



Marches Academy Trust

Date of last review: **March 2021**

Approved: **March 2021**

Date of next review: **September 2021**

Early Years Foundation Policy

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1. Introduction

The aim of this policy is to enable all Primaries within Marches Academy Trust:

- To provide a structured, secure, caring and well-resourced learning environment both inside and out which meets all the individual developmental needs of ‘young learners’ and underpins all future learning.
- To enable “young learners” to become confident, motivated and happy learners, developing the skills and attitudes necessary for their own successful future learning.
- To enable “young learners” early development to take place within the caring and nurturing environment, in line with the ethos and values, which the school upholds and promotes.
- To develop independence and individuality, whilst fostering respect and tolerance for others irrespective of ability, race, creed, gender or background.

2. Key Principles

In order to achieve the above aims staff and Governors will provide a curriculum for the last year of EYFS (reception) based on the following principles, which will establish the foundations that underpin all future learning:

- at the core, place the development of positive attitudes and dispositions towards learning and foster the development of positive behaviour and social interaction skills;
- promote and develop personal, social and emotional well-being;
- encourage the development of self-confidence and positive self-awareness;
- enable children to develop the skills of attention, concentration and persistence;
- place speech, language and communication at the heart of learning;
- lay the foundations for developing reading and writing;
- develop early mathematical skills and concepts;
- develop an understanding of the world in which children live;
- enable children to be creative in their responses to their world and in their development of skills;
- encourage children to develop their imagination through the exploration of media and materials;
- Promote healthy and safe physical development – both gross and fine motor;
- Encourage independence and ownership of own learning.

3. The needs of Young Learners

All children require:

- Adults who are sensitive to their differing needs, abilities, backgrounds and previous experiences to teach, support, care and offer equal opportunities for them all to develop.
- Adults who will respect them and value their ideas and opinions recognising that every child is an individual.
- A challenging and diverse curriculum offering ample opportunity to practise and develop skills and learning. This includes rich and positive learning experiences with plenty of first-hand experience, varied to include all learning styles and including regular opportunity to explore and learn through practical and play activities.
- Opportunities to make decisions and to take responsibility - both for their learning and behaviour. The curriculum is founded upon offering opportunities for the development of personal qualities, social skills, and positive attitudes towards learning. This includes the chance to make mistakes in a forgiving environment and to realise that making mistakes is a learning experience.

In summary, a well-planned, carefully structured programme of academic and personal development, building on past experiences and achievements - delivered in ways appropriate to their age and stage.

4. The Curriculum

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is a comprehensive statutory framework that sets the standards for the learning, development and care of children from birth to five. The EYFS extends from birth to the end of Reception and the beginning of Key Stage 1. The curriculum should therefore be seen as part of a continuum of learning, which begins at birth, extends throughout the years of compulsory schooling and establishes the young person as a lifelong learner. At all our schools our values underpin all teaching, learning and conduct, providing a context in which children's spiritual, moral and social development (SMSC) may take place.

SMSC will be integrated naturally within the planned learning outcomes throughout the Foundation Stage.

Play underpins the delivery of all the EYFS.

The EYFS principles guide the work of all practitioners, there are four themes:

- a unique child
- positive relationships
- enabling environments
- learning and development.

The curriculum consists of seven areas of learning - three "prime" and four "specific". These

are inter-related and none can be delivered in isolation from the others. The seven areas consist of a total of seventeen Early Learning Goals:

Prime:

The prime areas begin to develop quickly in response to relationships and experiences, and run through and support learning in all other areas. The prime areas continue to be fundamental throughout the EYFS, work together, and move through to support development in all areas.

The **prime areas** are:

Personal, Social and Emotional Development - comprising:

- Making relationships;
- Self Confidence and self-awareness;
- Managing feelings and behaviour.

Communication and Language - comprising:

- Listening and attention;
- Understanding;
- Speaking.

Physical Development - comprising:

- Moving and handling (gross and fine motor);
- Health and self-care.

Specific:

The specific areas include essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society. They grow out of the prime areas, and provide important contexts for learning.

Mathematics - comprising:

- Numbers
- Shape, Space and Measures

Literacy - comprising:

- Reading
- Writing

Understanding the world - comprising:

- People and communities
- The world
- Technology

Expressive arts and design - comprising:

- Exploring and using media and materials
- Being imaginative

The above also refers to our practice of cross-curricular teaching and learning which encourages children to make links and practise skills in a relevant and interesting way.

Trust staff believe that all individual learning styles should be recognised and honoured in a creative learning environment. The way in which we learn is as important to progress and success as what we learn.

5. Assessment at the end of the EYFS

In accordance with all schools, children will be assessed in their first half term at school. Through observation staff will assess their attainment in the three prime areas and the four specific areas against the early learning goals.

On-going assessment (formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process. Staff are involved in daily observations and assessments throughout the Reception Year; they include child-initiated tasks and teacher led activities in the inside and outside learning environments. Observations, samples of work and photographs are recorded (if relevant) in each child's 'learning journal.'

In some schools data is entered electronically onto the data-tracking programme online at the end of each term, we are looking to secure this across all our primary schools for 2021. The EYFS Profile will be completed at the end of the Reception year; data will be sent to the Department for Education (DfE).

Some Reception Year children may begin to work towards the expected standard of a year one child of the National Curriculum when it is judged appropriate for them. This is when their assessment demonstrates that they are "exceeding expectations". Children who do not achieve all of the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception Year continue to work towards them in Year 1. These children will be assessed to be "emerging" in their development. Progress will be shared with parents and carers after the autumn half term, towards the end of the spring term and at the end of the summer term, in accordance with our Assessment, recording and reporting policy. All attainment data is shared with the next teacher for continuity at this time of transition.

6. Learning & Teaching

The fundamental principles of teaching and learning which are detailed within the Teaching and Learning policy are applied within the Foundation Stage. The core purpose at Marches Trust is to teach for enjoyment and progress, ensuring that all children steadily acquire and improve skills, knowledge and understanding. In EYFS children join a community of lifelong learning - children and adults alike. High quality expectations for teaching, learning and conduct is established in EYFS and is consistently and clearly applied throughout the school. The more specific features of good practice which apply to the EYFS are as follows:

- the very close partnership between teachers and parents/carers that helps our children to develop a positive self-image of themselves as learners and, therefore, to feel secure and confident at school;
- the understanding that teachers have of early child development and special educational needs and how this relates to teaching and learning;
- a kinaesthetic and visual approach to curriculum delivery, which provides rich and varied opportunities for 'small world' play - using toys and models which replicate real life activities - and for role play (involving areas inside and outside the classroom which simulate real life situations and provide opportunities for imaginative play);

- the range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences; give clear explanations; make appropriate interventions; and establish and develop the children's ability to play, socialise and communicate with others;
- a very strong emphasis on communication - including speech and language interventions and in some schools additional therapy as required - to generate a language for learning; to seek every opportunity to talk with children about their learning, encouraging them to listen and respond productively as appropriate to their level of need;
- the carefully planned and well-resourced curriculum and schemes of work that help children to maximise their potential against the Early Learning Goals (see above). This includes off-site visits and drawing on the resources of the local and wider community;
- the high value placed on Music, Art and the performing arts;
- a safe, high quality-learning environment - both indoors and outdoors, available throughout all seasons and weathers;
- the assessment, through observations, of children's achievement, progress and future learning needs, which are regularly shared with parents and carers, and the appropriate resourcing and training of staff to meet the children's needs;
- the good relationships between Trust, other educational and early years settings and agencies.

7. Organisation

Their curriculum will be planned, overseen and delivered by the class teachers and an experienced Teaching Assistants. The Leadership Team will support the teaching and learning in EYFS and take part in the teaching and assessment processes.

Volunteers will also be encouraged to support Early Years children, under the direction of the class teacher. All children begin school in the autumn term. The integration of the pupils currently is variable depending on our schools and individual community needs.

Key person: The key person approach is aimed at enabling and supporting close attachments between children and practitioners. Attachment provides a sense of security so that children can become confident, independent and capable young learners. Their role is to meet the needs of each child in their care and respond sensitively to their feelings, talking to the parents and working in partnership with them. They will of course work in close partnership with the class teaching assistant and The Leadership Team.

A key person is:

- A named member of staff who has more contact than others with the child;
- Someone to build relationships with the child and parents;
- Someone who helps the child become familiar with the provision;
- Someone who meets children's individual needs and care needs;
- Someone who responds sensitively to children's feelings, ideas and behaviour;
- The person who acts as a point of contact with parents

8. Safety

Children are taught to stay safe through the curriculum work in Personal Social Health Citizenship education, which is key part of the whole school curriculum.

The EYFS curriculum and profile documents set clear expectation on aspects of personal safety awareness and where these will be identified in the curriculum plan and taught explicitly.

The Trust takes safety of its pupils very seriously and various related safety policies and procedures are available in the school office and published on our website.

The headteacher or the Governor with responsibility for Health and Safety will be happy to discuss these in more detail should a parent / carer wish to do so. Specifically the following procedures must be observed:

- **No child will be handed over to the care of any adult other than a parent / carer or person nominated by the parent and known to the Reception class staff and they must be over 16 years of age.**
- No mobile phones / cameras other than the designated school mobile phone and cameras may be used in EYFS (in line with whole school policy). Visitors including parents are expected to respect this. Any visitor or volunteer spending time in EYFS will be asked to leave mobile phones in a secure place within the school office and will be returned on their departure.
- The EYFS learning environment is checked frequently for health and safety and this is recorded in a log scrutinised regularly by the Headteacher. The Health and safety governor monitors that any repairs and maintenance is undertaken in a timely manner.

9. Induction & Home-School Links

Parent meetings and presentations are used to disseminate important information, to encourage discussion and **to emphasize the vital importance of home-school cooperation and mutual support**. This marks the beginning of the home-school partnership, which we regard as high priority for the benefit of all our children.

Links will be made with the pre-school settings and where practicable the Class teacher will make a visit in July.

10. Inclusion in the EYFS

At Marches Trust we believe that all children matter and have equal rights - irrespective of the child's special educational need(s), disability, gender, creed or ethnicity. Consequently, we aim to be a fully inclusive school - as described in the school's Equality Policy. We give our children every opportunity to participate in a wide range of experiences in order to help them to achieve their best.

We do this by taking account of each child's learning style, communication needs, disability and range of life experiences when we are planning for their learning. This is outlined in the Accessibility Plan, which is a document outlining how the school intends to meet the needs for all children to access learning and is revised annually.

11. Monitoring & Review

This policy is monitored by the Headteacher and the Local Governing Body, which receives regular reports on the EYFS from the Headteacher.

The policy will be reviewed every two years, or sooner if necessary.

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Policy Owner	Executive Lead Team
Scope	All staff, Trustees and Governors
Last Updated	March 2021
Effective from	March 2021
Next planned reviewed date	September 2021
Status	Approved
Date of approval	22.03.2021
Summary of last revision	Adoption of new style of policy
Related Policies/Documents	Primary Behaviour Policy Primary Assessment and Feedback Primary PE Policy