

**Meare Village Primary School**  
**Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

This policy should be taken as part of the overall strategy of the school and operated within the context of our vision, aims and values.

**Our aim**

At Meare Village Primary School we believe that all children matter and all children are equal and have the right to high quality education and care. We create a safe and happy environment in our school with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable our children to become confident and independent learners. We value each child as an individual and work alongside parents and carers to meet their needs and ensure the best opportunities for all children to reach their full potential.

"Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. A secure safe and happy childhood is important in its own right and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. When parents choose to use early years services they want to know the provision will keep their children safe and help them to thrive. The Early Years Foundation Stage is the framework that provides that assurance."

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of their reception year. In our school most children join us in the September after they have turned four and will therefore turn five during that academic year.

The EYFS is based on four founding principles;

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

**A Unique Child**

At Meare Village Primary School we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children whilst recognising that all children are competent learners who can be resilient, capable and confident. We also recognise that children develop and learn in different 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 and rewards to encourage children to develop a positive attitude towards learning. We encourage the children in our care towards having a 'growth mindset' and we openly value effort and resilience.

**Inclusion**

We value the diversity of all individuals within our school and do not discriminate against children, all are treated fairly, regardless of race, religion or ability. We give our children every opportunity to

do their best and achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning their learning opportunities. In the EYFS we set realistic yet challenging expectations that meet the needs of all our children, boys and girls, those with SEN and children from diverse social and cultural backgrounds. We meet the needs of our children through:

1. Planning opportunities that build on and extend the children's knowledge and life experiences and interests and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
2. Using a wide range of teaching strategies;
3. Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and engage children to help them learn effectively;
4. Providing a safe and supporting environment where all contributions are recognised and valued;
5. Using resources which reflect diversity and are free of discrimination and/or stereotyping;
6. Planning engaging and challenging activity for children whose understanding is in advance for their language and/or communication skills;
7. Monitoring children's progress and identifying early on those with additional needs and taking action to provide support and intervention as necessary.

### *Welfare*

At Meare Village 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 2008. We are required to:

1. Promote the welfare of our children;
2. Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill;
3. Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and their individual needs;
4. Ensure that all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so;
5. Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose;
6. Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs;
7. Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe, efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of our children.

### Positive Relationships

We recognise that children thrive and learn best when they are supported through positive relationships.

"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"

Therefore at Meare Village Primary School we always aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their parents/carers. All staff in the EYFS aim

to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively and taking time to listen to them. At our school the Reception class teacher acts as a 'key person' to all children in EYFS, supported by the support staff.

### *Parents as partners*

We recognise that parents are a child's first and most enduring educator and we value the contributions they make. We recognise and value the role parents have played and their future role in educating the children. We do this through:

1. Talking with parents and pre-school educators about the child before they start school;
2. Inviting the children and their parents to have the opportunity to spend time in the Reception classroom in the summer term before they start school in the September;
3. Inviting all parents to an induction meeting in the summer term before the children start school;
4. Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns at any time.

There is a formal meeting for parents to meet with their child's class teacher on the Autumn and Spring terms. Parents receive a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of Foundation Stage reporting their child's progress against the ELG's and assessment scales.

### Enabling Environments

At Meare Village Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Through observation we assess the children's interests, stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging, stimulating yet achievable activities and next steps for them.

### *Observation, Assessment and Planning*

The planning in the EYFS is based around termly whole school learning topics. These plans are used by the EYFS teacher as a guide for weekly planning, however the teacher may alter these in response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children.

We make regular assessment of the children's learning using both AFL and planned assessment and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation and this involves the teacher and support staff as appropriate.

### *The learning Environment*

The classroom is set up into different areas where children can be active, can explore or be quiet. These areas allow the children to explore independently, finding equipment and resources themselves. We have a small outdoor area with further opportunities to explore, using their senses and bodies to be physically active.

## *Areas of Learning*

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning:

1. Personal, Social and Emotional Development
  - Making relationships
  - Self-confidence and self-awareness
  - Managing feelings and behaviour
2. Communication and Language
  - Listening and attention
  - Understanding
  - Speaking
3. Literacy
  - Reading
  - Writing
4. Mathematics
  - Numbers
  - Shape, space and measure
5. Understanding the world
  - People and communities
  - The World
  - Technology
6. Physical Development
  - Moving and handling
  - Health and self-care
7. Expressive Arts and Design
  - Exploring and using media and materials
  - Being imaginative

We believe that none of these areas can be delivered in isolation, they are equally important and intertwined with each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities and the ELG's (Early Learning Goals) in each area define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

## Learning and Development

At Meare Village Primary School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and have their own learning styles. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are often linked.

## *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 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 and 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;
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment; 7
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations.

### *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 have the opportunity to practise skills, develop ideas and think creatively alongside other children as well as individually. The children communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They are enabled to express fears or re-live anxious experiences if needed, 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 satisfactions 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 opportunity 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 allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

### *Monitoring and Review*

It is the responsibility of the Foundation teacher to follow the principles stated in this policy. There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. This governor has the opportunity to discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion.