

Millbrook C.P School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

INTENT

Curriculum Vision

At Millbrook we believe every child deserves the best possible start in life. A child's experiences between birth and age 5 have a major impact on their future life chances. Together with parents and the local community, our aim is to provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents no matter what their starting points. We strive to enable all children to reach their full potential as they progress through our Early Years Foundation Stage.

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all teaching staff.

Aims

The aims of the EYFS curriculum at Millbrook are:

- To support all children to become independent and collaborative learners. We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential.
- To develop self-regulation skills and executive function in all children, key for successful learning.
- To provide a happy, safe, stimulating and challenging programme of learning and development for the children to experience as they begin their journey through school.
- To provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond and enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence.
- To use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress.
- To develop the skills of enquiry, investigation, analysis, evaluation and presentation.

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

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

The Curriculum

The EYFS framework sets the statutory standards for the development, learning and care of children from birth to age 5. The Early Years Foundation Stage will use the objectives set out in each Area of Learning. The prime areas are: Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Communication & Language and Physical Development. The four specific areas are: Literacy, Maths, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts & Design.

Four principles shape practice in our EYFS. These are:

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships
- 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 and parents and/or carers
- Children develop and learn in different ways

Planning is vital to ensure that children's learning is effective and that they are making the required progress towards the Early Learning Goals at the end of Reception.

By supporting the children's development by following their interests and providing a broad, balanced and stimulating curriculum is crucial. A good balance between child-initiated and adult-led activities is provided, ensuring our ethos of 'learning through play' is always maintained. At various times in our daily routine staff are able to have dedicated focussed groups to teach new concepts and assess learning needs.

IMPLEMENTATION

At Millbrook the whole of the curriculum will be taught by following the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) which sets standards for the learning, development and care of children from birth to 5 years old.

High Quality Teaching and Learning

Effective learning builds and extends upon prior learning and following children's interests. Effective planning and teaching is informed by observations of the children to ensure we follow their current interests, as well as identifying areas outside of their experience that will ignite their curiosity and enthusiasm. In this way enhancements to our Continuous Provision are identified and added as appropriate.

Play based learning and teaching is paramount and children direct their own learning from a range of open-ended opportunities provided by staff. Staff will enhance play and extend as needed to challenge and support individual learning for all children. Our skilful practitioners use a variety of strategies to support learning. These include direct instruction, guided interaction, participating in play and asking open ended questions. Adults make use of opportunities to stimulate, scaffold, reinforce, problem solve, think creatively and extend learning.

At Millbrook we understand that children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. We are committed to applying the EYFS framework in our setting to ensure it covers the education and care of all children in our provision, including children with SEND.

Learning Environment

At Millbrook we know that children learn and develop well in enabling environments. Our aim is to create such an environment, both physical and emotional, in which children's experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents/carers. An enabling environment is one that provides support for children to take risks and explore; we encourage our children to learn to do this responsibly, by observing, recognising what children are aiming to do, standing back to allow them to work things out for themselves and when necessary, supporting verbally or with resources. We strive to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident, secure and challenged. Children's work and achievements will be celebrated through displays.

Literacy - Oracy and Vocabulary

Many of our children begin with delayed communication and language. Our aim is to provide a rich and varied environment that supports children's language learning. Time is invested early on reading aloud, singing, reciting nursery rhymes and talking to children as much as possible as well as listening to what they have to tell us. Language and literacy skills have a huge impact on a child's outcomes. Research shows that there is a significant gap between children with good and poor language skills when they begin school. It is a vital part of our role in the EYFS that language skills are promoted to address this gap. We are an ICAN accredited setting. We are also a Voice 21 Hub School and work in partnership with Voice 21 Knowsley. Vocabulary is developed through 'Chatty Words'. All children are assessed on WELLCOMM and next steps planned for. 'Tales Toolkit' is embedded in our curriculum to develop oral and written story telling.

Reading

Enjoying books and reading stories from a very early age is crucial in the development of a positive attitude to reading for all children. It helps with their ability to understand words, use their imagination and develop their speech, as well as being something they really enjoy.

Staff and parents play a huge part in the development of reading skills in young children.

The ability to read is embedded throughout the curriculum through the use of Read, Write, Inc. phonics and the children are given many opportunities to develop their understanding through a rich and diverse programme of learning. Children are taught to read at an early age and they are given the opportunity to develop their reading skills in all subject areas. Children are assessed every 6 - 8 weeks and placed in RWI groups matched to their phonic ability. Home reading books that are matched to their phonic ability are also sent home.

Progress

To ensure that progress is made for all children the staff consistently build on the children's prior learning to deepen their understanding and build confidence in their own ability. Transition visits are made prior to the children beginning in our Nursery to gain an insight into a child's starting points through discussions with parents/carers.

Development Matters (Non-statutory Curriculum Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage September 2020 (Revised July 2021) guides our professional judgement on how children learn and develop. This guidance helps us to meet the requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (March 2021). Development Matters sets out the pathways of children's development in broad ages and stages to help assess each child's level of development. Observation checkpoints are used to notice if a child is at risk of falling behind in their development. Children are assessed on-entry then tracked throughout their time in EYFS to ensure progress is taking place within all 7 Areas of Learning as well as in their characteristics of effective learning. Gaps in learning are identified and addressed. Moderation takes place internally and externally to validate judgements made.

Progress information is used to support transitions as children move into Reception or Year 1. At Millbrook school we have a mixed Reception/Year 1 class. This enables children who have not reached GLD at the end of Reception to access a play based curriculum. Skilled staff ensure a smooth and seamless transition from EYFS to National Curriculum.

Assessment

The purpose of monitoring and evaluation activities is to raise the overall quality of teaching and levels of pupil attainment. The EYFS Lead and the Head teacher will monitor the quality of teaching and learning within the EYFS through Learning Journey and book scrutiny, lesson observations and learning walks.

Through careful ongoing observation and assessment, including information provided by parents (on-entry and ongoing) and other settings (when children join our school), children's development stages are assessed. As far as possible, assessment of children's capabilities is done through observation of child- initiated activities i.e. what a child can do independently without support.

These observations are used to assess how children are achieving in line with age related expectations. Staff complete the Baseline Assessment within the first six weeks of starting school. At the end of the EYFS a child's achievements related to the seven areas of learning are recorded within the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile.

The primary uses of EYFSP data is to: inform the parents about their child's development against the ELGs and the characteristics of effective learning; support a smooth transition to Year 1 and to help Year 1 teachers plan a curriculum that will meet the needs of all children.

Inclusion/SEND

Staff at Millbrook are aware that every child, whatever their diverse learning needs, must be given the opportunity to achieve their full potential. We will respond to the needs of children whatever their ability. We will ensure that we provide learning opportunities that enable all children to make progress by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's needs. We believe in early intervention and staff work closely with the EYFS SENCO to quickly identify any concerns. The SENCO may refer a child to an outside agency for further support. Staff have high expectations for all children but we also ensure that able, gifted and talented pupils have opportunities provided that develop and apply their particular capabilities. We ensure that teaching and learning is accessible for all pupils including those with EAL. A child's home language is integral to a child's cultural and individual identity, and should be encouraged to be used and developed at home. Working closely with the child's parents/carers to ensure that the home language is not discarded will be key to ensuring for a partnership that successfully supports a child with EAL.

Impact

Resilient, inquisitive, confident, ambitious, challenged, empathetic, compassionate, respectful, reflective, thriving, articulate and knowledgeable are all adjectives which describe our intent and demonstrate the impact for children in our school.

CAROLYN LEWIS

EYFS Lead

July 2023

Date of Review July 2024