

Mawnan C of E VA Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



The Early Years Foundation Stage at Mawnan C of E VA School is a place of learning, adventures and discovery and takes place in the Oppie Class setting. Our aim is to excite our children, making learning irresistible, full of curiosity and wonder, ensuring that they are equipped with the skills, ambition and self-regulation that they will need as they embark on their onward learning journey through the school and beyond.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. In our school, most children join us, full time, at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. In specific cases parents are within their rights to defer entry until the following year or to opt for a staggered entry which is carefully mapped and planned on an individual basis before entry.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

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

A Unique Child

At Mawnan C of E VA Primary School 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, our class rainbow, as well as celebration/sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences' in fact we celebrate them. All children at Mawnan C of E VA Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school. In our school we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve to the best of their abilities. We do this by taking account and extending our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. 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.

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 styles and 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 promptly reacting to need and providing support as necessary.
- Supporting children's physical and mental health, providing plenty of physical learning, teaching children specifically about how to stay healthy and by including many opportunities to nurture and develop emotional literacy.
- Creating a communication friendly space where Makaton is widely used by both staff and children as part of the daily routine and symbols are used when needed.

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe.' We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See Whole School Safeguarding Children Policy and the DfE Document "Keeping Children Safe in Education".)

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."

At Mawnan C of E VA Primary School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2021. We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare of children.
 - promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
 - manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
 - ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so and have a current DBS.
 - Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose.
 - Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
 - Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.
- We endeavor to meet all these requirements.

Staff at Mawnan School support emotional literacy in a number of ways. Daily peer massage provides opportunity to self-regulate, calm down, recognise and practise appropriate touch. We engage in a wide range of stories about emotions, cultural diversity, disability and gender. These provide openings to create organic discussions to promote and support awareness, tolerance and empathy. Additionally, regular "R-time" paired sessions help reinforce sharing, turn-taking, speaking and listening and the qualities embedded in our school "Rainbow Rules". Language referring to "rainbow behaviour" is widely used to encourage children to be making positive choices and understand their behaviour whether wanted or unwanted (refer to the Positive Behaviour Policy for further details).

Positive Relationships

At Mawnan C of E VA Primary School we recognise that children learn to be successful and independent when they have formed secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make.

We recognise the vital role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school in a home visit *when safe to do so

- Questionnaires about the child's likes, interests and supporting information is shared during home visits. Parents have one form and children narrate another. *when safe to do so
- the children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during 'Stay and Play' afternoons and a transition morning.
- Staff to visit and liaise with pre-school in the spring term to identify any possible children needing extra support or transition requirements. Regular pre-school visits by Teacher/ TA in the summer term involving opportunities to meet and talk to parents. *When safe to do so.
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school either face to face or via zoom.
- Short Preschool transition meetings are offered giving advice and information about how to prepare your child for school. These are available at pick up times during "Stay and Play" afternoons or as pre-recorded videos on ClassDojo when unsafe to have face to face meetings.
- Offering parents ongoing opportunities to comment on their child's learning in our reception class via Tapestry and allowing free access to the children's 'Learning Journey' folders *when safe to do so.
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns, this can be via email, ClassDojo, school phone or preferably face to face at drop off or pick up or at a pre-arranged time.
- There is a formal meeting for parents in the autumn and summer terms at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year including whether the child has met the early goals or not and a how their child learns by commenting on their characteristic of effective learning; children on the SEN register will have termly or half termly review meetings with both the EYFS team/ teacher and SENCO.
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: Sharing assemblies, outings, "forest school" mornings, Sports Day etc; *When safe to do so
- Ongoing information to the parents about what is going to be covered the in phonics and mathematics the following week and a brief recap of the current week's learning in "Oppie News"
- Dojo provides a window into the class's adventures and learning through the class story and is regularly updated with photographs and narratives of the children and their achievements/learning.
- Dojo is also used for reminders and day to day information either via the class story or through the private message facility.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. This starts relationship starts before the child has started at the school and is nurtured

during the home visit. This is often a valuable tool to establish common ground for chat, the child's comforts and fascinations.

We have good links with Mawnan Preschool. The EYFS teacher and team meets with staff to discuss new intake children. Visits to other feeder settings are encouraged in the Summer term although this is not possible a zoom or phone conversation will take place between the child's key worker and teacher.

Enabling Environments

At Mawnan C of E VA Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

The Planning within the EYFS follows the Mawnan School Curriculum. We have ensured that learning builds on prior learning and provides a cohesive journey throughout the school. EYFS starts that journey and is based on assumed prior learning so topics and themes are carefully selected to reflect our surroundings and interests. The Curriculum is mapped throughout the school and the EYFS KS1 Cross Curricular Curriculum plan then links to KS2 road maps of learning. Each half term is then mapped to form a "expedition" although children's interests and fascinations are incorporated in the weekly and day to day planning. Wherever possible children then help to plan the topic's learning by "adding possible lines of discovery", this is then shared in a floor book that the children contribute to and review. Daily incidental planning occurs often on an individual basis where the EYFS team responds spontaneously and directly to a child's interest or need.

We make regular and ongoing assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs.

Assessment in the EYFS generally takes the form of short observations with photographs or videos which are made by the teacher, teaching assistants and other adults as appropriate. Assessments take the form of:

- Incidental observations recorded and shared with parents via Tapestry
- Observations from home contributed by parents via Tapestry
- Collections of Child-Initiated writing and evidence which form the basis of a hard copy of the children's learning Journals
- Assessment of writing progress in books which are assessed using 2 stars and a wish- these are always marked with the child and often with the child contributing a wish.

- Floor books provide a great opportunity for topic/curriculum based assessment and learning and record class discussions
- Listening to reading/ phonics while working in partnership with parents provide us with ongoing assessment into progress in this area.
- During periods when the class is home learning, parents provide evidence of their child's learning for the EYFS team to assess, feedback next steps and cheer the family on.

During the first six weeks of the Autumn term either the Class Teacher or Teaching Assistant creates a relaxed informal peaceful environment in order to administer the Statutory Foundation Stage baseline assessment. It is the intention for the children to be unaware that they are being assessed and is promoted to them as a welcome opportunity to spend some special individual time with the adult. The intention of the data collection is to provide a snapshot of the pupils learning as they enter the school and then will provide a measure of progress that the school has made with their pupils by the end of their primary education. At Mawnan C of E VA Primary School, we use an excel EYFS tracking sheet to monitor whether the children are on track or causing concern. This is assessed termly and shared on Google Drive.

In the summer term children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals and are either marked as "emerging" or "expected" That data is submitted to County.

Internal moderation of ongoing progress takes place termly within the Early Years team. Whole school Writing and Mathematics moderation takes place on a termly basis. Internal moderation takes place within the Early Years Team and Headteacher before end of year statutory Early Years data is submitted. In order to moderate the learning of our EYFS children we meet with other settings in our cluster to monitor writing and other agreed areas of learning. This takes place annually.

Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress against the Characteristics of Effective Learning, the Early Learning Goals and assessment scales. We give a reasonable opportunity for the parents to discuss these judgements with the EYFS teacher and feedback slips are provided.

The Learning Environment

In Oppie Class we provide the children with as many first-hand experiences as possible. Our school grounds offer us a wide diversity of experiences, from growing vegetables in the school garden, climbing, digging and enhancing our

gross motor skills in the adventure playground to having plenty of space to run and play and develop school-wide friendships on the playground and field.

Additionally we make use of our amazing local environment by going on visits to local gardens, the beach, walks and regular trips to our school “forest school”, situated about 200m from the school and lovingly known as “The Reserve”. Here we explore, learn and play, watching and experiencing the changing seasons, listening to and watching the birds (if we’re lucky a squirrel or two), making dens, talking to our friends, creating artwork, exploring the wonderful mathematical opportunities found in nature and climbing a few trees!

At school the class outside provision is full of challenge and open-ended learning and can be freely accessed by the children when they are not in formal teaching or group sessions. This way the children are not only asking and answering their own self-initiated questions but are becoming sophisticated, resilient, independent, risk-taking problem solvers. Challenge is subtly offered by the supply of a range of authentic “real” materials which encourages open-ended play opportunities. For example, there is generally always a pile of logs, builders bricks, big heavy pallets, hazel branches, tyres and a tarpaulin on offer to name a few. With these things the children can endlessly combine materials, create narratives and collaboratively solve problems. One day we will have a technical bridge made out of branches that is strong enough to walk over, another a den for chatting and snacking, another a boat or racing car destined for great adventures.

Inside the classroom, the philosophy mirrors the outside learning; one of discovery and exploration, although generally on a smaller scale. Just like outside, the children will encounter managed risk and the creative area is a good example of this. All children have access to a cold melt glue gun so that sculptures stick and the frustrations born of waiting for glue to dry and reams of sellotape, sticking to everything in sight, are eliminated. Water play is cherished and challenges regularly given to the children such as “can you move water from one bucket to another without touching the buckets or pouring the water?” (early syphoning) or “can you catch a bubble on your hand without it popping” which gently encourages deeper thinking and questioning.

We have a small world area, a construction area with large and small apparatus with space to return to a precious building, a (sometimes) peaceful reading area, messy/ sensory play zone, a writing den and a role play area which generally changes to support the class learning. We are a communication

friendly space and both children and adults use Makaton on a daily basis as part of our daily routines.

Learning and Development

At Mawnan C of E VA Primary School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are interconnected.

Teaching and Learning Style

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 EYFS just as much as they do to the teaching in Key Stage 1 and 2. Features that relate to the EYFS 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, talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout 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, resilience, self-regulation 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 shared with parents;
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school;

Characteristics of Effective Learning and Play

“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, and learn

how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Active Learning

“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 to have 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.

Creativity and Critical Thinking

“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 opportunities to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children’s thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are given enough time to allow them to move them around the classroom to extend their learning and become deeply involved in high quality play.”

Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning, three of which are “Prime”, the others “Specific”:

PRIME

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- Self-Regulation
- Managing Self
- Building Relationships

Physical Development

- Gross Motor Skills
- Fine Motor Skills

Communication and Language

- Listening and Attention and Understanding
- Speaking

SPECIFIC

Literacy

- Comprehension
- Word Reading
- Writing

Mathematics

- Number
- Numerical Patterns

Understanding the World

- Past and Present
- People, Culture and Communities
- The Natural World

Expressive Arts and Design

- Creating with Materials
- Being imaginative and Expressive

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are all important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities. In each area there is guidance from Development Matters and Early Learning Goals (ELGs) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teacher to follow the principles stated in this policy.

There are two names Governors responsible for the EYFS one with a leading role. This governor will discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners regularly and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion.

The Head teacher and subject coordinators will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

Louise Wylie
November 2021

*For information about EYFS provision provided during COVID closures please refer to the Mawnan C of E VA Primary School Home Learning Policy.