

Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is important in its own right, and also in preparing children for later schooling. The Early Learning Goals set out what is expected of most children by the end of the EYFS.

The provision we offer our children in the EYFS is based on the following principles:

- to build on what our children already know and can do
- to offer a well organised structure for learning that has a range of starting points with content that matches the needs of young children and activities that provide opportunities for learning
- to provide a rich, carefully planned, stimulating environment which ensures that all children are safe and included, and in which their emotional wellbeing is given high priority.

Learning in the Early years foundation Stage at Queen Margaret Primary School

Queen Margaret Primary School uses the Early Years Foundation Stage guidance to provide the best possible start to school life for all children in our care.

We use the following principles to help us plan and offer an EYFS experience that enables children to grow and develop as confident, independent, resilient learners.

Theme: Unique Child

Principle: Every child is a competent learner from birth who can be capable, confident and self-assured.

We plan and offer opportunities for children to become confident both in their surroundings and with their peer group.

We have high expectations of each child based upon our knowledge of them. We believe that communication and language is key for our children's development and a huge emphasis is placed upon this.

We aim to develop skills and attitudes to learning that will foster success throughout the child's schooling. We value children's ideas and feelings, support each child's self-esteem, develop their independence, self-confidence, motivation, curiosity, perseverance and concentration.

Theme: Positive Relationships

Principle: Children learn to be confident, resilient and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person.

We ensure that children in our care have the opportunity to choose their own learning in a safe and supportive environment with caring and qualified adults to nurture them.

We aim to develop a partnership with parents and carers based on a shared interest in the child.

We aim to prepare children for further learning by teaching them to relate positively to adults and their peers; to work and play together co-operatively, constructively and with confidence and to foster a growing independence and respect for others. Our whole school values-based ethos also helps to support this.

Theme: Enabling Environments

Principle: The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning.

We use the whole environment, both inside and outside to support children's learning.

We aim to provide a secure, rich and stimulating learning environment in which to deliver the EYFS curriculum. We provide daily opportunities for learning through a balance between continuous provision and adult guided activities focussed upon specific skills and knowledge. We also provide planned learning sessions such as Phonics, Talk for Writing, P.E and Maths, which incorporates the mastery approach to learning key concepts.

We believe it is our responsibility to support children to enjoy learning, to be confident to take risks, ask questions and

understand they are part of real learning.

Children have access to the outdoor classroom throughout most of the day. This is sometimes with adult support but can also be used by the children independently.

Theme: Learning and Development

Principle: Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of learning and development are equally important and interconnected. Our planning shows that we are aware of different children's needs and the way in which they learn. We provide evidence to support this through Learning Journeys and observations.

We aim to plan learning experiences that build upon previous knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes. These experiences allow the children time to repeat and rehearse their skills and knowledge.

Our curriculum is planned to enable children to develop competency, skills and knowledge across the Prime Areas and Specific Areas of learning:

Prime Areas:

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

Specific Areas:

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

The 'Early Learning Goals' and 'Development Matters' document provide the basis for planning throughout the EYFS. We plan three main themes which are broad in nature to encourage a wide range of ideas and interests. Further planning is designed around observations made of children and is created according to the needs and specific interests of the children.

The following principles help to ensure a high standard of care and education:

- Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives.
- Care and Education are complementary and inseparable.
- High self-esteem/emotional wellbeing is an important pre-requisite to effective learning.
- There is potential in all children, which emerges powerfully under favourable conditions.
- Children develop at different rates emotionally, intellectually, morally, socially, physically and spiritually – all aspects are important and are all interwoven.
- Parents/carers are a child's first educators. An effective partnership between home and the early years setting, contributes significantly to a child's personal, social, emotional and academic development.
- Children learn in many ways, but they learn most effectively when they are actively involved and interested.
- Effective learning builds on and extends what children know and can do and offers new learning experiences and challenges.
- Attitudes and behaviour patterns established during the first years of life are central to children's future educational and social development.
- Play is a meaningful and powerful medium for learning which is valued and used for the development of children both socially and academically.
- Opportunities to make decisions and to take responsibility for their own learning and behaviour help children to develop autonomy and a sense of personal responsibility.
- Relationships between adults and children are based upon respect for individual worth.
- Children's well-being is paramount and therefore health and safety considerations have a high priority.
- Early Years practitioners conscientiously promote equal opportunities in their approaches and practice with all children and adults regardless of gender, disability, race, culture and background.
- Children's interest and pleasure in books is actively promoted as this builds a strong foundation for later learning.

Assessment

The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile supports the emphasis on observation of children's achievement and development. The profile is used for baseline assessment and 'Insight' is used for all other formal assessment. Detailed gap analysis is carried out regularly to help provide information for future planning, provision and development. Data is collected at the end of the Reception year and is collated and forwarded to the Local Authority. Parents/carers are informed of their child's progress on a regular basis, including through discussion at parent's evenings and through annual written reports to parents at the end of the summer term (Term 6). Parents and teachers may also discuss any queries or concerns about their child's progress at any time throughout the school year and through comments in children's reading diaries.

Observation and assessment of small groups and individuals provide the starting points for our subsequent planning. Transfer records from pre-school settings, along with other information from parents/carers during home visits, help inform EYFS staff about each child.

The role of Parents and Carers

At Queen Margaret Primary School, we believe that parents/carers have a vital role to play in the education of their child. We recognise this role and encourage parents to come into the classroom to join in with regular 'Learning Together sessions'. These sessions provide links with parents and enables them to better understand how to help their child learn to read and write.

Parents/Carers also have the opportunity to attend two parent consultation evenings throughout the year. In the Reception class, parents are asked to read a book with their child every day. Reading is given a very high priority and books are carefully matched to children's phonic knowledge. We promote reading for pleasure and encourage parents to engage children in the exciting world of books.

Safety

If someone other than the child's parents/carers are to pick up the child after school, then this information must be passed to the class teacher and office staff – children will not be allowed to leave the premises unless this information has been given. Children are collected from the side door of the Reception Class at 3.15pm. Should a child not be collected then the child will be taken to the school office where the parent/carer is telephoned - a member of staff will stay with the child until the parent/carer arrives.

Special Learning Needs

Parents/carers will always be informed early of teacher's concerns over a child who may have specific individual needs. Parents/carers who have concerns about their child's progress or development should initially contact the class teacher. The school's Special Needs co-ordinator is responsible for providing additional information and advice to parents and for arranging for external intervention and support where necessary.

Equal Opportunities (please also refer to whole school policy)

Date: Revised April 2020

Next review date: April 2021

Approved: At Full Governing Body meeting 7th May 2020