live. Play is a vital component of children's lives and is the medium through which skills can be developed and practised.

Within the EYFS guidance document 'Effective Practice: Outdoor Learning' the key messages are:

1. The outdoor environment has unique characteristics and features.
2. Outdoor learning has equal value to indoor learning.
3. Outdoor learning has a positive impact on children's well-being and development.
4. Children need the support of attentive and engaged adults who are enthusiastic about the outdoors and understand the importance of outdoor learning.
5. Outdoor learning is enhanced by an environment that is richly resourced with play materials that can be adapted and used in different ways.
6. An approach to outdoor learning that considers experiences, rather than equipment, places children at the centre of the provision being made.

At Muswell Hill Primary School we encourage children to learn to make decisions, solve problems and grow in confidence in their own abilities outdoors and they need plenty of time to investigate their outdoor environment purposefully. They are given opportunities to make predictions about what may happen based on their previous play experiences and test out these ideas and theories. We have an attractive outdoor provision that has direct access from both Reception classrooms and we encourage 'freeflow' when possible.

## **English as an Additional Language (EAL)**

Children for whom English is not their home language will engage in activities and first hand experiences that do not depend solely on the English language, their participation will reveal what they know and can do in the security of their home language. As soon as possible, staff will ascertain a child's prior language and any previous education experiences.

(Please note that the Early Learning Goals for Communication, Language and Literacy, Reading and Writing are assessed in English)

Staff will observe the EAL child over time in order to quantify assessments and raise questions with the parents (or a bilingual support assistant/member of staff) to be confident about what the child knows and understands.

The Early Years environment will reflect and celebrate EAL children's cultural and linguistic heritage within its setting where the opportunity arises, for example: celebrating Diwali, Eid, Hannukkah and Christmas.

## **Assessment**

Assessment is carried out through observations - both informal and planned. All staff will record examples of spontaneous, independent and consistent learning across a range of contexts. These significant observations are recorded in the children's online Learning Journeys on 'Tapestry' or in their 'Special Books'.

Staff will also take into account a collection of perspectives from those of the child, parents/carers and other adults who have significant interactions with the child. A baseline observation is carried out on entry so that we can track children's progress from their starting points. Tracking grids are updated at the end of each half term. Please see the school's assessment policy for the further details.

The primary uses of the EYFS profile data are:

- to inform parents about their child's attainment and progress against the Early Learning Goals and the Characteristics of Effective Learning.
- to support a smooth transition to Key Stage 1 by establishing a professional dialogue between EYFS and KS1 teachers;
- to support Year 1 teachers to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children.

The Early Years Foundation Stage framework requires that the EYFS profile is carried out in the final term of the year in which a child reaches five years and no later than the 30th June. It summarises and describes children's attainment at the end of the EYFS

By the end of the Foundation Stage it is expected that your child will have reached or exceeded the Early Learning Goals. Parents receive an annual written report that highlights the child's strengths and development needs. To ensure your child has a Good Level of Development (GLD) they will need to reach an Expected or Exceeding level in all three Prime Areas of Learning as well as Literacy and Maths.

These are reported to the Local Authority as the following grades:

- 1-Emerging (not GLD currently)
- 2-Expected
- 3-Exceeding

## **Key Person**

In our Reception classes the Nursery Nurses and class teachers share this role. This helps to ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs to help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with their parents. The Key Persons play a key role in observing the child and setting next steps. This is shared with all practitioners in the classroom environment to ensure consistency and to help inform future planning. The teams work closely together and there are times when children might be assigned to their 'key worker' eg computing sessions, storytimes, some focus activities but overall the statutory role is shared.

## **Admissions and Settling-In**

At Muswell Hill Primary School children are admitted into Reception in the September following their fourth birthday.

Starting school can be a difficult time for young children; we therefore plan this time carefully to ensure the transition is as smooth as possible. Although we do not have a Nursery, the Early Years practitioners visit many of local pre-school settings and meet with key workers to discuss individual children. We encourage pre-school settings to pass on any useful information such as children's special books and development matters booklets. Places are allocated to the two Reception classes, Red and Ruby based on number of siblings, age and gender to create a broad, inclusive mix of pupils in both classes.

Prior to the child's start date, parents/carers are invited to an Induction Meeting in July. Here the parents are given a presentation about the school and an information booklet to take home along with various other materials linked to early years. They also have the opportunity to meet their child's teacher and nursery nurse. In addition to this, each new child is invited for an afternoon's play session to meet their teacher and nursery nurse as well as visiting the setting for the first time and meeting other children who will be joining the same class.

In September before the children begin the settling in period, parents are invited to an individual 15-minute meeting with the class teacher and nursery nurse. This is to discuss their child's likes and dislikes and any medical issues or allergies.

Muswell Hill Primary School has a staggered entry procedure in the Autumn Term. This helps greatly in the settling process, giving the children time to get used to their new environment and to get to know the staff and other children.

When children join the school in September the following procedures apply:

- During the first week, children attend for the morning session or afternoon session.
- During the second week, children attend for the morning and lunchtime sessions only (to be picked up at 1pm).
- During the third week and thereafter, children attend for the full school day unless the class teacher and parents or guardians agree that it is not in the best interests of an individual child.

The school also holds parent consultations in the second half of the Autumn term to establish how children are settling into the school environment.

## **Positive Relationships.**

At Muswell Hill Primary School we recognize that children learn to be strong, confident, and independent from being in secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families. We know that parents / carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value being partners with them in their children's education.

The school operates an open-door policy for parents / carers with any queries or concerns. Conversely, if Reception staff have any concerns about the progress of a child, they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss them.

We hold meetings each term to discuss children's progress and to set targets for future development. Nursery nurses also attend these meetings so that they can contribute towards conversations regarding children in their group. Once the children have settled in, we encourage parents to come in and participate in activities such as cooking and support staff and children on class trips.

## **Transition to KS1.**

At the end of the Summer term meetings are arranged for the Reception Team and Key Stage 1 teachers to discuss the transition of the pupils from Reception to Year One and to formally hand over all assessment data and reports. Towards the end of the Reception year children visit their new Year 1 Classrooms and have storytime with their new teachers. During the transition phase of Year 1, play-based approaches are planned alongside more structured teaching and learning.

## **SEND**

Developmental and health issues can sometimes be first noticed in Early Years. Any observations recorded by staff would always be discussed with parents/carers and any appropriate multidisciplinary referrals would be made only after consultation with parents/carers.

## **Equal Opportunities**

There are policies and procedures for staff but also in particular for children to promote equality of opportunity, including support for children with special educational needs or disabilities. The main Equal Opportunities principles are as set out in our Policy for Equal Opportunities.

## **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 the EYFS 2014)

At Muswell Hill Primary School we understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2014. The school's Safeguarding Policy and procedures are in line

with the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) and have regard to the Government's statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' and follow Keeping Children Safe In Education 2019. (KCSIC 2019).

Good Health:

Children are provided with a healthy snack each day as well as being given the choice of milk. They have access to water at all times.

Intimate Care:

"Intimate Care" is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. However, depending on a child's age and stage of development, they may need some support, for example dressing, wiping their bottom after using the toilet and changing underwear following an accident. In most cases, intimate care is to do with personal hygiene.

Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child.

Please refer to the Intimate Care Policy for guidance given to practitioners.

Permissions:

Parents are asked to sign generic permission forms for school visits, food tasting and photographs etc.

## **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks**

All existing staff, new staff, helpers will be DBS checked before being allowed to come into contact with children.

## **Staff**

All staff will receive the appropriate induction training which includes: roles and responsibilities, emergency evacuation procedures, safeguarding, child protection, equality and health and safety issues. Any training needs will be identified through regular staff appraisals and staff having contact with children and families will be adequately supervised.

## **First Aid**

A member of staff who holds a Local Authority approved, current **paediatric** first aid certificate will always be present on the premises or during outings. They will ensure that the first aid box has the appropriate contents and maintain a written record of any accidents. They will ensure that the parent or carer is informed of any accident on the same day it occurs or as soon as is reasonably practicable thereafter.

## **Links with other policies**

For specific details about possible related practice refer to the following policies:

- Behaviour and Anti-bullying
- Teaching and Learning
- Safeguarding
- SEN
- Equal Opportunities
- Assessment
- Intimate Care policy

## **Procedures for policy monitoring and dissemination**

All members of staff and governors will have access to and receive this policy. It is the responsibility of those working in Reception to follow the principals stated in this policy. The Headteacher will carry out monitoring on EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule. The Phase Leader for EYFS/Y1 will support and monitor the quality of provision in line with the school's School Development and Improvement Plan. They will meet teachers regularly to discuss the provision and curriculum and are accountable for the quality of teaching and learning.

A copy of this policy is available on the school website or parents can request a copy from the school office. This policy has been approved by the Governing Body and the School Leadership Team and it will be reviewed in line with the curriculum policy schedule.

## **People responsible**

- Amanda Howells (Headteacher)
- Lucy Sykes (Early Years Phase Leader)