

## EYFS Policy

### Policy Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

This policy is effective for North Mead Primary Academy

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### Revision History:

Version	Date	Author	Summary of Changes:
0.1	Feb 2015	VR	
0.2	Sep 2016	VR	To reflect change to Academy Status
0.3	Nov 2017	VR	Addition of Point 10. Safeguarding
0.4	Nov 2018	VR	Updated to reflect Trust name change
0.5	Nov 2019	VR	Updated to reflect school name change
0.6	Nov 2020	VR	Policy review due – no changes needed
0.7	Oct 2021	RP	Policy review due – Covid and curriculum changes
0.8	Jan 2023	RP	Policy Reviewed and all sections updated

# North Mead Primary Academy

## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

*'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.'*

Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage - Department for Education 2021

### 1 Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. At North Mead Primary Academy, we offer part-time Nursery places (morning only), for children who turned three prior to 31<sup>st</sup> August before starting school in September. All children in Reception classes will join us in the September following their fourth birthday.

Here at North Mead Primary Academy, we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. However, we also believe that early childhood is valid in itself as part of life. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

### 2 Aims and Objectives

We aim to support all children to become independent and collaborative learners. We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively, and intellectually to their full potential.

The early-years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- It builds on what our children already know and can do;
- It ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged;
- It offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children, and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
- It provides a rich and stimulating environment;
- It acknowledges the importance of a full working partnership with parents and carers.

### **3 The Early Years Foundation Stage is based on four themes:**

#### **3.1 A Unique Child**

At the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations keyed to the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals (ELG) by the end of the stage. We do this through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them learn effectively;
- Offering a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Employing resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- Planning challenging activities to meet the needs of both boys and girls, of children with special educational needs, of children who are more able, of children with disabilities, of children from all social and cultural backgrounds, of children from different ethnic groups, and of those from diverse linguistic backgrounds;
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary. This could be internal support (Family Support Worker, ELSA etc.) and external (Speech therapist).
- Working closely with parents, carers and other outside agencies to ensure all children's needs are met and we enable them to access the curriculum and make good progress.

#### **3.2 Positive Relationships**

We recognise that children learn to be strong, confident, and independent from being in secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Early Years Staff - All staff in the Foundation Stage aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them.

Parents as Partners - We recognise that parents/carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value being partners with them in their child's education through:

- Arranging, where possible, visits by the teacher to all children in their home setting or childcare provision prior to their starting school.

- Providing a handbook of information about commencing Reception and Nursery at North Mead Primary Academy.
- Inviting parents/carers and children the opportunity to spend time in their Nursery or Reception Class induction visits before starting school.
- Providing an induction meeting for Reception and Nursery parents/carers to meet with staff to discuss school routines, expectations and to answer any questions parents/carers may have.
- Providing a parent support pack with resources and information of each terms topics and key learning points.
- Operating an open door policy for parents/carers with any queries or concerns. Conversely, if Foundation staff have concerns about the progress of a child, they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss them.
- Written contact through the school newsletters.
- Connecting parents to the online portal 'Class Dojo' where they can view their child's progress through photos/videos of their learning, send messages to class teachers and check any announcements.
- Inviting parents to attend informal meetings about areas of the curriculum, such as phonics or reading.
- Offering two parent/teacher meetings per year at which their child's progress is discussed.
- Sending a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of their time in reception and nursery.
- Parents are invited to a range of activities throughout the school year such as assemblies, workshops, Christmas productions and sports day etc.

### **3.3 Enabling Environments**

At North Mead Primary Academy we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development, where the children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision.

Play-based learning is paramount and children have opportunities to direct their own learning with planned opportunities provided by staff. We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning and reflects the individual's interests, passions and abilities. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning. We ensure that resources and spaces are safe to use and checked regularly.

### **3.4 Learning and Development**

Our curriculum for the Foundation Stage reflects the areas of learning identified in the Early Learning Goals.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Our children's learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skill across several learning areas. They require a balance of adult led and child initiated activities in order for most children to reach the levels required at the end of EYFS. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The three Prime areas are:

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

Staff will also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

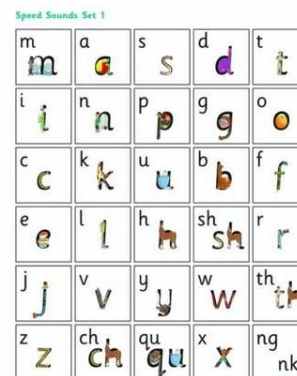
Specific Areas:

- **Literacy**
- **Mathematics**
- **Understanding the world**
- **Expressive arts and design**

Children's development levels are assessed and as the year progresses, the balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning, as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas. However, if a child's progress in any of the prime areas gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents/carers and agree how to support the child.

## 4 Phonics

At North Mead we follow the Ruth Miskin Literacy (Read Write Inc) programme which develops communication, language, and literacy skills in a systematic and structured way. We believe that teaching phonics is the best way for children to become confident readers and writers. In Reception, children receive a phonics lesson every day where they learn which sound each letter makes and how to build these into words. Children are taught to write unknown words: stretch out the word (segmenting) so they can write a letter for each sound. To read unknown words, children learn to say each sound they can see and then blend them together (blending) to read to whole word.



High frequency words are taught in the order on the long-term plan and have been carefully sequenced to allow maximum impact on children's reading and give children quick success in Ditty Books and Benchmarked levelled books. To encourage a love of books in EYFS, we use a book rich curriculum. Children also access a wide range of high-quality books to take home and read.



## 5 Maths

Power Maths is a whole-class mastery programme designed to spark curiosity, excitement, and help children nurture confidence in maths. It is built around a child-centred lesson design that models and embeds a growth mindset approach to maths. The curriculum strands have been broken down into core concepts. These are taught in blocks of lessons so you can give sufficient time to developing a deep and sustainable understanding of core maths concepts. Each concept has also been broken down into small steps (lessons). Each lesson and concept builds on prior knowledge to help children build a robust and deep understanding of the concept before moving on.



## 6 Characteristics of Effective Learning

We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

**6.1 Playing and exploring** - children will have opportunities to investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.

***'Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development.'***

Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They can think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

**6.2 Active learning** - children will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy their achievements.

***'Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.'***

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

**6.3 Creating and thinking critically** - we encourage and support children to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

***"When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions."***

Children should be given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning. Adults can support children's thinking and help them make connections by showing interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open ended questions.

Children can access resources and move around the classroom freely and purposefully to extend their learning.

Planning - The Early Learning Goals provide the basis for planning throughout the Foundation Stage. The planning objectives within the Foundation Stage are from the Development Matters Statements. The planning is based upon topic books with a focus on all seven areas of learning plus links to the Key Stage 1 subjects. Teachers use Read Write Inc and Power Maths to plan their directed teaching.

Observations - Foundation Stage staff use observations as the basis for planning. Staff are skilled at observing children to identify their achievements, interests and next steps for learning. These observations then lead the direction of the planning. These observations can be recorded on Class Dojo for parents to see.

Assessment - During the first six weeks of the Autumn term all pupils in Reception are assessed in Mathematics, Literacy, Communication and Language using the new Reception Baseline Assessment. The results are held by the Department for Education and will be used to measure progress at the end of Year 6. Staff also carry out an internal baseline assessment looking at all 7 areas of learning. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children.

Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal observations, photographic/video evidence and through planned activities. Assessment is completed regularly and involves both the teacher and other adults, as appropriate.

Progress data is collected at three points in the school year. Baseline, Autumn, Spring and Summer. Progress is recorded on Bromcom. Bromcom used to track children's progress and is updated at the end of each term. This provides a summary sheet for each child which feeds into the whole-school assessment and tracking process. At the end of the year, we record each child's level of development against the 17 Early Learning Goals as Emerging or Expected. We send a summary of these assessments to the LA for analysis. The child's next teacher uses this information to make plans for the year ahead. We share this information too at parental consultation meetings and in the end-of-year report. Parents receive an annual written report that offers an overall comment on the child's progress and their end of year assessment level for each area of learning

The Learning Environment -The Foundation Stage classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are specific areas where the children can be active, be quiet, creative etc. Children have access to both inside and outside area across the day; this has a positive effect on the children's development. The Foundation Stage has its own outdoor classroom area as well as its own playground and woodland area. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways



and in different scales than when indoors. The children can explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. All areas of the curriculum can be explored outside.

## **7 Teaching and learning styles**

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage just as much as they do to the teaching in Key Stage 1 and 2.

**7.1** The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the Foundation Stage are:

- The partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement
- The understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching
- The range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication
- The carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the ELG by the end of the EYFS
- The provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities
- The encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management
- The support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities, and equipment
- The identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are regularly shared with parents
- The good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school including home visits
- The clear aims for our work, and the regular monitoring to evaluate and improve what we do
- The regular identification of training needs of all adults working within the EYFS

## **8 Transition**

Starting school can be a difficult time for young children; we therefore plan this time carefully to support children with the transition and to ensure it is as smooth as possible for each child and that they settle into their new class quickly and happily.

Starting Nursery and Reception - Parents of reception children starting in the next academic year will receive a home or nursery visit and be invited to a stay and play in the

summer term to meet their child's new teachers and other key staff and learn more about the reception curriculum. Parents of nursery children will receive a home visit and be invited to a stay and play on the first week of the Autumn term. This is an opportunity for staff to personally

- Explain about uniform, PE kit and school dinners/ free school meals
- Explain about holidays and absences
- Purchase uniform and book bag if requested
- Explain the arrangements for the gradual induction into reception and nursery

Starting in Key Stage 1 (Year 1) - Throughout the Reception year, each child's involvement in whole school life will have been built upon; many of the teaching and support staff will already be familiar people to them. They will have taken part in phase and whole school assemblies as well as sharing lunchtimes.

Children can meet their new class teacher and spend transition mornings in their new class during the summer term.

## **9 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 EYFS 2021)

We ensure children learn in a safe, caring and enriching environment. Children are taught how to keep themselves safe, to develop positive and healthy relationships, and how to avoid situations where they may be at risk including being exploited.

## **10 Inclusion in the Early Years Foundation Stage**

**10.1** In our school we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

**10.2** At North Mead Primary Academy we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, so that children can reach their full potential in achieving the expected levels within the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage. Some children progress beyond this point. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

**10.3** We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary

## **11 Resources**

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning.