

Maidensbridge Primary School



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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September 2021	September 2022	Mrs Sarah Mason	7 th October 2021

Version 3

The Early Years Foundation Stage at Maidensbridge Primary School

This document provides an overview of the policy, philosophy and practice in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) at Maidensbridge. It outlines our intentions in the EYFS and how we implement this within our provision.

"The education of even a very small child does not aim for preparing him for school but for life."

Maria Montessori, 1967

EYFS Policy and Philosophy

At Maidensbridge, the Reception Team deliver an EYFS curriculum through immersion in high quality teaching alongside an enriched environment.

Our philosophy is to nurture every child's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, developing skills, knowledge and confidence as they take their first steps on their unique journey of lifelong learning.

Intent

The intent for our child is to enter the next stage of their education ready to embrace new challenges with confidence, resilience and a positive mindset.

Engage our pupils in a stimulating environment led by the children yet carefully organised and managed by adults. Providing a curriculum that is responsive to individual starting points and needs.

Innovate our children to take the lead in their own learning, encouraging confidence to explore new ideas, think about problems, take risks and seek challenge.

Develop high levels of engagement, curiosity, collaboration and co-operation. Highly adept at managing their own behaviour in the classroom and in social situations.

Express themselves with confidence in a meaningful way. Respecting the opinions and values of themselves and others.

Implementation

Our approach is influenced by the work of educationalists, researchers, psychologists and practitioners who have guided our knowledge of how children learn and how adults can support their learning.

"Knowledgeable practitioners appreciate that adult-led learning offers a child something different from, but complementary to, child led learning and it is one without the other that leads to an impoverished educational experience."

Fisher, 2016

At Maidensbridge Primary School, provision is underpinned by a complimentary relationship between adult led, adult-initiated and child led learning. We are ambitious in our approach using a continuous cycle of observation and assessment, planning/ teaching, alongside structured and systematic lessons and guided group work.

Shared Input

Structured sessions are delivered throughout the day either as a whole class, key worker or streamed ability group to support the delivery of the Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Literacy and Mathematics curriculum goals. Using the Development Matters (2021) guidance alongside SCARF, Read Write Inc and White Rose Hub curriculum programmes.

Adult led focused groups

Short, focused group sessions are planned with care, meeting the needs of all children, using prior knowledge of the child's learning experiences and guidance from Development Matters (2021).

Learning through play

At Maidensbridge, practitioners firmly believe that play based learning is paramount to children's learning and development in all areas. Children's play reflects their varied and, wide ranging interests and is where they learn at their highest level. It should be purposeful and valued; delivered through a mixture of child initiated and adult-led experiences and is essential for developing confidence. As children grow older, and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually move towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1.

Through play, children learn to explore and develop learning experiences, which in turn help them to make sense of the world around them. They practise and build up ideas; learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have opportunity to think creatively alongside others as well as on their own, and relate to others. Practitioners must respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interactions.

Continuous Provision

"High levels of attainment come from high-level engagement."

Alistair Bryce-Clegg, 2015

Indoors and outdoors resources are organised to develop children's skills in personal interaction and exploration and are linked to current assessment information. Resources are carefully selected to meet development needs of the children in order to enhance potential for new learning and consolidate prior learning. Resources are dressed/ displayed to reflect children's interests- discover, experiment and explore key themes.

Continuous provision transcends all areas of learning and provides children with the opportunity to demonstrate the three characteristics of effective learning. Children are given the freedom to make independent choices and are encouraged to be active learners and take control of their own learning.

We are ambitious in our approach using a continuous cycle of observation and assessment, planning/ teaching, alongside structured and systematic lessons and guided group work.

The role of the adult

Young children learn from those they trust and with those who foster enthusiasm for learning."

Trevarthen, 2002

Research shows that progress will be significantly enhanced by the effective support and role models of adults withing a high-quality learning environment. In Reception, each child is allocated a **key worker**.

At Maidensbridge Primary School, the role of the adult particularly during continuous provision, is based upon the work of Marion Dowling and her book on supporting sustained shared thinking (2005).

Within our setting interactions between children and adults will include:

- Tuning into what is happening or a child's thinking
- Showing genuine interest
- Respecting children's own decisions and choices
- Inviting children to elaborate
- Recapping on what has happened so far
- Offering personal experience
- Clarifying ideas
- Reminding
- Using specific praise
- Offering an alternative viewpoint
- Speculating/ using 'I wonder if ...'

Teaching is a broad term which covers the many ways in which adults help young children learning. It includes their interactions with children during planned and child-initiated learning: communicating and modelling language, showing, explaining, demonstrating, exploring ideas, encouraging, questioning, recalling, providing a narrative for what they are doing, facilitating and setting challenges.

It takes account of the equipment they provide and the attention to the physical environment as well as the structure and routines of the day that establish expectations. Integral to teaching is how practitioners assess what children know, understand and can do as well as take their interests and dispositions to learning (characteristics of effective learning), and use this information to plan children's next steps in learning and monitor their progress.

The importance of each adult to support progress is crucial however, we equally understand that in times when a child is on their own independent learning journey, the environment plays a significant role in development. Interact, don't interfere!

Enabling Environments- The role of the environment

At Maidensbridge Primary School, each area of the environment is informed by assessment. As the needs of the children change, as they grow and develop, so does their learning environment. We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident and secure and challenged.

Using resources that are open-ended encourage creativity, imagination and high order thinking skills. For example, the creative workshop may contain ribbon, lace, piñon cones or wooden sticks. The outdoor role play area is deconstructed with access to logs, planks, sheets and tyres. These resources can become anything and have unlimited potential.

Our timetable allows for long uninterrupted periods of continuous provision that allow children to reach a deep level of involvement as they engage, play, investigate and talk.

EYFS Curriculum 2021

At Maidensbridge Primary School, we follow the EYFS Framework (2021). Within this framework there are four overarching principles which shape our practice.

These principles are as follows:

1. Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured.
2. Children learn to be strong through **positive relationships**. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents/ carers.
3. Children learn and develop well in **enabling environment** with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and help them to build their learning over time.
4. Children **develop and learn** at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Learning and Development in the EYFS

Our curriculum encompasses the seven areas of learning and development. All areas of learning and development are important and interconnected.

Three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving. These three *prime* areas are:

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

The prime areas are strengthened through the four specific areas. The specific areas are:

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

Throughout their time in Reception, our children partake in an ambitious curriculum which is designed in a sequential way to ensure progress towards the end of Reception goals. These goals are defined as the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) which are outlined in *Appendix 1*.

As previously outlined, our curriculum incorporates learning through play, learning by adults modelling, by observing each other and through guided learning and direct teaching. It is also important to highlight that our plans are flexible to allow us to respond quickly to children's interests and/ or needs.

Weaving throughout the EYFS curriculum at Maidensbridge Primary School are three **Characteristics of Effective Learning**. The Characteristics of Effective Learning run through and underpin all seven areas of Learning and Development.

The Characteristics of Effective Learning 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 achieving what they set out to do.

- **Creating and Thinking Critically**- Children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things themselves.

These elements underpin how we reflect on each child's development and adjust our practice accordingly. Supporting children in their individual learning behaviour and observing the context of children's play is essential. The characteristics play an important role in each child becoming both an effective and a lifelong learner. As enduring characteristics, they constantly need to be observed and nurtured, but they cannot be described in a developmental sequence.

A Unique Child

At Maidensbridge, practitioners recognise children are constantly learning and that they can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. Children learn in many different ways and at varying rates. The Unique Child reaches out to people and things through the Characteristics of Effective Learning, which are evident in all areas of Learning and Development.

Inclusion/ Special Educational Needs (SEN)

All children and their families are valued at Maidensbridge. Children are treated as individuals; they have equal access to the available provision and are encouraged to achieve their personal best. Planning is differentiated to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. 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 opportunity.

Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child effectively. If a child's progress gives cause for concern, practitioners share concerns with parents/ carers at the earliest opportunity and agree how best to support the child. In collaboration with the SENCo, practitioners must decide whether a child has a special education need or disability which requires specialist support.

At Maidensbridge, practitioners meet the needs of all of our children by:

- Considering the individual needs, interests and stages of development of the children in the class.
- Planning challenging and enjoyable opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge and experiences, and develop their self-esteem and confidence.
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs.
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued.
- Using resources which reflect cultural diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping.

Parent Partnership

Parents are the first and most important influence on their child's development and future outcomes. Children have two main educators in their lives- their parents and their teachers. Therefore, the school and the parents all have crucial roles to play. The impact on a child's education is greater if parents and schools work in partnership.

At Maidensbridge, parents are invited to be involved in every step of a child's journey in education. Starting with an induction meeting to welcome families to Maidensbridge the term before their child starts Reception, we promote a positive partnership by:

- Welcoming new parents and carers into the Home School Association as new members.
- Completing a Home Visit before the children start school and talking to parents and carers about their child.
- Actively forming good links with Pre-school providers to ensure continuity and progression during the EYFS:
 - Visiting, observing working alongside the children at their Pre-school provision.
 - Engaging in a professional chat with each child's Key Person to ascertain stage of development, interests, characteristics of learning and any additional needs.
- Meeting with professionals supporting the children and ensuring that an individual plan is in place to support their children's individual needs.
- Inviting children to attend several transition afternoons in July to spend time with the Reception Team and start to form relationships with their peers.
- Supporting the children through the transition from pre-school to Reception with the children attending part time during the first week. Opportunities during this time for staff and children to form relationships and share pre-school learning journeys together.
- Informing parents and carers who their child's key person is before they start school.
- Operating an 'open door' policy to encourage an on-going dialogue with parents and carers and encourage them to share any concerns.
- Inviting parents and carers to attend a parent consultation and celebration meetings each term to formally discuss their child's progress and any concerns in private with their class teacher.
- Providing parents and carers with a summative progress report at the academic year.
- Using the school planner to communicate messages with parents and carers on a regular basis. Parents and carers are encouraged to do the same.
- Allowing access to their child's online learning journey captured on Tapestry to celebrate their progress, achievements and 'wow moments' captured on Tapestry. Families are encouraged to contribute to their child's learning journey by uploading text, images and videos to celebrate their learning and experiences at home. Every entry helps to create a complete story of a child's time in Reception.
- Arranging a range of experiences throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, parents and school: open days, workshops, assemblies, visits, Sports Day etc.

We pride ourselves on building positive relationships with the families of Maidenbridge. Creating a 'triangle of trust' (Elfer et al.) between children, parents and practitioners. We understand that when parents relinquish part of the care and teaching of their child to the staff in our setting it is a big step.

We create an environment that is conducive to interactions where all feelings can be taken into account. A warm welcome each day often leads to a deeper knowledge and understanding of each child and their family.

As stated earlier,

'It is knowing the child and family that opens up endless possibilities for interactions that deepen the emotional bonds between a practitioner and a child, and lead, in turn, to educational opportunities to support and extend learning.' (Fisher, 2016)

Impact

Children enter key stage one ready to begin the next chapter of the educational journey. They are equipped with a broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for future progress through school and life.

In 2017, a 'Study of Early Education and Development: Good Practice in Early Education' was published which outlined three themes that underpin effective practice that are aligned with our ethos and development.

At Maidensbridge we:

1. Tailor practice to the needs of the children- the child is at the centre of our practice. We have a clear vision of what we want to achieve for the children in our care, and these clear goals inform all areas of our practice.
2. Invest in skilled and experienced staff- that support children to reach their full potential.
3. Operate an open and reflective culture- our culture is driven by continuous improvement. We seek out other settings and professionals to learn from, share and reflect practice. We recognise the knowledge and expertise of our own staff and value open discussion and staff consultation; and embedded within our school is a culture of self-evaluation as a means of driving continuous improvement.

Assessment

Within continuous provision, our assessment has three key elements.

1. Observation

Throughout continuous provision observations forms a fundamental aspect of the pedagogy of EYFS at Maidensbridge. Ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process. It involves practitioners observing children to understand their interests, learning styles and stages of development and to plan experiences that will challenge and extend their existing skills.

Observation and responding to children's thinking inform our planning of experiences and opportunities, how we create our environment for thinking, the strategies the adults use to extend learning (modelling, scaffolding, questioning, discussion, shared sustained thinking) and how we capitalise knowledge of children's interests to ensure high levels of engagement.

Tapestry is used to capture 'wow' moments' when a child does or says something that demonstrates progress or skill in a particular area.

2. The Leuven Scales

Alongside the use of observation as an assessment tool, we also refer to the pioneering work of Professor Ferre Leuven (1980's) to understand how focused and comfortable children are in our setting.

The scales of well-being and involvement act as a measure of deep learning and of the effectiveness of the learning environment. This had an empowering impact on our planning and can help to develop the huge potential of the children.

The five-point scale measures:

- **Well-being** refers to feeling at ease, being spontaneous and free of emotional tensions and is crucial to good mental health. It is linked to self-confidence, a good degree of self-esteem and resilience.
- **Involvement** refers to being intensely engaged in activities and is a necessary condition for deep level learning and development.

A continuous cycle of observation assessment and planning is embedded throughout our EYFS provision.



3. Summative Assessments

In addition to the continuous cycle of observation and formative assessments which informs each child's next steps, summative assessments are completed for Read Write Inc and Maths. These take place termly and informs planning of subsequent teaching and learning.

Reception Baseline Assessment

The NFER statutory Reception Baseline Assessment is administered within the first six weeks of pupil's attending school. This task-based age-appropriate assessment formally assesses pupil's attainment in early literacy, communication and language, and early mathematical skills.

EYFS Profile

In the final term of reception, the EYFS profile will be completed for each child. Each child's level of development will be assessed against the Early Learning Goals (*Appendix 1*). Throughout the year, profile moderation activities are undertaken internally to quality assure judgements made.

Transition into Year 1

The Reception and Key Stage 1 team at Maidensbridge work closely together, hosting special days and workshops to form relationships with the children in Reception and support the transition process over a long period of time. Reception and Year 1 work collaboratively to provide integrated experiences throughout the year.

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. The Profile includes on-going observations, all relevant records held by the setting, discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

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.

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. For further information, please see the school **Equal Opportunities Policy**.

EYFS Policy Written by: Mrs Sarah Mason

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The Early Learning Goal Descriptors

Communication and Language

ELG- Listening, Attention and Understanding

- Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions.
- Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding.
- Hold conversations when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers.

ELG- Speaking

- Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary.
- Offer explanations for why things might happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems when appropriate.
- Express their ideas about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

ELG- Self-Regulation

- Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly.
- Set and work towards simple goals, being able to wait for what they want and control their immediate impulses when appropriate.
- Give focussed attention to what the teacher says, responding appropriately when engaged in activity, and show an ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.

ELG- Managing Self

- Be confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience, and perseverance in the face of challenge.
- Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly.
- Manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet, and understanding the importance of healthy food choices.

ELG- Building Relationships

- Work and play co-operatively and take turns with others.
- Form positive attachments to adults and friendships with peers.
- Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs.

Physical Development

ELG- Gross Motor Skills

- Negotiate space and obstacles safely, with considerations for themselves and others.

- Demonstrate strength, balance and co-ordination when playing; move energetically, such as running, jumping, dancing, hopping, skipping and climbing.

ELG- Fine Motor Skills

- Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing- using the tripod grip in almost all cases.
- Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paint brushes and cutlery.
- Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing.

Literacy

ELG-Comprehension

- Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary.
- Anticipate where appropriate, key events in stories.
- Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes, and poems and during role-play.

ELG- Word Reading

- Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs.
- Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by sound-blending.
- Read aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent with their phonic knowledge, including some common exception words.

ELG-Writing

- Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed.
- Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with. Letter or letters.
- Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.

Mathematics

ELG-Number

- Have a deep understanding of number to 10, including the composition of each number.
- Subitise (recognise quantities without counting) up to 5.
- Automatically recall (without reference to rhymes, counting or other aids) number bonds up to 5 (including subtraction facts) and some number bonds to 10, including double facts.

ELG- Numerical Patterns

- Verbally count beyond 20, recognising the pattern of the counting system.
- Compare quantities up to 10 in different contexts, recognising when one quantity is greater than, less than or the same as the other quantity.
- Explore and represent patterns within numbers up to 10, including even and odds, double facts and how quantities can be distributed equally.

Understanding the World

ELG- Past and Present

- Talk about the lives of people around them and their roles in society.

- Know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.
- Understand the past through settings, characters and events encountered in books read in class and storytelling.

ELG- People, Culture and Communities

- Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts and maps.
- Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in their country, drawing on their experience and what has been read in class.
- Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and when appropriate, maps.

ELG- The Natural World

- Explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants.
- Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.
- Understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter.

Expressive Arts and Design

ELG- Creating with Materials

- Safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools, and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function.
- Share their creations, explaining the process they have used.
- Make use of props and materials when role playing characters in narratives and stories.

ELG- Being Imaginative and Expressive

- Invent, adapt, and recount narratives and stories with peers and their teacher.
- Sing a range of well-known nursery rhymes and songs; perform songs, rhymes, poems, and stories with others, and when appropriate, try to move in time with music.