

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy



Approved by: LGB

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1. Introduction

Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe, and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.

Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage, 2017

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. At Millbank Academy, this is available to children who enter nursery at three years of age or children are admitted to reception in the September following their fourth birthday.

At Millbank Academy we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. Our setting works with parents to develop in every child a love for learning and a desire to expand their horizons and aspirations. Through effective partnerships between home and school, we aim to improve the life opportunities for all children in our care.

The EYFS unit at Millbank Academy consists of a nursery class (3 & 4 years) and 2 reception classes. The nursery intake can consist of 26 children who either occupy part-time place (mornings) or a fulltime place. The reception unit can consist up to 60 children, organised into two classes.

Nursery school hours:

- Part time: 8:50am-12:00pm
- Full time: 8:50am-3:15pm see our Nursery admissions policy.

Reception school hours

- 8:40am-3:30pm

Optional Breakfast Club from 8am and Afterschool Care provision until 6pm is available for all EYFS children.

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [2017 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#).

This document also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Aims and Objectives

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress, and no child gets left behind
- Close partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and antidiscriminatory practice

There are four guiding principles that shape the practice in Early Years settings. These are:

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

A Unique Child

At Millbank Academy, we recognize that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured. We recognize that children develop in individual ways and 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.

Positive Relationships

At Millbank Academy, we recognize that children learn to be strong independent from being in secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Enabling Environments

At Millbank Academy, we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development, where the children feel confident, secure, and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision.

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning. Through observation we assess the children's stages of development and learning needs, before planning challenging, achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning and knowledge. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We ensure that resources and spaces are safe to use and checked regularly.

Learning and Development

At Millbank Academy, we acknowledge that children develop and learning in different ways and at different rates and all areas of learning and development are equally important and interconnected.

4. EYFS Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2017 statutory framework of the EYFS. There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in early years settings. They require a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities in order for children to reach the levels required at the end of EYFS.

Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The three Prime areas are:

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

Staff will also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

Specific Areas:

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

Children's development levels are assessed and as the year progresses, the balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning, as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

However, if a child's progress in any of the prime areas gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents/carers and agree how to support the child.

Reception pupils will participate in:

- Daily phonics lessons, following the Read, Write Inc. scheme.
- Daily mathematic lessons, following the Mathematics Mastery programme of study.
- English lessons using focused texts using the Talk for Writing pedagogy.
- Get a head start on the national curriculum through age-appropriate foundations in history, geography, and science.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1. Our

medium-term planning is completed half-termly which identifies the intended learning, with outcomes, for children working towards the Early Learning goals and for those who may be working towards the National Curriculum.

5. Assessment

At Millbank Academy, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe the children to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers. Observational notes, focused observations, adult-led assessments, and photographic evidence are all used to assess children's learning. At Millbank Academy we use the programme Tapestry (an online learning journal) to document the children's learning experiences, staff observations and assessment and to share the learning that takes place at school with parents.

During the first few weeks in September adults will observe the children as they settle and complete a baseline assessment. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children.

Teachers meet with an SLT member for a half termly pupil progress meeting to discuss the progress and attainment of their class. We will analyse data at a whole class level, for specific groups of children and at an individual level. These meetings will identify interventions needed and once in place these will be rigorously monitored for impact.

At the end of the reception year, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child to provide a summary of every child's development and learning achievements against the Early Learning Goals this indicates if the children:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Exceeding expected levels or,
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

Children in Nursery and Reception will receive an end of year report that offers brief comments on each child's progress in each area of learning. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs and gives details of the child's general progress.

6. Working with parents

At Millbank Academy we recognise the importance of establishing positive relationships with parents. We understand that an effective partnership between school and home will have a positive impact on children's learning and development. So, our staff endeavour to encourage the regular sharing of information about the children with parents.

We value the role of parents as children's primary educators. Through home visits, questionnaires, Tapestry and informal chats, staff encourage parents to share their unique knowledge of their child, providing further insight into the children as an individual.

Parents are kept informed of what is happening in the setting through regular newsletters, parent's evenings, parent workshops, and informal chatting at the beginning and end of the day. This also gives suggestion of how parents can support their children's learning at home; consolidating and building on what has been covered in the setting.

Our school has a friendly, open-door ethos and practitioners are available to talk to parents at the beginning and end of the day. Parents are always welcomed into school and encouraged to discuss any concerns they might have.

7. Transition

Starting school can be a difficult time for young children; we therefore plan this time carefully to support children with the transition and ensure it is as smooth as possible for each child and that they settle in to their new class quickly and happily.

Parents of all children starting in the next academic year will be invited to three Stay and Play sessions. This is an opportunity for staff to share important induction information such as:

- School procedures and EYFS curriculum
- Class routines and expectations
- Uniform, PE kit and school dinners/free school meals
- How to support children at home

These sessions also allow the child to see the EYFS environment and meet our staffing team.

Home visits are also scheduled to support with this transition. These will be completed in September.

For Nursery we also adopt a staggered approach to starting school.

Reception to Year 1

EYFS staff and Year 1 teachers work together to ensure a child's transition between the EYFS and Year 1 are seamless. Our staff make sure children's experiences in the final year of the EYFS are valuable in themselves and prepare the ground for year 1. It is important that year 1 builds on the successful principles and approach encapsulated in the EYFS. EYFS Staff and year 1 teachers are given time to discuss and expand on the information presented in the end of EYFS profile.

8. Safeguarding and Welfare

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

9. Inclusion

We acknowledge that all children are individuals, and we ensure that all children within our care are respected and nurtured regardless of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability, or gender. We recognise that children learn in different ways and at varying rates and all

children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities.

We set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, so that our children have the best opportunity to meet the Early Learning Goals by the end of Reception. Some children progress beyond this point.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience, 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. This may involve referral to external agencies.

Concerns are always discussed with parents/ carers at an early stage and the school SENDCO is called upon for further information and advice. Appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the SEND Policy.

Our setting seeks to promote the value of healthy lifestyles, good life choices and confident community participation. Children are encouraged to develop a sense of belonging and responsibility and treat their school and others with respect. We will take all necessary steps to keep children safe and well and we carefully follow the guidance as set out in the Statutory Framework for the Early years Foundation Stage.