

EYFS Policy



Marton Manor Primary School

*'Every pupil matters,
Every moment counts'*

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Marlon Manor Primary School and Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Rationale

The teachers, support staff and Governors of Marlon Manor Primary School are committed to providing high quality education in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives.

At Marlon Manor we greatly value the important role that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development, however we also believe early childhood is valid in its self, 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. The EYFS is for children from birth to five years of age. The final year of the EYFS is referred to as the reception year.

Values

Marlon Manor Primary School provides a safe, caring, happy and stimulating environment where our children are nurtured and feel secure and valued. We set high expectations and are committed to life long learning where every learner can succeed and achieve their dreams. Children deserve the best start in life and support to fulfil their potential. At Marlon Manor Primary, as early years' practitioners we aim to use a holistic pedagogical approach as we believe it is important to pay attention to children's physical, personal, social and emotional wellbeing as well as cognitive aspects of learning.

Our EYFS places great importance on developing the children's personal and social skills to ensure they are happy and confident learners. Communication and language is also at the centre of everything we do to ensure children can talk about their experiences and share their ideas. Children are provided with a wide range of activities and experiences in a safe, happy and caring environment that enables them to make progress in their development and learning. We provide opportunities for the children to meet and overcome challenges, make decisions and work co-operatively with each other and adults.

We aim to:

- Make our school open and welcoming and a central part of the local community
- *Ensure all children have their Human Rights met and respect the rights of others*
- Create a safe, environment where all are valued
- Actively promote healthy lifestyles
- Give all our children an excellent, enjoyable and rich curriculum
- Give our children a voice so that they can be part of their own learning
- Provide opportunities for them to aspire to their dreams

The Foundation Stage

The Foundation stage will begin the term after children have had their third birthday and ends at the end of the reception year, regardless of when the child's birthday falls. At Marlon Manor Primary School, children attend Nursery and they move into full time education when they begin Reception – in the September of the year in which they become five.

We have a limited number of 30 hour places for eligible nursery children the term after their third birthday.

Learning and Development

We follow the SoundsWrite synthetic phonics scheme in EYFS through to KS1.

All children in Nursery also follow the BLAST speech and language programme and those children which are identified as needing extra support access BLAST2 in Reception.

Curriculum Aims and Intent

In EYFS at Marton Manor Primary, we follow the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage' and have designed our own curriculum to support us in our work in Nursery and Reception. It sets out the seven areas of learning and development:

Prime areas

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

Specific areas

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

At Marton Manor, our delivery of the EYFS curriculum is based on a thematic book led approach and aims to provide a variety of opportunities for our children to develop as independent, resourceful, happy and positive learners. We want our children to have a desire to learn new things and challenge themselves each day. We work extremely hard with the children to develop their independent learning skills and their approach to challenge. We aim to create opportunities for children to communicate more easily through developing language and communication skills and specifically teaching vocabulary. Every child is recognised as a unique individual and we celebrate and welcome differences within our school community.

There are four guiding principles that shape practice in our EYFS. These are:

Unique Child – Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

Positive Relationships – Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.

Enabling Environments – Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners, parents and carers.

Learning and Development – Children develop and learn in different ways. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years' provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

Implementation – how we teach what we teach?

Our EYFS children learn through a balance of child-initiated and adult-directed activities. The timetable is carefully structured so that the Reception children have rigorous directed teaching in English, maths and phonics daily. We use questioning to encourage our children to query the world around them and through their own exploration they develop their independence, communication, creativity, and problem-solving skills.

Children are provided with plenty of time to engage in 'exploration' throughout the variety of experiences carefully planned to engage and challenge them in the provision. The curriculum is planned for the inside and outside classrooms and equal importance is given to learning in both areas. The curriculum is planned in a cross-curricular way to enable all aspects of the children's development including understanding the world and expressive arts and design, as well as to promote sustained thinking and active learning.

Planning is flexible to meet the needs and interests of our children. In order to ensure broad and balanced learning, practitioners plan adult-led targeted learning opportunities.

Our curriculum is the cultural capital we know our pupils need so that they can gain the knowledge, skills and understanding they require for success. They can only do that if we embed the right habits for learning through the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning – Play and Exploration, Active Learning and Creative and Critical Thinking.

Playing and exploring – Children investigate and experience things and are willing to 'have a go'

Active learning – Children try their best and persevere even when they face challenge

Creating and thinking critically – Children develop their own ideas both independently and in collaboration with others

Our learning environment is engaging and well organised; resources are clearly labelled and accessible. Enhancements are made based on the interests of the children, the class topic or the learning and development needs of the children. The provision areas are regularly assessed, and then adapted or changed to interest and excite the children.

Reading is at the heart of our curriculum and our aim is to encourage a love of reading right from the start. Our days and environment are book rich. We use high-quality texts to create an integrated approach to learning from which pupils can experience the full curriculum.

There is an emphasis on studying the key skills of number, calculation and shape so that pupils develop deep understanding of the concept of number and acquire the mathematical language needed to explain and develop their mathematical understanding. Our pupils learn through games and tasks using concrete manipulatives which are then rehearsed and applied to their own learning during exploration. Nursery pupils begin to develop these key skills during maths meetings where they explore sorting, quantities, shape, number and counting awareness. These early mathematical experiences are carefully designed to help our pupils remember the content they have been taught and to support them with integrating their new knowledge across the breadth of their experiences and into larger concepts.

Impact – how well do we know what pupils have learnt and how well they have learnt it?

Our curriculum needs to meet the needs of our children, including our disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND, so we spend time looking at and evaluating how children are learning. This is achieved through talking to children, looking at their work, observing their learning experiences and analysing data and progress by year group, class, groups and individuals. Every member of staff uses ongoing observational assessment to identify children's starting points and plan experiences which ensure progress. This information is recorded in learning journals, floor books and wall displays. We use this information on a weekly basis to plan learning experiences and next steps so that knowledge and skills are built cumulatively. There are 'checkpoints' to assess whether children are progressing at particular points throughout the academic year. This information is recorded on a tracking system.

With a system of focus children, a balance of child-initiated and adult directed activities and an engaging learning environment, our EYFS children are learning effectively all the time.

Learning through play

At Marton Manor, we do not make a distinction between work and play. We support children's learning through planned play activities, and decide when child-initiated or adult-led play activities would provide the most effective learning opportunities. We believe that it is important for adults to support children's learning through play, by getting involved in the play themselves.

Organisation

The Nursery/Reception children are taught by a qualified teacher and level 3 teaching assistants. The ratio in Nursery is a minimum of 1:13.

Nursery and Reception then use the outside area throughout the school day. The outside area is seen as an extension of the classroom and incorporates equipment and activities that both mirror and enhance the different areas found within the classroom. The children are encouraged to treat the area as they would the classroom. The area is used daily and is planned and organised by the EYFS staff.

Planning

Good planning is the key to making children's learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive. Effective learning builds on and extends what children know and can do. Our planning shows how the principles of the EYFS will be put into practice and is always informed by observations we have made of the children, in order to understand and consider their current interests, development and learning. All practitioners who work in EYFS at Marton Manor are involved in this process. There are three stages of planning the curriculum:

Long Term Planning

Our long term plans ensure coverage of the educational programmes and ensure a breadth of experiences, knowledge and skills throughout the year.

Medium Term Planning

We address particular aspects of the curriculum in more detail. We include links between areas of learning and development and opportunities for ICT. We identify activities and experiences for each area of learning and development and base them around a particular theme, which is usually quality text based. Thematic plans are shared with parents and children at the beginning of each half term. They are used to assess prior knowledge and understanding and to enable the children to have an input into the direction of the topic.

Short Term Planning

We identify specific learning objectives, activities, differentiation, deployment of adults and resources, to meet the learning needs of the children on a weekly and day-to-day basis. It allows for flexibility in response to individual children's needs and interests and for revision and modification, informed by on-going observational assessments. Activities, resources and experiences are planned in the areas which incorporate the characteristics of effective teaching and learning: playing and exploring, active learning and creativity and critical thinking. Our short-term plans are flexible to enable us to take advantage of spontaneous opportunities when they present themselves, and the changing interests of the children.

Assessment

At Marton Manor we believe in Assessment for Learning. Children are constantly supported to reflect on their own learning, to identify successes and those areas which can be enhanced further, as well as to provide peer review for their classmates, learning about tact and diplomacy in the process. Children are assessed on entry to Foundation Stage and their progress is tracked throughout their time in EYFS. There are 'checkpoints' to assess whether children are progressing at particular points throughout the academic year. This information is recorded on a tracking system. We analyse and review what we know about each child's development and learning, and then make informed decisions about the child's progress. This enables us to plan the next steps to meet their development needs.

At the end of the Foundation stage, children are assessed using the Foundation Stage profile which is a legal requirement. The children will not know they are being assessed as this takes place through observation, direct teaching and activities set up in the classroom and outdoor area. Assessment of this kind enables children's individual needs to be met and special educational needs that may occur. All staff who interact with children contribute to the assessments.

Formative assessment

This type of assessment informs everyday planning and is based on on-going observational assessment of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles. Formative assessment may take the form of observations, reception baseline assessments, other focused assessments e.g. sound/number, annotated examples of work, photographs, video and information from parents.

Reception Baseline Assessment

The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is a statutory assessment. It provides a snapshot of where pupils are when they arrive at school and will be completed within the first six weeks. It will provide a starting point to measure the progress schools make with their pupils between Reception and the end of primary school. The RBA is a short, interactive and practical assessment of children's early literacy, communication, language and mathematics skills.

Summative assessment

The EYFS Profile summarises all of the formative assessment undertaken and makes statements about the child's achievements against the 17 Early Learning Goals. It summarises children's progress towards the early learning goals. It is completed at the end of each term by the class teacher. The teacher also undertakes in-house and cluster group moderation.

Record keeping

In Reception, children have English and Maths books which have a record of both adult-led and independent tasks.

Practitioners also use floor books to record any experiences and events that happen in the provision that all children have engaged in. These are made up of pictures and adult led activities that the whole class

has contributed towards and are used to show curriculum coverage and enrichment. Later in Reception, these floor books are used to show the children's enquiry and they contribute towards the making of them.

Monitoring

Teaching and learning in communication, literacy and mathematical development is monitored by the English and mathematics leads termly in each class, through lesson observations, pupil interviews and whole school work sampling. Curriculum leaders of other subjects monitor the other aspects of the EYFS curriculum. The EYFS leader and SLT monitor teaching and learning across the Foundation Stage each year and analyses the EYFS Profile data in conjunction with the Head Teacher.

The Learning Environment

"A rich and varied environment supports children's learning and development. It gives them the confidence to explore and learn in secure and safe, yet challenging, indoor and outdoor spaces."
(Early Years Foundation Stage -Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2012)

We aim to create an attractive, welcoming and stimulating learning environment which will encourage children to explore, investigate and learn through first-hand experience. We also aim to make it a place where children feel secure and confident and are challenged to develop their independence. Activities are planned for both the inside and outside; children have the freedom to move between the areas throughout the school day.

The learning environment is divided into a variety of different areas including role play, book corner, writing zone (moveable), maths area/loose parts, investigation station, listening centre, ICT, creative, malleable, funky fingers, phonics, sand, water, outside, painting, construction, small world and puzzles. These areas are carefully arranged to encourage quiet areas and more active areas within the learning environment. Children are encouraged to become independent learners and to take some responsibility for initiating their own lines of enquiry and investigation.

Transition

Preparation for EYFS

At Marton Manor, we want all our children and their parents to have a happy and supported transition into Nursery. We have close links with the local pre-school providers. SLT oversees our Nursery and liaises closely with the class teacher during the period prior to the child entering Reception. We recognise the importance of the role of parents and the significant influence that they have already played in the early education of their child. We aim to build strong links in order to benefit and enhance the development and wellbeing of every child. During the weeks prior to their child starting Nursery, parents and children are involved in a range of activities.

Nursery Visit

New children come to visit nursery with their parent/carer. This happens after nursery closes so that the child can explore the environment independently. Parents will complete a questionnaire with staff, staff will give a start date during this visit.

The child then comes for a visit to the Nursery during a session and stays without a parent for an hour.

Transition from Nursery to Reception

This is usually seamless, as children in EYFS are used to working in both areas.

Before transition, a meeting is arranged with parents for them to meet staff, to share information outlining the reception curriculum and to enable them to understand the value of supporting their child at home.

Discussion points include:

- Classroom routines
- The structure of the school day

- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- Drop off and collection of children
- Reading/phonics
- School uniform
- School dinners
- Behaviour
- Rewards and sanctions
- Our open-door policy
- School Nurse

At this event, parents and children are also encouraged to stay for lunch.

Transition meetings are held between teachers to discuss children's progress, special needs or interventions.

Transition between Reception and Year 1

This is carefully managed by staff from both classes. During transition week the Y1 teacher visits the children in Reception to build up a relationship with them. He/she will then read a story and/or teach a lesson so that the children get used to a different adult. Children will then have a series of short visits to the new classroom to work with the new teacher before the end of the Summer Term.

Parents as partners

We actively promote the partnership between families and professionals within the school setting and local area. We believe this helps the children to develop a positive image of themselves as confident, competent individuals and learners. Good parenting and high-quality early teaching and learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. We communicate with parents in different ways to provide many opportunities for parents to work in partnership with school:

- Informal end of day chats
- Half termly newsletters to parents
- Dojo messages
- Termly parent events e.g. craft mornings, stay and play, science days, teddy bears' picnics
- Termly parents' evenings
- Support meetings – reading at home, maths at home.
- Facebook and school website used to show events and activities (with permission)
- Weekly Head Teachers Awards

Work with other agencies

EYFS staff work closely with a range of other agencies, these include:

- Speech and language therapists
- Physiotherapists
- Health visitors

Safeguarding and Behaviour

Behaviour and Safety

Positive behaviour is expected and encouraged in the Foundation Stage as within the rest of school. We operate reward systems (Dojos) and praise good behaviour and attitudes. Age-appropriate strategies are used to develop a safe and secure environment for learning. We use a whole school behaviour policy and approach to discourage disruptive, disrespectful, unsafe or unkind behaviours. The children are encouraged and praised for following the school rules: Be ready, Be respectful and Be safe.

Health and Safety

All safety measures are taken to ensure the safety of all children in the Foundation Stage. Special locks are installed on the gates and doors. We follow the school's 'Health and Safety' policy which all staff and students are familiar with. Within the Early Years Department the majority of staff are trained in paediatric First Aid. Children are taught the safe and appropriate use of equipment and materials. Children are taught to be mindful when moving around the school and are aware of safety issues. A full health and safety policy is available in school. All medicines are kept in a locked cupboard at the school office or in

the classroom if required and approved by parents/carers before administration of any medicines. No hazardous substances are used within the setting. No mobile phones are allowed in classrooms.

Safeguarding Children

The school takes its child protection responsibilities very seriously. Any concerns, which the school has, will be noted on the CPOMs system and, if deemed necessary, will be reported to the relevant designated person within school. The safety of the child is always of paramount importance. The full Safeguarding Policy is available in the school for parents to read if they wish. All staff follow the schools Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

Equal Opportunities

At Marton Manor, we aim to provide all pupils, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability, equal access to all aspects of school life and work to ensure that every child is valued fully as an individual. Practitioners, as role models, are aware of the influence of adults in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical ideas. Teachers and all school staff adhere to our Equality and Diversity Policy and all teaching staff underwent LGBTQ+ awareness training in May/June 2024.

Inclusion

Care is taken to assess the needs of each child from nursery age onwards. Group and individual help are provided within the school where possible. We have links with various agencies and when necessary, their involvement may be required to support certain children. Parents/carers are always contacted to seek their approval before an outside agency is approached for assistance/support for their child.

Provision plans identify targets in specific areas of learning for those children who require additional support, in line with the school's Special Educational Needs Policy. The Class Teacher would discuss these targets with the child and his/her parents/carers. Progress is monitored and reviewed every term. The school's SEN co-ordinator is responsible for providing additional information and advice to practitioners and parents, and for arranging external intervention and support where necessary. Further details are included in the Special Needs policy.

Monitoring and Review

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored and evaluated by the Headteacher/SLT and will be reviewed on an annual basis.