



## Our Core Beliefs

- High Expectations
  - Integrity
  - Nurturing
- Always Learning
- Working Together
- Taking Responsibility – No Excuses

# Early Years Foundation Stage Policy – Including Teaching & Learning

# Moor Green Primary Academy - Our Core Beliefs

high expectations



always learning



nurturing



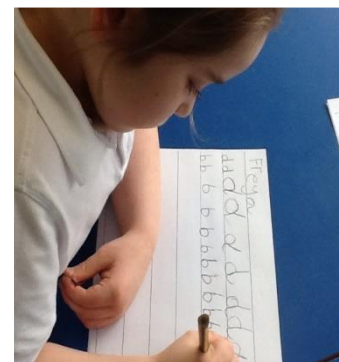
taking responsibility



working together



integrity



# Early Years - Our Curriculum

Our exceptional curriculum has been specifically designed to meet the needs of all children, regardless of their background, needs or circumstances. We provide children with a broad range of essential skills and knowledge enabling a solid foundation and transition into Key Stage One. We have a highly ambitious staff team who are both supportive and motivated in facilitating all our children to achieve the best possible outcomes. We put this into practice every day removing obstacles to learning and creating meaningful learning opportunities.

The Curriculum in Nursery and Reception is based on the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Curriculum (2021). This framework outlines the seven areas of learning and development which 'must be implemented through planned, purposeful play'. We are strong believers in following children's personal interests and learning through play with a balanced set of more structured lessons.

The framework is a means of ensuring high standards of early education and care that will reassure parents that their child's development is being fully supported. It underpins all future learning by supporting and fostering the children's personal, social and emotional wellbeing. It encourages positive attitudes and dispositions towards learning and promotes learning through play.

This framework does not prescribe a particular teaching approach. Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults.

Revised EYFS Framework 2021



The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework gives all professionals a set of common principles and commitments to deliver quality early education experiences to all children. The guiding principles within the statutory framework, drive the work we do in the Early Years.

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

## A Unique Child

At Moor Green Primary Academy, 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/sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

## Responsive Planning

“Babies and young children are experiencing and learning in the here and now, not storing up their questions until tomorrow or next week. It is in the moment of curiosity, puzzle, effort or interest- ‘the teachable moment’- that the skilful adult makes a difference. By using this cycle on a moment-by-moment basis, the adult will be always alert to individual children (observation), always thinking about what it tells us about the child's thinking (assessment) and always ready to respond by using appropriate strategies at the right moment to support children's well-being and learning (planning for the next moment)” **From National Standards document - Learning, Playing and Interacting P.22-23**



When practitioners interact with a child, they are observing, assessing, planning for, and responding to, that individual child. By setting up an enabling environment and through carefully planned curriculum maps, we have outlined the skills and aspects of our EYFS curriculum across all physical areas and the pupil's learning for long term memory can be achieved through engagement, both indoors and outdoors. All Early Years practitioners monitor the progress of individual pupils on a daily basis and targeted intervention groups are organised half termly to ensure achievement and progress for all pupils. The knowledge, engagement and development of pupil's learning and next steps is organised through: weekly staff meetings, collective staff responsibility for recording key observations on the Tapestry app, regular RWI assessments for the effective delivery of daily phonics, reading and writing tasks, maths key groups and 'Focus Child' work. Six 'focus children' are chosen weekly where these pupils' work and interests see a 'deep dive' and become high status for the week's planning.

Staff also complete a 'responsive planning' sheet. Staff meet to talk about any important themes and interests observed during the week. This may be an interest in environmental print or that pupils responded well to a shape hunt and continued this in their play. Staff then list the ways in which this can be developed through the week (short term planning) and what resources or alterations to the environment are needed to enhance our provision.

**We work in this way because ...** high level involvement occurs in child-initiated activity. When children show high levels of involvement, this is when maximum progress and development occurs - when the brain is at its most active and engaged. High level involvement occurs most often when children are able to pursue their own interests in an enabling environment, supported by skilful staff. Our 'responsive planning' approach helps to make this possible.



## An Enabling Environment

The Early Years environment supports children to be fully engaged in purposeful play of their own choice and interest. Both the indoor and outdoor areas allow for learning in all areas of development, but the two areas do not mirror each other. Indoors is the ideal place for children to be calm and quiet (and we enforce this requirement firmly and consistently), pursuing activities which require small equipment and using resources that will not survive the outdoor elements. In the EYFS classes, the children choose where to go and what to do from the moment they arrive – they initiate their own learning and adults join them and support them in their pursuits. In order to support genuine choice, we have a **workshop style environment** set up in classes. In all areas, the resources are available and accessible to the children at all times, but nothing is set out. **The areas are clear, stocked and tidy at the start of the day:** the tables and carpet areas are free of equipment, but the resources are available next to these areas. For example, a unit may contain a box of playdough and resources to be used with the playdough. It is placed near a table and the children can choose whether or not to go to this area and what to do if they do go there. This allows **the children to be in control of their learning**. The choice of resources stocked in the area is made to support the areas of learning in the curriculum, include differing levels of challenge and most areas are cross curricular. Children are able to select the area in which to play, the resources to use in that area and what to do with them. Obviously, their choices are limited by the areas and resources available, and it is therefore crucial to have appropriate areas with varied, high quality, open-ended resources. It is also vital that the areas are well stocked, tidy, clearly labelled (with picture and word) or shadowed and arranged to allow optimum access. Because the children select and access resources themselves, they know where they are from and they know where to put them back when they have finished using them or at the end of the session.

We constantly review and reflect on the environment to see which areas are proving productive and which need altering. For example, although we have opportunities for mixing sand and water outside, we want the indoor sand to be dry to offer different opportunities. Therefore, it is necessary to keep water away from the sand tray. We support children's developing schema through the planning of the environment by offering opportunities for purposeful exploration of their schema such as transporting or trajectory. The resources (as well as the areas) are assessed and reviewed constantly with changes made as necessary. We combine the creative area and the 'writing' area. Young children combine their different types of mark-making– they make a card and write a message; they draw a picture and write a story; they create a robot and add labelled controls. In many cases, they need creative equipment **and** writing implements, so we store them all in one area, as well as providing mark-making equipment in all areas. Children also experience maths in almost all areas of the indoor classroom, and we ensure that there is equipment in all areas to facilitate this.



We review our provision in terms of levels of involvement. If an area or a resource is not engaging children in purposeful play, then we remove it or change it. For example, threading beads might engage a few children, but sewing/attaching fabrics to make a real bag will be far more engaging and lead to higher levels of learning. Areas that deliver the highest levels of involvement are the role play areas, creative area including woodwork, construction, sand, water, playdough and small world equipment (including cars and dinosaurs). With regard to role-play, we ensure that there is always a “home corner” (either indoors or outside) as this is what is familiar to the children and this is where they can practise being the adults that they know, and in doing so, develop the vital life skill of empathy. Other role-play is set up as and when an interest emerges.



We have iPads and interactive white boards readily available to support and record the children’s learning. We ensure that our book areas are as inviting as possible by having a smaller amount of books available, that may have been organised by topics chosen by the children with labels to help them choose and return books. We have soft furnishings, puppets and props in our library corner to engage children in early reading. We also have books in numerous areas of the indoor classroom: craft books in the creative area, cookery books in the role play, construction and reference books in the small world area.



Spaces are designed to allow children room to collaborate in their learning but also provide ‘nooks’ and quiet spaces to suit all learning styles as reflected in The Communication Friendly Spaces™ approach. A guide to visual expectations for staff creating displays/ role plays etc. is included as an appendix to this policy which has been created using the Clever Classrooms report (University Salford Manchester, 2015) and ECERs.





As mentioned, an enabling environment is critical. ***When the children arrive, nothing is set out, but everything is available and accessible.*** From day one, the children are supported to explore the environment to see what is available, to select the resources they would like, to use them appropriately and to tidy the area when they have finished. Tidy up time is very short as most areas have been tidied during the session and because the children have got the resources out themselves, they know where to return them. The induction period is always critical, even more so when the children have so much autonomy and choice. Small groups with high ratios of adults are the ideal, and part time attendance in the first two weeks can ensure that the routines and expectations are established efficiently. Ground rules are essential when so much freedom is given as all the children need to feel safe. Clear and consistent expectations are key. For example, the children will walk and use quieter voices indoors and running and shouting can be done outside.

## Outdoors

In the EYFS we believe very strongly in learning outdoors. Our outdoor areas are designed to support all areas of a child's development. The sand area is large and is surrounded by shelving and baskets stocked with resources. The resources available are traditional sand toys, as well as natural shells, sticks, stones, etc and cooking utensils, plates, cups, cutlery etc. to support a variety of play ideas. A water supply is essential, this allows for pretend cooking, chemistry, cement mixing, moat filling or alchemy! We have access to the large playground area where children can really develop their gross motor skills. Activities outdoors, also, involve children being independent in their choices of outdoor learning and activities range from planting & gardening, mud kitchen, bug-hunting, role-play, singing/dancing on the stage, woodwork with adult-sized hammers and saws, riding bikes/scooters and many more athletic type games. There are opportunities for risk, so again, the crucial induction period ensures that the children know how to use equipment appropriately and they are encouraged to evaluate risks themselves.

We also take our children for regular visits to the farm; the adventure playground and they participate in regular Forest School sessions.



In summary, any area or resource is evaluated by assessing the levels of involvement that the children display. Children display the highest levels of involvement when they are pursuing their own interests in an environment that allows them to take risks and challenge themselves in their endeavours. The physical

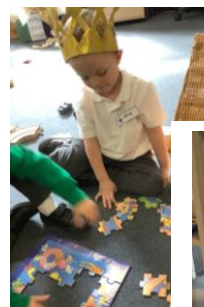
environment needs to be well laid out and equipped with high quality, open-ended, varied resources. The adults are key in creating the emotional environment that supports them in this – ensuring that they feel confident and independent, ready to try new things in the knowledge that the adults will help them if necessary but without taking over. Pupils are taught to access areas independently such as using the cooking area (in line with the risk assessment) without adult support to bake cakes or make their own playdough.

## Learning and Development

At Moor Green Primary Academy School we support children in using the three ‘characteristics of effective teaching and learning’ (EYFS Foundation Stage Framework 2021)

These 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 develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things



### A typical day

Each day begins with pupils using name writing templates with an emphasis on handwriting and then children move on to completing a writing or maths task on whiteboards for their early morning work. Read Write Inc (RWI) daily phonics sessions take place, with the length of the session dependant on the needs of the group. Phonic groups are set based on the children’s phonic knowledge and reading ability. At the end of phonics, pupils move into free flow (continuous provision) where they make their own learning choices. About 20 minutes before the end of the session, the children tidy up. This is a purposeful time which includes teachable moments eg. sorting and counting opportunities. After lunchtime, children come together for maths groups. At Moor Green, we follow ‘White Rose Maths’ which is a structural programme which offers clear progression in the skills learnt. Children develop and enhance their early maths skills by regularly revisiting taught mathematical concepts in the environment and our sequenced planning ensures that skills are built upon.



We also carry out daily focus child work and take groups of children to our Calm Corner which includes sharing specific books with a PSED (personal, social and emotional development) focus and our ‘Mindfulness & Yoga sessions’. This enables children to develop their emotional literacy, helping children to self-regulate, to stay calm in tricky situations, to relax and to stay present and to learn vocabulary to articulate their feelings. Likewise, Yoga supports development of core strength, balance, focus and attention.

### Focus children

As mentioned earlier, three children from each class are selected to be “focus children” for the week. These children are given a form to take home for their parents to complete, asking about current interests of the child, any special events in the family and any questions the parents may have. During the week any adult who has a productive interaction with a focus child records the event on that child’s learning journey on Tapestry. So, “What about all the other children?” They too are pursuing their own learning, in the same environment, supported by the same adults. The ‘Focus child’ does not work 1:1 with the adult through the



whole session. They lead the learning by sharing their starting point and the focus child will usually work among a larger group depending on the activity. An example would be a focus child sharing an interest in animals and a group working with them to design and build a zoo and to create signs to show what animals are there. The group may move on to finding books related to animals in the library or drawing animals in the school farm. These activities are skilfully guided by staff who have already identified 'gaps' in the focus child's learning by looking back at Tapestry and talking to the wider team and they may identify other children who would benefit from the same interventions and invite them to join the session.

## Curriculum Maps

Our curriculum maps (which are available on our website) are coherently planned and sequenced to ensure that children acquire the essential skills and knowledge in all areas of the EYFS curriculum, to benefit from meaningful learning - these skills clearly progress from nursery to reception, then reception to year 1 and beyond - children are continually building on what they know.

**Nursery Curriculum Map - Summer 2024**

The Curriculum in Nursery and Reception is based on the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum. This describes the seven areas of learning and development which must be implemented through planned, purposeful play. The EYFS curriculum gives children a broad range of skills and knowledge which provides the right foundation for transition into Key Stage 1 and beyond.

**Communication and Language**

- To enjoy conversations with friends, taking it in turns to listen & respond.
- To talk about their feelings and express their point of view in one-to-one situations and small groups.
- To continue to understand and follow two-part instructions in daily routines.
- To continue to join in with favourite rhymes, enjoy listening to familiar stories and to join in with repeated refrains.

**Literacy**

**Core book texts**

- To continue to explore core books over a 12-week period.
- To continue to make predictions, summarise and sequence the story.
- To continue to learn new vocabulary and make links in our writing & link to non-fiction texts.

**Summer 1 (Literacy)** 'Once Upon a Jungle', 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar'

**Summer 2 (Literacy)** 'We're going on a bear hunt!', 'The Train Ride', 'Down by the Station', 'Sand between my feet', 'Hand's upside'

**Phonics RWI**

Throughout daily 'explore and learn' sessions children take part in direct instruction for phonic games, beginning to identify words starting with the same initial sound. Each week, we have 15 min sessions to directly teach letter sounds and oral blending.

**Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

- To continue to talk about their own and others' feelings and emotions.
- To take turns and take account of one another's ideas and negotiate solutions to conflicts in their play.
- To continue to develop confidence in social situations - such as sharing their home photos/acting out a story.
- To be increasingly independent in meeting their own care needs (brushing their teeth, using the toilet, washing and drying their hands).

**Mathematics**

- To recap numbers 0-6 (ten tower) and the composition (ways to make the total) of them.
- Say one number for each item to 10 (pointing to each item carefully as we count).
- Look at different ways of representations of number to 5 for example: 1 2 3 4 5
- Find one more/one less up to 5
- Recognise objects quickly without counting (subitising) and show finger numbers up to 5.
- Make comparisons between quantities (more/fewer) and objects relating to size, length, weight and capacity - tall/short, big/small, heavy/light, full/empty.
- Name common 2D and 3D shapes and use them purposefully to build.
- Understand and use positional and directional language (in, under, on top, forward, backward) - directing the bee-hat.

**Understanding the World**

- To explore the natural world around them and describe what they can see, hear, and feel - changes in seasons (making kites and discussing the force of the wind)
- To talk about and recognise the need to respect and care for the natural environment and living things - planting a seed, caterpillar life-cycles
- To show an interest in different occupations
- To engage in role play (baby class/travel agents)
- To know that there are different countries in the world and discuss the differences which they have experienced or seen in photos

**Physical Development**

- To safely move around the environment, adapting their speed where necessary.
- To climb confidently on apparatus.
- To enjoy throwing and catching balls and balancing on bikes and scooters.
- To skip, hop, stand on one leg, and hold a pose for a game like musical statues.
- To become more confident to take off and put on their own coat and try to zip it up.
- To practise holding writing equipment with a comfortable grip, showing preference for a dominant hand.
- To use one-handed tools and equipment such as making strips in paper with scissors.

**Home Learning**

Parents can support their child at home with their learning:

- To read to their child daily
- To encourage independence with dressing and using the toilet
- To count together everyday
- To teach their children how to tidy up and look after their property
- To ask their children about their day to support their communication and listening skills and increase their vocabulary, reminding and praising kind interactions with other children including sharing.

**Expressive Arts and Design**

- Draw and paint with increasing detail - such as representing a face with a circle including details - Self-portraits, observational daffodil painting in the style of artist Seurat
- To enjoy singing familiar songs and create their own - exploring and playing with words when creating their own songs.
- To continue to express feelings and ideas by playing a variety of instruments.
- To play with purpose and create stories with small world toys, sometimes using objects to represent something else.
- To use their imagination to build complex 'small worlds' with blocks and construction toys
- To create models using recycled boxes and learn to use simple joining techniques with tools such as scissors, tape, and glue

**Key Events**

- Farm visits
- Sports day
- Learning Library/ Main Library/ Story cafe.

## Reading

Pupils begin their phonic learning as soon as they join us in Reception. Children learn the sounds of the alphabet in their systematic 'Read Write Inc' phonic lessons, and they eventually learn to read aloud simple sentences and books using their phonic knowledge. Through teaching a variety of comprehension skills, pupils demonstrate understanding of what has been read and can anticipate key events in stories. Highly effective teaching of phonics and 1-1 interventions for targeted children, helps prepare ALL pupils to become confident and fluent readers. Children learn to form letters correctly, spell words by identifying sounds and begin to write captions and sentences. A parent meeting is held in school in the Autumn Term to explain in detail about how we teach children to read and how parents can support their child at home.

All children in the EYFS are encouraged to enjoy and share books with each other, individually and with an adult. We have carefully selected 'core' books each term to match with children's interests and also their stages of development e.g 'Barbara Throws a Wobbler' and 'The Colour Monster' link with 'feelings' so we read these repeatedly in the first half term as they link strongly to PSED (personal, social and emotional development). These quality texts develop children's listening skills, vocabulary, love for reading and comprehension skills.



## Inclusion

Our EYFS curriculum is ambitious for ALL pupils, regardless of backgrounds or needs. We value the diversity of individuals within our school and do not discriminate against any child because of 'differences'. At Moor Green Primary Academy, all children and their families are treated fairly, regardless of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school. Children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and our planning and teaching is adapted to meet the needs and abilities of all children.

In our EYFS, we set realistic and challenging expectations to meet the needs of all our children. We meet the needs of 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 providing targeted interventions for any child who struggles in a particular area eg. Communication and language, speech and language, phonics, maths, fine motor skills – to support them to keep up with their peers.

## Special Educational Needs

Assessments take into account contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential special educational needs is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage and the school's Inclusion Leader is called upon for further information and advice, and appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the school's Inclusion policy for SEN.

## Equal Opportunities

All members of the school are treated as individuals. We aim to meet the needs of all, taking account of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, special educational needs, disability, and social circumstances. All staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect cultural diversity and the need to prepare pupils for life in a diverse and multi-faith society.

## British Values

British Values are an integral part of teaching in Early Years:

- Democracy - making decisions together
- Rule of law - understanding rules matter
- Individual liberty - freedom for all
- Mutual respect and tolerance - treat others as you want to be treated

These values are not only threaded through everything we do but also through our weekly 'Philosophy for Children' sessions.

## Assessment

Assessment in Nursery and Reception is carried out in line with the 'Early Years Foundation Stage' and staff observe the children to create a 'learning journey' which evidences the child's progress through the Foundation Stage. Staff have professional discussions about pupil's learning and development and respond to this with activities, resources and events. This is in line with the 2021 revised EYFS Framework:

1.7 The level of development children should be expected to have attained by the end of the EYFS is defined by the early learning goals (ELGs) as set out below.

1.8 The ELGs should not be used as a curriculum or in any way to limit the wide variety of rich experiences that are crucial to child development, from being read to frequently to playing with friends.

1.9 Instead, the ELGs should support teachers to make a holistic, best-fit judgement about a child's development, and their readiness for year 1.

1.10 When forming a judgement about whether an individual child is at the expected level of development, teachers should draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgement. This is sufficient evidence to assess a child's individual level of development in relation to each of the ELGs. Sources of written or photographic evidence are not required, and teachers are not required to record evidence.

Early Years Framework (2021)

## Transition

Recent research from Bath University shows that children's levels of the stress hormone cortisol, increase significantly during the transition to school (Turner-Cobb 2005) and these increased levels can affect attention and brain function, particularly for vulnerable children (Balbernie 2007). Key protective factors, which ensure children's well-being in the learning environment, were identified in 2001 by Hartley-Brewer for the Institute for Public Policy Research. They are security, which includes feeling physically and emotionally safe, significance, which is perceived by feeling special to someone, and connection, which is achieved through being and feeling accepted. The National Strategies SEAD (Social and Emotional Aspects of Development) Guidance makes it clear that good social and emotional development has a huge impact on later well-being, learning, achievement and that fostering this development is vitally important during transition into an early years setting.

**Communication Friendly Spaces™ and Transition in the Early Years ©ELIZABETH JARMAN®**

## From Nursery/Pre-school settings

During the summer term prior to a child's entry into the Reception year, the following procedures are put into place to ensure successful transition:



- Parents are invited to meetings to ensure they know about school procedures and express any concerns they may want to clarify.
- The children are invited to visit their reception class for Stay and Play sessions.
- Members of staff from Moor Green Primary Academy make visits to pre-school settings and carry out home visits.
- Reception children will have a phased start, over one/two weeks.
- Children requiring extra support will have additional visits as appropriate and be given further settling in time.

## From Reception Class to Key Stage 1

During the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. To ensure a smooth transition, teachers from Year 1 visit their new classes during the summer term and Reception children also visit their new year one classes. Additionally, reception teachers visit Nursery at the end of Summer term.

Each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals. The profile indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are exceeding expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This informs the dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1.

## Positive Relationships

### Practitioners



Sir Michael Wilshaw says:  
 "Early years provision is only as good as the quality of interaction between adults and children."

At Moor Green Primary Academy, we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. Our aim is to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families. All of our EYFS staff team are trained to develop good relationships with children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. The practitioners within the EYFS have a role as a 'keyworker' to a group of specific children developing a closer bond and awareness of those children and their individual character and needs.

The most valuable resource in any setting is the group of adults. The adults are there to teach - they do this though observing and interacting. We ensure that our adults receive training so that they can spot a 'teachable moment' while the children are engaged, they know the children very well and have a sound understanding of child development. This ensures that the adults enhance and extend the learning at the appropriate level for each unique child. Generally, the adults go to the children. The children become involved in activities of their choice. The adults observe the children carefully, join them, when appropriate, and engage in quality interactions (teaching) to move the learning on, they **"teach" through modelling, suggesting, providing vocabulary or resources, explaining or encouraging**. In this way, if a child encounters a challenge, then they will not give up – rather, they will be supported to persevere, overcome the challenge and move forward in their learning.

Quality interactions lead to progress. We use Tapestry online journals to record and store incidental and extended observations. These may be from adult-led situations if a child demonstrates a new skill or understanding of a concept but they are generally from child-led work as they are demonstrating behaviour that is typical and embedded rather than a 'one off' or a response to a teacher's question. Parent voice is recorded on Tapestry by parents' additions to the online journal, which staff can respond to and incorporate in work going on in class. Pupil voice is strong as we work from their interests, which also means we are involved in ongoing assessment for learning.

1.14 This framework does not prescribe a particular teaching approach. Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. Practitioners need to decide what they want children in their setting to learn, and the most effective ways to teach it. Practitioners must stimulate children's interests, responding to each child's emerging needs and guiding their development through warm, positive interactions coupled with secure routines for play and learning. As children grow older and move into the reception year, there should be a greater focus on teaching the essential skills and knowledge in the specific areas of learning. This will help children to prepare for year 1. (Revised EYFS 2021)

## Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make to our school. We recognise the 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
- visiting all new children in their home setting prior to them starting school
- providing the children with the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during stay and play sessions
- inviting parents and children to sample a school meal before starting Reception
- supporting children through the transition from Nursery to Reception by giving children the opportunity to visit the reception environment before starting school. This is also to support staff and parents in getting to know each other as well as the children
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts Reception
- ensuring all parents know their child's teacher, teaching assistant and their key worker
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns
- inviting parents to a formal meeting each term to discuss the child's progress and attainment
- providing parents with a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year

- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: stay and play sessions, school visits, learning library, x-mas production, parent workshops: C&L; Reading; Phonics; Healthy eating; Tapestry support.

## **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*

At Moor Green Primary Academy, 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 such boundaries 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 Policy)

We understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage. We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare and safeguarding 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, through CRB/DBS checks
- 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
- Having trained Designated Senior Persons (DSP) in school, with recognised procedures in place

## **Monitoring and Review**

It is the responsibility of those working in Reception to follow the principles stated in this policy. There is a named governor responsible for the EYFS. The Head Teacher, SLT and Early Years lead will carry out monitoring of the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

**Policy reviewed in September 2023.**

**To be reviewed in July 2024.**



## Appendix 1

### **Communication Friendly Spaces™ and Transition in the Early Years**

The Communication Friendly Spaces™ (CFS™) Approach helps to create effective learning environments for children, young people and adults. This guidance paper is one in a series about the way that the environment can affect behaviour, communication, emotional well-being and general engagement. Getting the environment right for learners contributes to their overall achievement.

#### **Why is transition so important?**

Transition is the process that children and adults go through when changes occur in their lives. Even when the change is desirable, transition can be a very unsettling time because it is not just about new beginnings, which can feel very exciting, but also about endings which can feel extremely worrying. During times of transition feelings of loss, fear and anxiety can accompany the positive feelings of excitement and anticipation. For young children especially, unless transition is understood and sensitively managed, transferring to a new nursery, school or other situation can be a very difficult experience. (Centre for Community Child Health 2008) Recent research from Bath University shows that children's levels of the stress hormone cortisol, increase significantly during the transition to school (Turner-Cobb 2005) and these increased levels can affect attention and brain function, particularly for vulnerable children (Balbernie 2007). Key protective factors, which ensure children's well-being in the learning environment, were identified in 2001 by Hartley-Brewer for the Institute for Public Policy Research. They are security, which includes feeling physically and emotionally safe, significance, which is perceived by feeling special to someone, and connection, which is achieved through being and feeling accepted. The National Strategies SEAD (Social and Emotional Aspects of Development) Guidance makes it clear that good social and emotional development has a huge impact on later well-being, learning, achievement and that fostering this development is vitally important during transition into an early years setting.

#### **Creating the right environment for transition**

##### **EYFS - Enabling Environments**

When children's physical and emotional needs are met they are more likely to take advantage of the play and learning opportunities on offer.

##### **EYFS – Enabling Environments**

Children's social, emotional and educational needs are central to any transition between one setting and another or within one setting.

##### **EYFS - Learning and Development**

To be mentally or physically engaged in learning, children need to feel at ease, secure and confident. Environments which are designed to support children and families during times of transition will enable communication, emotional well-being and general engagement to happen and help transition to be a time of excitement and challenge rather than being difficult and stressful. The Bath University research emphasises the particular importance of providing environments where shy or quiet children are able to express themselves during transition to school. The SEAD Guidance document acknowledges that starting nursery or school is a stressful time for many children and that physical and emotional environments where children feel safe, cared for and relaxed and are with adults who are 'tuned in' to their individual needs is key to their well-being and development.

©ELIZABETH JARMAN® The Communication Friendly Spaces™ Approach helps the process of transition to be as smooth as possible for children and families by encouraging a calming, welcoming and stimulating environment to be created which takes account of children's preferred learning contexts. Using the approach will enable you to consider, through observation and reflection, how your environment is currently affecting children and their families and how it could be adapted to create the best possible space for transition to happen.

A good starting point is to have a look at the whole environment, both indoors and outdoors, which you are providing for children. Look at it from the child's perspective as well as the adult's - taking photographs and video footage can be very useful to get a real picture of the environment.

#### **Stop and think**

What do you notice about your environment?

What does it look like from the child's perspective?

What does it look like from an adult viewpoint?

### **Audit your environment:**

**When children and families are new to your setting, what does it look like and feel from their point of view?**

#### **EYFS – Positive Relationships**

Imagine what your setting seems like to a parent and their child when they first arrive. It may seem busy, friendly, noisy, lively, exciting and fun to you.

How might it seem to a five-year-old or an anxious parent?

#### **Is your entrance area welcoming?**

The entrance is usually the first experience of the setting for children and families. Large open spaces and high ceilings may not feel 'emotionally safe' for some children, and can make them feel exposed and unsure. Cramped spaces and corridors can feel very overwhelming when a lot of people are using them at the start of a session. How does movement flow in your reception area? Are there any spaces for children to 'watch from' before they go in? Think about how these spaces could be made more welcoming and homely by careful use of space, colour and resources.

#### **Is the environment full of resources, bright colours, posters and displays?**

Too many, or poorly stored and displayed resources and a very bright and colourful environment can be very overwhelming for both children and adults who might already be feeling anxious and unsure. A calmer environment can be created by careful choice of colours such as pastel shades of green and blue and more neutral colours. A small amount of intriguing and unusual resources could capture attention and interest more effectively. They could be chosen to reflect links with the home environment, thus reflecting family cultures.

#### **Are there different spaces that can be easily accessed, including outdoor spaces?**

We all have preferences about the kinds of spaces we like to be in, especially at times of stress. Children need to have spaces that help them feel secure and relaxed at times of transition.

#### **©ELIZABETH JARMAN® Are there soft, comfortable spaces, contained or private spaces?**

Children can feel gently nurtured in soft, comfortable spaces. Research from Harvard University has made strong links between softness and emotional independence for children. Spaces which provide physical containment can also provide the emotional containment which offers security and comfort. Being able to access somewhere small, perhaps contained and private, somewhere to observe from, can be very important for children, especially as they make the transition into a setting or school from home, or from one space to another within the setting. Have you got spaces like this which adults can also access with children or where they can talk to practitioners during the settling in process?

#### **EYFS – Enabling Environments**

Create an indoor environment which is re-assuring and comforting for all children

#### **EYFS – Enabling Environments**

Where possible link the indoor and outdoor environments so that children can move freely between them.

#### **EYFS – Enabling Environments**

Involve parents at transition times, valuing what they say and encouraging them to stay with their children while they settle in.

#### **Is the environment unduly noisy?**

Many children are extremely sensitive to noise and this can make them anxious when spending time in environments that are busy, frantic and loud. It can be helpful to create some quiet, calm spaces both inside and outside for children to use to make transition from one area to another or to withdraw to when they need to.

#### **Is lighting used to enhance the environment?**

Natural daylight has a calming, meditative effect and contributes to health and well-being. Muted light can be relaxing, cosy and safe and enables children to stay engaged in a comfortable environment.

#### **Stop and think**

What are your CFS™ priorities?

What three things could you change now to support transition?

Talk to parents/carers and children and other people who come into your setting and find out how they feel in the environment

Use their opinions, your reflections and observations to make informed changes that will ensure the best possible outcomes for the children you work with.

©ELIZABETH JARMAN® **References**

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## Appendix 2

### class design guide

The aims of this design guide are to maintain high quality, enabling environments based on the pedagogy of the department and research based practice:

- Keep windows clear- no displays on windows- we allow natural light in and children to see out.
- Areas should be 'homely' to support transition into school
- 
- Displays have a main heading in blue with cut out letters/ comic sans or sassoon primary infant
- Displays should aim to include the following:
  - Photos of our children engaged in the activity
  - A wide range of related vocab
  - Key questions (to support adults to extend learning)
  - Blue speech bubble of ELG related to that work
  - A child friendly/ simple poem related to the subject
  - A painting by a famous artist related to the theme (we encourage staff to link art into work to avoid over use of clip art or photos)
  - A 3D element if possible
  - Not everything must be laminated
  - Displays for children should be at child height
  - We don't use Sparklebox or Twinkl
- We do not staple into furniture- this is a hazard when staples do not come out properly and also destroys expensive furniture!
- We do not staple into plaster walls- blue tak
- Boards are backed in pale blue or wood effect paper
- Rooms are organised to make rooms within rooms
- Boxes should be labelled with a photo of the item and the word
- Items on shelves should have a 'shadow' where possible to support tidying
- Areas of the room should have relevant non-fiction books displayed
- Book corners/ boxes should not contain all books owned by the class (storage style) but a smaller range relevant to interests/ events (enabling research)
- All areas are for children to access with the exception of the filing cabinet and woodwork under supervision