

Mere Brow C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL



A Policy for Early Years Foundation Stage

Aims and Objectives:

At Mere Brow C of E School Foundation Stage we aim to give each child a positive and meaningful start to their school life, in which they can establish solid foundations on which to develop into independent and fearless lifelong learners.

We will encourage children to develop independence within a secure and friendly atmosphere; to support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing; to help each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and by developing the confidence to work towards personal goals.

Our high expectations will enable each child to develop socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally and to achieve their full potential. We will offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited availability for development through a wide range of new and exciting first-hand experiences that will give children the opportunity to consolidate, explore and test their skills, knowledge and understanding alongside existing experiences. We will ensure that children are kept healthy and safe and that they achieve the knowledge and skills they need to start school.

The Curriculum

The Nursery and Reception follow the curriculum as outlined in the 2014 Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) document, which is available to download at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>. This clearly defines what we teach. The following policy details the specifics of our setting.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

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. 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.

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 and stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging and achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning.

Learning and development

Our foundation stage has one classroom which is shared by Nursery and Reception. We have a covered outdoor area and use of the school playgrounds and field. All our learning environments are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The seven areas of learning are defined so that children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

Areas of Learning

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

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

These areas are vitally important if children are to access the rest of the curriculum. On entry into the setting we strive to achieve within these areas. We help children to become familiar with the staff, children and environment and to settle into life at Mere Brow, to be happy and have friends. We also work hard to make them become independent in looking after their own needs such as putting coats on successfully and looking after their own toileting needs. It is usual that most children who start our Nursery will have already started toilet/potty training at home if not already dry during the day. However, if this is not the case, we will talk on a one to one basis with parents about supporting their child through this stage of their development. Once initial steps in toilet/potty training have been started at home, we will work alongside parents whilst the child is in school to provide a consistent approach.

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

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

At Mere Brow C of E all areas are delivered through a well-planned play based approach, with a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. Throughout the foundation stage our long, medium and short-term plans ensure that each child has the opportunity to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in every area at the appropriate developmental level. Our long term planning ensures coverage so that all children have opportunities to work towards and achieve the Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS. We follow a half termly topic based approach which allows flexibility to ensure that both children's needs and interests are taken into account.

Learning through Play

Children come to school already as skilled learners. Our stimulating learning environments both indoors and out provide the children with many opportunities to extend their skills in all seven areas of learning through play. For example the role play area, sand and water play, small world area, number and writing areas, construction corner, messy craft table and reading corner. These areas are changed throughout the year to reflect topics covered and school events. Through our observations, assessment and professional judgement we gain valuable insights into how each child learns best which then informs our planning so that we can stimulate the interests and meet the needs of each

individual child. Each child's progress is documented and recorded in their Foundation Stage Profile.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning and the nursery and reception teachers plan activities with these in mind. The characteristics highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them. The three characteristics 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

Creating and Thinking Critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Assessment

Throughout nursery and reception children's knowledge, understanding, skills and achievements are assessed and tracked using the developmental stages set out in the document 'Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)'.

Our assessment depends on us getting to know our children very well and to this end we gather information from a range of sources; observations of the children in play, in adult led activities, through discussions with parents and carers and through talking to the children. We keep written and photographic evidence to help us build up a picture of children's strengths and achievements and to help us to plan for children's next steps in learning. Every child in nursery and reception has a 'Foundation Stage Profile (FSP)' in which we record our observations and keep samples of the children's work.

After assessing the children they will access the appropriate work for the age range in which they are working, not necessarily their age in years.

Children's knowledge, skills and understanding is tracked throughout the foundation stage and assessed against the ELG's at the end of reception to establish an end of foundation stage achievement and learning profile for each child in preparation for their transition into key stage one.

Home/School Links

The relationship between school and home is extremely important to us and we have a number of ways in which we invite parents to become

involved in their child's education in the EYFS. Each child takes home a Home/School book which is kept in their School bag and which parents are asked to use to jot things down which their child has done whilst away from school. The children then have the opportunity to share their news with their friends in class.

Also, both Nursery and Reception children are encouraged to enjoy a school reading book at home as well as in school. Nursery children can choose a school library book to share with parents and Reception children take part in the school Reading Scheme. Reception children are also given homework initially in the form of activities but then later becoming more formal in order to prepare children for the transition to Year 1. From September 2018 the activity based homework will also be given to Nursery children.

In addition we hold regular Stay and Play sessions for parents/grandparents where the children get the opportunity to show their family what sorts of things they do in school.

On arrival arrangements

Each child will have a coat peg with their name on in our Cloakroom area which is to be used to hang their coat up. School reading book bags are kept in the classroom. During the first term all parents are welcome to enter the cloakroom area with their child to help them take their coat off/hang it up etc. However at the start of the Spring term we ask Reception parents to encourage their children to enter the Cloakroom independently and hang up their own coat etc. This is to develop independence in one aspect of self-care in the Reception children in line with one of the Early Learning Goals.

Transition from Reception into Key Stage One

During the Summer term we encourage the children to become further independent in preparation for Year One (Squirrels Class). We develop the curriculum and timetable so that it becomes similar to Year One. The children will also experience the Year One classroom environment and teaching staff so to make the transition in September of the following academic year an easier one.

Signed: Sinead Greene

EYFS Co-ordinator

Autumn 2018

It was approved by the Governing body/Chair of SEC _____

This policy will be reviewed in the Autumn of 2020.

