

Maltby Redwood Academy Early Years Policy

Date Last Reviewed: September 2020

Reviewed by: Academy Principal / EYFS Lead

Date of next review: September 2021



Purpose of this policy

This document outlines our current practice and procedures in the teaching of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The term Early Years Foundation Stage is used to describe children who are in our Nursery (Acorns) and Reception (Saplings) classes.

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life, and support to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and the age of five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important, and good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities' Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2014

At Maltby Redwood Academy we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children, giving them a strong foundation for their future learning. We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent learners. We value the individual child and work alongside parents and others to meet their needs and help every child to reach their full potential.

We adhere to the Statutory Framework of the EYFS. This document is available at:

<http://www.foundationyears.org/files/2012/03/DevelopmentMatters-FINAL-PRINT-AMENDED.pdf>

The principles of this document that shape practice within our unit are:

-  Every child is a unique child
-  We recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
-  We understand that children develop in different ways, at varying rates and join us on their own unique learning journey.

At Maltby Redwood Academy all children are encouraged to achieve their full potential and our planning for learning is in response to the observed needs of all groups and abilities.

We set realistic goals and have challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children so that they can make good progress from their starting points. We regularly monitor children's progress and take action to provide support by using intervention strategies as and when necessary.

We pride ourselves in using praise and encouragement, alongside celebrations and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within our school and believe that every child matters. We aim to provide all pupils, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, disabilities, gender or ability, equal access to all aspects of school life. We work together to ensure that every child is fully valued as an individual. Children with specific needs will be given appropriate support to enable them to access the curriculum.

The school's SENDCO is responsible for ensuring that all children who need it are given support plans in line with our Special Educational Needs policy.

Teaching and Learning

At Maltby Redwood Academy we understand that young children achieve their best when learning is engaging, purposeful and well matched to their interests. We aim to engage our children with play based learning alongside adult led learning. The children are increasingly challenged as their learning develops.

Foundation Stage Curriculum

This is split into two areas – **the prime areas** and **the specific areas**.

The prime areas – Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Physical Development and Communication and Language.

The specific areas – Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding of the World, Expressive Arts and Design.

The prime areas are our main focus within Nursery as these skills are essential for fostering early learning. Successful mastery of these skills then support the children in their learning in the specific areas.

Curriculum mapping is in place to promote a broad and varied curriculum. These are also linked to seasonal changes and any celebrations that are taking place at that time. We take into account the children's interests and the different ways in which they learn.

Children in our Foundation Stage take part in daily whole class and small group sessions of Maths and Literacy, including shared reading and writing. They also have daily Phonics sessions delivered to them using the RWI approach filtered to the children's changing abilities.

Reading is a whole school priority and this is reflected in the Foundation unit where the children are exposed to a whole range of genres of books around the environment. The children also enjoy lots of storytelling throughout the day.

Assessments of the children's progress are done on a regular basis ensuring that no child is left behind and that all children reach their full potential.

Positive relationships

At Maltby Redwood Academy we recognise that parents and carers are the children's first and most enduring educators and we, as a school, hugely value the contributions they make. To further develop our relationship with parents we provide the following opportunities:

-  All Nursery and Reception children and parents/carers are invited to meet their teachers/other adults prior to their admission.
-  We hold new parents' meetings to introduce the staff and some of the routines of our Foundation Unit.
-  In school meetings are planned for children starting in the Nursery and previous settings are visited prior to children joining our Reception class.

- ✚ Children joining our Nursery are given the opportunity to visit with their parents/carers for two sessions during the term prior to them starting.
- ✚ Vital information is shared during these visits and any questions that parents/carers may have will be answered.
- ✚ If necessary, we will arrange for children to have a staggered start to school over the first three weeks to ensure the wellbeing of the child.
- ✚ Parents/carers are invited to come to a range of events throughout the year including celebration assemblies, open mornings/afternoons, Stay and play/read, Harvest Festival, Christmas celebrations etc.
- ✚ Parental workshops around the development of language and vocabulary are being introduced this year and will be a fantastic addition to our parental opportunities.
- ✚ Parent's evenings are held twice a year in which the class teacher and the parent will discuss the child's progress.
- ✚ Parents will receive a written report of their child's attainment in the final term of Nursery and Reception.
- ✚ At the end of the Reception year children are assessed against each of the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG's). They will be assessed as either emerging, expected or exceeding the ELG for these areas.
- ✚ Regular contact via the Class Dojo app. This allows you to send a message to your child's class teacher that they will be able to respond to. All messages are private and encrypted and are only shared should a safeguarding concern arise.
- ✚ Children's work at home and at school can be shared using the Class Dojo portfolios section. This allows collaboration between parents, teachers and children and leads to good quality assessment opportunities.

Reading

As stated, reading is a whole school priority. Parents will receive Read Write Inc resources appropriate to their child's developmental stage along with tailored support from the EYFS staff to enable them to consolidate their child's learning at home. Regular practice is a must, and we ask that you spend a few minutes every day working with your child on what will be a familiar routine to them which mirrors that in school.

Enabling Environments

We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where the children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up to provide development and progress within the seven different areas of learning. Children will have access to outdoor provision whatever the weather, so wellies and a water proof coat are essential items to have every day.

Learning spaces are clearly defined and resources are easily accessible so that the children can develop as independent learners by following their own interests.

We recognise the importance of open ended experiences to promote purposeful, meaningful and challenging play. Adults observe and extend this play as

appropriate using inspiring language to promote sustained shared thinking. The adults then use these opportunities to further enhance provision and extend individual learning.

We plan a balance of children following their own interests and activities/themes that are planned by the adults to provide opportunities for the children to extend their learning. We promote the Characteristics of Learning throughout all areas of the Foundation Unit. We encourage the children to develop their abilities to play and explore, take an active role in their learning and to think creatively.

Observation and assessment

“Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children’s progress, understand their needs and to plan activities and support”. Statutory framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2014

The Development Matters bands and Early Learning Goals provide the basis for assessment through the Foundation Stage. Children are quickly assessed at their entry to F1 and F2 to establish a baseline. We use observations and interactions within everyday experiences to gain an informed judgement of the children's abilities. Progress is then monitored and tracked consistently using the O-track assessment tracker. This is an online assessment tool which allows our staff to perform a gap analysis of the children's learning. Any gaps in learning will then be planned for using intervention groups and next steps are planned in response to staff findings.

Within the final term of Reception, we provide the parents with a report based on their child's development against the Early Learning Goals and the Characteristics of Learning. Parents are then given the opportunity to discuss these judgements with the Reception teacher in preparation for Year 1.

During the year there are usually two opportunities for parents to meet formally with their child's class teacher and share work and discuss attainment and progress; along with daily informal meeting during drop off and collection. Further parental support is sought during the year to evidence objectives that are more commonly seen at home such as using technology in the home.

Safeguarding and welfare

“Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adult who is caring for them” Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2014

Within the Early Years we ensure that our current practice and provision complies with the welfare requirements as stated in the Ofsted Statutory Framework for the EYFS.

All observations of the children that are collected on our Foundation iPads, to inform assessment and planning, are password protected and deleted when no longer needed. All our staff are regularly trained in Safeguarding and updates are given regularly throughout the year.

Staff at Maltby Redwood Academy work collaboratively to:

- ✚ Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their individual needs.
- ✚ Provide a setting that is welcoming, safe and stimulating where children can flourish and grow in confidence.
- ✚ Promote good health.
- ✚ Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs linking to the school's Good to be Green policy and Star Learning Behaviours.
- ✚ Ensure that all adults who look after the children, or who have unsupervised access to them are suitably qualified to do so.
- ✚ Ensure that the setting, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for the purpose it is intended for.
- ✚ Maintain records, policies and procedures required for the safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

Intimate care and first aid

Depending on the child's age and stage of development, they may need some support, for example dressing, wiping themselves after using the toilet and changing underwear following a toilet accident.

Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from staff who help them to meet their needs.

Our policy states that;

- ✚ Students and volunteers (other than employed apprentices) will not provide intimate care for the children – this will be done by Academy trained staff.
- ✚ Staff will be sensitive to the child's needs and consider their feelings.
- ✚ Children will be encouraged to wipe themselves if they are able; however, a member of staff will assist if needed.
- ✚ Gloves will be worn at all times and disposed of appropriately afterwards.
- ✚ Where possible, two members of staff will be with the child whilst changing.

There are Paediatric first aid trained staff within the unit. All first aid resources are checked and regularly updated. All accidents are recorded and parents are informed upon collection for a minor accident or by a phone call / Dojo message home if the accident is more significant.

Healthy schools

At Maltby Redwood Academy the children in Foundation have a daily healthy snack which normally consists of fruit and milk. We also encourage the children to bring a water bottle from home which they have available during the day. Water bottles must only contain water, juice or squash is not permitted in water bottles in accordance with the Healthy Schools guidance.

Pupil Premium

We ensure that, through baseline assessment, we ascertain in which areas Pupil Premium children are attaining and how we can further support them through resources, expertise or intervention. Progress is then rigorously monitored and tracked.

Although children in F2 are eligible for Free School Meals under the Universal scheme, if you are eligible for benefits related Free School Meals, it is essential that you still complete the application. This enables us to receive additional funding for the unit. Children in F1 are not entitled to the Universal Infants Scheme so please apply for Free School Meals if you believe your income means you would be entitled to receive them. Children not in receipt of FSM in Nursery (F1) will need to bring a packed lunch or pay for school lunches if they are staying for 30 hours.

Applications for Free School Meals can be made here, and the form is quick and easy to complete:

<https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/xfp/form/532>

British Values

The fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law, individualist liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs are fully embedded in the Early Years Foundation Stage. We actively seek to promote these values through modelled behaviours, challenging stereotypes and ensuring that our children receive a rich and varied curriculum.

When appropriate we demonstrate democracy in action and support the decisions that children make and ensure they are given opportunities to develop enquiring minds in an environment where any child's question is valued. We provide opportunities for children to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and increase their confidence in their abilities.

We encourage children to reflect on their differences and understand that we are free to have different opinions to others.