

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

We work within the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), published by the Department for Education (DfE) in March 2021, effective from September 2021

All areas of learning within the setting incorporate the Prime and Specific areas of development within the revised EYFS (Sept 2020) assessing children against the Early Years Outcomes, to inform individual best fit judgements.

Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of three Prime and four Specific areas of learning:

Prime

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

Specific

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

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to 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. 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 the reception year. In our setting, all children join us, throughout the year into the appropriate room according to their age:

Green Croft & Riverside - All Year setting

- 3 months – 18-24 months in the Snugglers
- 18 months – 30 months in the Explorers
- 30 months to school age in the Discoverers

Some children attend more than one setting and a wrap around service is offered to those children. We also work in partnership with the local school nurseries, sharing a communication book between the settings.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

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

All meet the characteristics of effective learning. These are:

Playing and exploring – engagement

- Finding out and exploring
- Playing with what they know
- Being willing to 'have a go'

Active learning – motivation

- Being involved and concentrating
- Keeping trying
- Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

Creating and thinking critically – thinking

- Having their own ideas
- Making links
- Choosing ways to do things

A Unique Child

At Merry go Round Day Nursery 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/ sharing values to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the nursery and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our nursery.

In our nursery settings, we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

It is important to us that all children in the nursery are 'safe' and well cared for. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

We aim to protect the physical and psychological well being of all children. (See Child Protection Policy)

"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."

At Merry go Round Day Nursery we understand our legal duty is to comply with certain safeguarding and welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2020. We have an obligation to:

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

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

Positive Relationships

At Merry go Round Day Nursery we recognise that children learn to be strong independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring and respectful relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make.

We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children.

We do this through:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our nursery;
- the children have the opportunity to spend time in the setting to become familiar with staff, peers and the environment;
- inviting all parents and children to an induction meeting during the summer before their child starts nursery;
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress and allowing free access to the children's 'Online Learning Journeys'; Tapestry.

- encouraging parents to talk to the child's Keyworker if there are any concerns. Parents can have a formal meeting if they wish to discuss the child's progress in private with the Keyworker and/or Supervisor. Parents receive a report on their child's progress at the age of 2 ½ years and again before the child goes to Primary School;
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between children and parents: Open days, Family Values and Graduation;
- we encourage parents to add information about home life into their child's 'Learning Journeys' relating to their child's interests;
- Communicate with the Primary School that the child is moving to, assisting with transition.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At our nursery, the EYFS is supported by all staff and led by the Managers who cascade training and advise staff of Continued Professional Development (CPD).

We have good links with other local schools in the community and are happy for them to visit us at any time.

Enabling Environments

At Merry go Round Day Nursery we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

The planning process begins with the voice of the child. Staff document children's interests and skills and work together to find a common interest in the form of a project. This encompasses individuality and autonomy. Therefore, our planning is more of a proposal and intention, linked to the EYFS, Characteristics of Effective Learning and Reggio Philosophy.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Observations are assessed by all practitioners. These observations are recorded in children's individual 'Learning Journeys. They also contain information provided by parents. This enables us to monitor a child's best fit judgement towards the Early Years Outcomes.

The Learning Environment

In all Merry go Round settings we have organised the rooms to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The rooms are set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. All settings have their own enclosed outdoor area. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways of exploring and on different scales than when indoors. It gives the children the opportunity to use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all 7 areas of learning. Green Croft has an allotment where children can learn the life cycles of plants and vegetables. Riverside has a secret garden, which is located opposite the nursery grounds, where children can fully explore the natural environment. Green Croft setting has an area, which represents the Atelier, as seen in the Reggio Emilia pre-schools in Northern Italy. It is a room that

is an extension of both the nursery and the garden, bringing the outside inside. It incorporates a creative/exploration area, and workshop. The workshop allows children to take risks in a safe environment where they have the opportunity to use real tools and resources such as nails, screws and tacks. The whole area is a creative enabling environment.

Learning and Development

At Merry go Round Day Nursery we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are inter connected.

Teaching and Learning Style

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of the Reggio Emilia Philosophy and also relating to the EYFS and ensuring that:

- there is a strong partnership between staff and parents;
- our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that practitioners have on how children develop and learn, and how this affects their planning;
- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play, speech or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) 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 and empowerment;
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents;
- the good relationships between settings and the local schools that our children have the opportunity to experience prior to starting school;

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 practice and build up ideas, and learn how to manage their behaviour and carry out safe risk taking. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations. Practitioners act as role models and express care and concern for every child.

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 are 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 and clarifying ideas. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the room to extend their learning. Practitioners identify children’s learning styles and schemas, which are facilitated through the planning of activities.

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. In each area there is an Early Learning Goal (ELG) that defines the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS (end of Reception class in Primary school).

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of all practitioners to follow the principles stated in this policy.

There is a named practitioner responsible for the EYFS, this being the Manager and she will discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners regularly and provide feedback to the whole provision, raising any issues that require discussion.

The Manager will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the nursery monitoring and review.

The Nursery has an Early Years Professional over all the settings and she ensures that learning and development is coordinated and that the EYFS is followed in full.

Adoption Date: 1st September 2020.

Signed:

Nm Orel

Annual Review

Reviewed 1st September 2021

Reviewed 1st September 2022

Reviewed 1st September 2023

Next review 1st September 2024