



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy



“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to achieve their full potential. A child’s experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. 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.”

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. At Manor most children join us, part time, at the beginning of the term after which they turn three. They then start full time school in the September of the year in which they are five.

The EYFS is based around four themes:

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

A Unique Child

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, 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 to learning. At Manor we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of individual children.

Positive Relationships

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At Manor each child has a Key Worker who will keep an overview of progress being made. All children joining the nursery or a reception class receive a home visit from nursery staff and the learning mentor in order to create the foundation for these positive relationships.

Enabling Environments

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, achievable activities and experiences to extend the children’s learning. The EYFS is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The classrooms are set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The Early Years has its own enclosed outdoor area. This has a positive effect on the children’s development. Being outdoors offers the children further opportunities to explore, use their senses, develop their language skills and be physically active. We plan activities and resources both inside and outside enabling the children to develop in all the areas of learning.

Learning & Development

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. 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. 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 satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

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.

Aims

Our Early Years Foundation Stage aims to:

- Create a happy, caring, secure and fun environment for all children;
- Encourage confidence, independence and a desire to learn;
- Focus on the development of every child as an individual, valuing and building on their previous experiences and responding to their individual needs;
- Work in close and effective partnership with parents and carers;
- Develop in children an enquiring mind, an interest in learning and an enthusiasm for the next stage of school life;
- Provide good foundations for later learning;
- Encourage good social relationships, developing self-esteem and respect for others.

The Curriculum

The curriculum is carefully planned in line with the new Early Years Foundation Stage requirements which now include seven areas of Learning and Development. All areas are important and interconnected. There are **three prime areas** which are most essential for children's healthy development and future learning.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

This area involves helping the children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and respect for others; to develop social skills and learn to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; to have confidence in their own abilities.

This is achieved through providing an environment that value and nurtures each child. Children are encouraged to develop their confidence, sense of independence and self-respect. Sharing and co-operating, forming relationships with other children and adults are part of the everyday curriculum. Activities such as circle time, praising achievement and providing positive role models all support children's learning in this area.

Communication and Language

This area involves providing children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

This is achieved through stories, rhymes and songs, role play and small world activities. Adults use open ended questions to stimulate thinking and encourage children to express themselves using language for a range of purposes.

Physical Development

This area involves providing young children with opportunities to be active and interactive and to develop their co-ordination, control and movement in both indoor and outdoor environments. Children also learn to understand the importance of activity and to make healthy choices in relation to the food they eat.

This is achieved through providing a range of physical challenges and resources inside and outside to develop gross motor skills such as climbing, balancing, jumping, throwing and catching. Fine motor skills are developed through purposeful activities such as playing with play dough, clay, sand, water cutting and sticking, threading and building with small construction materials and puzzles. Children need well developed fine motor skills to control a pen/pencil when writing.

Children learn about the importance of exercise and hygiene through group discussions, cooking activities and P.E lessons.

The prime areas will help children develop skills in **four specific areas**. These are

Literacy

This area involves encouraging children to link sounds to letters and begin to read and write.

This is achieved by providing opportunities for children to develop a love of books and stories along with the knowledge that print carries meaning. We follow a synthetic phonics scheme that teaches letter sounds and word blending. Children's emergent writing is promoted through writing experiences such as those linked to role play and children are encouraged to believe in themselves as writers.

Mathematics

This area involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve in counting and number problems and to describe shapes spaces and measures.

This is achieved through practical and first hand experiences both indoors and outdoors. Children are encouraged to problem solve in practical play situations and develop mathematical concepts and vocabulary.

Understanding the World

This area involves children exploring, observing and making sense of their physical world and communities.

This is achieved by planning a learning environment that stimulates children's interests and curiosity and helps them to develop enquiring minds. Children are supported in using a range of ICT equipment such as computers I pads, programmable toys and cameras. We celebrate festivals and special events and provide activities for children to widen their knowledge of the community around them.

Expressive Arts and Design

This area involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play and design technology.

This is achieved by providing a stimulating environment with multi-sensory experiences. Children are encouraged to develop confidence in their ideas and abilities as they make choices, select equipment and evaluate their own work. Children have lots of opportunities to develop imaginative role play in the role play area, with small world, puppets and stories.

Our teaching in the EYFS area of learning and development is implemented through planned purposeful play and a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. We respond to each child's emerging needs and interests and support them in using the three 'characteristics of learning'.

These are

- Playing and exploring – children 'have a go', investigate and experience things.
- Active learning – children concentrate and keep on trying it they encounter difficulties and enjoy their achievements.
- Creating and Thinking Critically – children have and develop their own ideas; make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

When working with the youngest children we focus strongly on the three prime areas which are the basis for successful learning in the four specific areas. The three prime areas reflect the key skills and capacities all children need to develop and learn effectively and become ready for school. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus as children move through the Foundation Stage and grow in confidence and ability.

What Learning looks like in EYFS

Play is the most effective way for children to use new learning. They can try out ideas, pretend to be different people and test new information in their own way. Some children are natural players, others need encouragement and suggestions to help them. Well planned play, both indoors and outdoors is a key way in which young children learn with enjoyment and challenge.

Play happens outdoors in all sorts of weather. We are very clear about this with parents in order that children come to school with appropriate clothing, prepared for this outdoor play.

Our role is crucial in:

- Planning and resourcing a challenging environment.
- Supporting children's learning through planned play activities.
- Extending and supporting children's spontaneous play.
- Extending and developing children's language and communication.

Through play, in a secure environment with effective adult support, children can:

- Explore, develop and represent learning experiences that help them make sense of the world.
- Practise and build up ideas, concepts and skills.
- Learn how to control impulses and understand the need for rules.
- Be alone, be alongside others or cooperate as they work through their feelings.
- Take risks and make mistakes.
- Think creatively and imaginatively.
- Communicate with others as they investigate or solve problems.
- Express fears or relive anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Play is the vehicle by which young children gain access to the curriculum, developing confidence, independence and self-discipline. It helps children to move from the here and now in their thinking into both the past and the future and it can help them to think flexibly and at a high level.

Assessment

The children's learning is assessed on a continuous basis through observations and focused activities by all adults working in the rooms. Significant steps are recorded in their Learning Journeys and their portfolios. This information helps to form the next steps for each child, and provides the basis for the ongoing planning. We encourage parents and carers to contribute to this process.

Welfare of the Children

At Manor, we recognise our responsibility for promoting the welfare of our youngest children.

- All adults with access to our children will receive the appropriate level of CRB checking and as part of the induction process will have discussed and signed a school code of conduct.
- All staff employed by the school will undertake regular Child Protection training and are expected to follow the school guidance in following up a cause for concern.
- Staffing will be organised to ensure the safety of the children.
- All staff will be trained to the level appropriate to responsibility.
- First aid will only be administered by trained personnel. Procedures are in place to inform parents/carers of accidents involving their child.
- Procedures are in place to ensure security of children and the safe release of children into the care of individuals named by the parent/carer.
- As a healthy school, there is a focus on emotional well being, healthy eating and physical activity. Good health will be promoted and appropriate action will be taken when children are ill.
- Routines are in place to support children's growing understanding of personal hygiene.
- Children's behaviour is managed effectively through the use of a whole school system, which is adapted to the stage and development of individual needs.
- Risk assessments will be undertaken and reviewed regularly.
- Premises, furniture and equipment will be regularly checked and repaired, washed etc as required.

- Records, policies and procedures required for the safe efficient management of the setting will be maintained.
- Policy documents will be available for parents and carers.

Every Child Matters

At Manor we value the ethos behind 'Every Child Matters' and as a school we contribute to the five outcomes through all of our work.

Be Healthy: fruit and milk daily; encouraged to drink water regularly; regular PE sessions and active play in the outdoor area; sun awareness.

Stay Safe: safe and welcoming school environment; learning & behaviour plan; regular circle times; regular review of the safety of the outdoor area; encourage positive & tolerant relationships through modelling of good behaviour.

Enjoy & Achieve: plan activities and experiences that match the needs of all; enrich the curriculum with visits, visitors & celebrations; rigorous assessment & tracking procedures; staff have a caring approach and respect the children's individuality.

Make a Positive Contribution: help children to develop self-confidence in order to deal with life changes and challenges; building links with the local community and other nurseries and schools.

Achieve Economic Well-Being: high expectations for attendance, punctuality and behaviour; children involved in planning and implementing changes to the school environment; problem solving skills are taught in practical and exciting ways.

Transition into Key Stage 1

There is an important transition between Reception and Year 1 where the children move from the Early Years Foundation Stage framework to the National Curriculum. It is vital that the detailed information compiled about each of the children is effectively and manageably passed to the Year 1 teachers. The EYFS profile data is passed on to ensure that the teachers have good quality information with which to plan from. Data from the profiles is carefully analysed at the end of the Reception year with regards to individuals and classes as well as the cohort as a whole, and this information too is used by Year 1 staff – for setting targets, for planning and to provide support where needed.