



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Mount Pleasant Primary School

Policy approved by Standards Committee	March 2022
Reviewed (with changes)	May 2025
Reviewed (with changes)	September 2026

Introduction

“All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives, so their experiences in early years 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 provide the foundation children need to fulfil their potential.”
Early Years Framework.

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. Our Early Years Stage accommodates children from the age of 3 to 5 years. In our nursery we can offer 39 places in a morning and 39 places in the afternoon in nursery. In reception we have 3 classes of up to 30 children.

Aims

- To give each child a positive and meaningful start to their school life, establishing solid foundations on which they can develop into independent and fearless lifelong learners.
- Our high expectations will enable each child to develop socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally to achieve their full potential.
- To provide a happy, caring, safe and secure environment for learning which meets the individual needs and interests of the children.
- To provide a broad, balanced, language rich and high-quality curriculum in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework.
- To provide opportunities for children to learn through a carefully planned balance of adult led activities, scaffolded play, peer interaction and independent play.
- To foster positive home school links, working with parents/carers as partners.
- To help children to develop their self-regulation, emotional resilience and wellbeing.

The Curriculum

Nursery and Reception follow the educational programme curriculum summaries as outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework. The EYFS is based on four overarching principles:

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

A Unique Child

At Mount Pleasant Primary School, 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 and rewards to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school. All children at Mount Pleasant School are treated fairly and in accordance with the whole school single equalities policy. We are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and

carers, with a particular focus on those who share a protected characteristic. We recognise that treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same but means tackling barriers which could lead to unequal outcomes. We aim to create a culture of social inclusion and community cohesion in which all those connected to the school are treated with respect and fairness and feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life. We celebrate the diversity of our school community, and we will not tolerate any direct, associated or perceived associated discrimination (less favourable treatment), harassment (bullying), victimisation and inequality, including bullying of any groups or individuals. All members of the school community have a responsibility for promoting equality.

Welfare and Safeguarding

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. 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.

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 Mount Pleasant, we understand that we are legally required to comply with safeguarding and welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage.

Screen Use

From 1 September 2026, the school has regard to the Department for Education's guidance on children's screen use in early years settings. Screen use in EYFS is limited, carefully planned, age-appropriate and linked to a clear learning, communication or accessibility purpose. Children do not access screen content without adult oversight, and screens do not replace high-quality interaction, practical play, stories, physical activity or outdoor learning. Appropriate assistive technology for pupils with SEND is considered according to individual need.

The school's safeguarding arrangements set out how mobile phones, cameras and other electronic devices with imaging or sharing capabilities may be used. Digital content is checked before use; advertising, autoplay, algorithm-driven content and unsuitable artificial intelligence tools are avoided in Reception.

Staff Checks

The school follows the safer-recruitment and suitability requirements in the EYFS framework and Keeping Children Safe in Education. Staff and regular volunteers working directly with Reception children must have the appropriate identity, reference, enhanced DBS and, where eligible, children's barred-list checks before starting. Staff and prospective staff must disclose relevant information that may affect their suitability, subject to the legal rules on protected convictions and cautions.

Dogs on Site

The school does not allow dogs to come on to the school site. Banned dog breeds within section 1 of the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991, including the XL Bully type, must not be kept or present on the school premises at any time, including where a dog has a certificate of exemption.

Safe Sleep

The detailed safer-sleep requirements for children under two are not applicable because the school provides Reception provision only. If a pupil needs to rest or sleep because of a medical condition, disability or other identified need, an individual plan and risk assessment will specify safe supervision and care arrangements.

Further safeguarding and welfare procedures, including child protection, allegations against staff, whistleblowing, online safety, safer recruitment and staff conduct, are set out in the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Online Safety Policy, Staff Code of Conduct and associated procedures.

Positive Relationships

At Mount Pleasant Primary School, we recognise that children learn to be strong, confident and independent from being in secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families. We encourage positive relationships with all peers respecting and valuing their individuality.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value being partners with them in their child's education through-

- Inviting parents to a 'starting school' meeting before their child starts in our setting.
- Offering children transition visits to spend time in the Foundation Stage before starting school.
- Transition booklets are given to children after their visit, containing pictures of the school and staff.
- Using online platforms to share the children's learning experiences and as a means of communication (through ClassDojo).
- Valuing the ongoing contributions from parents.
- Offering two parent/teacher consultation evenings per year.
- Sending a report on their child's progress and development at the end of nursery and their child's attainment and progress at the end of their time in reception.
- Developing a range of activities and events throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents.
- Parents are encouraged to come into the classroom at the start of every session/day allowing staff and parents to have regular discussions. Parents are always welcome to discuss any concerns at the end of every day.

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.

Transition

Reception staff go to our nursery to visit the children in the summer 2 term. Staff also visit other private day nurseries and attend any transition evenings they may hold. Staff discuss each child with their key worker or class teacher and assessment data is passed up to ensure continuity and progression for each child. Staff also use information given by the parents. There is a transition event held for all new reception children in June where they can meet their new teachers and explore their new classrooms. All children are given a 'Golden ticket' with information regarding their new teachers and classroom. Transition booklets are created for identified children. The start of the term in September is staggered to allow children to adjust to their new setting, routines and timetables. All parents attend the first session with their child to help them settle in and review transition information.

When transitioning from reception to Year 1, the teacher is given a copy of the profile scores along with the end of year report which will include a commentary on the characteristics of effective learning. Year 1 teachers meet with the reception teachers to discuss the children. Reception class teachers will identify any barriers to learning and discuss successful strategies that have been implemented for any child identified as emerging in any ELG and for children with SEND. Year 1 teachers visit children in their reception class. We have a transition day where children will spend time with their new Year 1 teacher. Extra transition visits to Year 1 will be in place for identified children. Transition

Governors

Leaders presents an annual presentation to governors about attainment, progress and changes to EYFS. The EYFS leader discusses termly progress towards the EYFS school development plan.

Enabling Environments

At Mount Pleasant, 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. Adult led concepts and key skills are reinforced through carefully planned and sequenced tabletop activities.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

Staff are skilled at observing children to identify their achievements, interests and next steps for learning. These observations then feed into the planning to provide activities and resources which motivate the children. The planning within the Foundation Stage takes into account the learning and development requirements from the Early Years Foundation Stage framework. We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning and interventions reflect identified needs.

Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal observations. On entry to the setting staff use observations, assessments, parent information and information from previous settings (if any) to form a baseline. Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts reception, staff will administer the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

Progress is tracked using Insight at 3 points throughout the academic year. Staff attend termly moderation meetings to discuss progress and attainment across the Foundation Stage. This is then analysed and discussed in pupil progress meetings. The end of nursery data is used as a starting point for those children who continue into reception. At the end of reception, children's progress is recorded on to the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. Each child's level of development is recorded as emerging or expected against the 17 Early Learning Goals.

The Learning Environment

The Foundation Stage classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. The classrooms are set up and resourced to support all 7 areas of the EYFS profile. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet, creative etc. The Foundation Stage has its own outdoor classroom area, and all classes take part in a weekly outdoor learning session. The learning opportunities, inside and the outside, have a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. The children can explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We recognise that not all children within our

EYFS have access to the outdoors at home and the experience and opportunities this can afford.

Learning and Development

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. 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.

Prime Areas

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

Specific Areas

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

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

Characteristics of Effective Learning

Teaching and learning of the curriculum is underpinned by the characteristics of effective teaching and learning. The characteristics highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them. The three characteristics are:

Playing and Exploring - children investigate and experience things and 'have a go'.

Active Learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy achievements.

Creating and Thinking Critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

Play

Learning through play underpins our approach to teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage. We embrace the fact that children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them to learn. Children have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. Our adults take an active role in child-initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating, teaching and extending play, skills and language. We deliver learning for all of the areas through purposeful play and learning experiences, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities as well as purposeful planned activities and events to allow our children to have a broad range of rich experiences which we recognise as crucial to child development.

Tooth Brushing

The school promotes good oral hygiene and completes daily supervised tooth brushing.