

Early Years Foundation Stage at Mersey Vale

Policy reviewed February 2026

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

The early years of a child's life are exciting, powerful and valuable for building the foundations for learning. For a child to make progress throughout all aspects of their development and learning, we believe they require continuity, security and trust in others. Through this, they should develop self-confidence and increasing independence to take risks, explore, make connections and "have a go".

At Mersey Vale, we offer a range and variety of play based learning experiences for all throughout our Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception), which caters for children's development on all levels: physically, socially, emotionally and cognitively.

Partnership with parents/ carers is of major importance. Working alongside and maintaining communication as well as sharing knowledge of the child is paramount.

The four themes:

- **A Unique Child:** Every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- **Positive Relationships:** Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/ or a key person;
- **Enabling Environments:** The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning;
- **Learning and Development:** Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates

Seven Features of Effective Practice

1. The best for every child
2. High quality care
3. Curriculum: what we want the children to learn
4. Pedagogy: helping children to learn
5. Assessment: checking what children have learnt
6. Self-regulation and executive function
7. Partnership with parents

'**Learning through Play**' is fundamental and is at the heart of what we provide. Through play, children learn new physical skills, imagine, pretend, explore, find out, release energy, relax, practice new behaviours, develop social skills, learn to turn-take, cooperate, overcome anxieties and fears, problem-solve, develop language and thinking, communicate thoughts, feelings and begin to understand others' views and most of all have fun learning! Opportunities to take learning forward are maximised 'in the moment'.

Our Aims

During foundation stage, we will provide opportunities that will enable each child to develop:

- warm, secure and positive relationships with both adults and peers;
- into a confident communicator (oral and written);
- an enjoyment and interest in books and a desire to read;
- strength and agility, as well as bodily and spatial awareness;
- an interest in how things work and are constructed;
- a natural curiosity to discover and problem-solve;
- feelings of awe and wonder, delight, joy and mystery;
- imagination and creativity;
- a sense of personal achievement, individuality, self-confidence and sense of self ... BE HAPPY!

This is further nurtured and empowered though the focus on the core values: kindness, resilience, responsibility, inclusivity, collaboration and life-long learners!

Curriculum

The Foundation Stage curriculum encompasses seven areas of learning (AofL) all of which are of great importance for the development of the "child as a whole"

Prime Areas: The prime areas are important because they lay the foundations for children's success in all other areas of learning and of life

Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)

Communication and Language (CL)
Physical Development (PD)

Specific Areas: The specific areas provide the range of experiences and opportunities to broaden their knowledge and skills

Literacy (L)

Mathematics (M)

Understanding the World (UW)

Expressive Arts and Design (EAD)

Through the three 'Characteristics of Learning': Active learning; Creating and thinking critically; Playing and exploring

At Mersey Vale Primary School, we provide:

- A warm, welcoming, friendly and calm atmosphere in which children feel secure;
- A stimulating environment with high quality resources both indoors and outdoors;
- A developmentally appropriate curriculum (topic based) which is broad and balanced and supports individual learning needs;
- An interactive learning environment which includes 'resource base areas', which are easily accessible and well resourced;
- A learning environment which is organised, structured and well planned with displays which reflect children's efforts and achievements as well as informing carers;
- Adults who are caring, supportive and effective role models;
- Adults who have sound knowledge of the children in their care and who take an active role in teaching and learning;
- A staggered admission process (to both nursery and reception classes) responsive to individual and group needs;
- An agreed and consistent approach to teaching and learning from all staff;
- A clear and consistent routine which is known to all – class rules;
- Positive working relationships with parents/ carers valuing home-school communication and with outside agencies (health visitor, SALT etc);
- Ongoing observation, recording and assessment (formative and summative) including: baseline, observations, discussion, questioning, work samples, photographs, individual profiles and "next steps" all of which informs future planning, involves parents/ carers, ensures progression, evaluates provision and provides information for ongoing transition.

Involvement of Parents/ Carers in children's learning and development is encouraged through: daily contact, meetings, diaries and reading record books, open sessions/ parent – teacher consultations, transition events, workshops and 'stay and play' sessions in order to establish and develop a positive partnership "from the start" of a child's learning journey.

Communication is also supported via Class Dojo.

We offer flexible options re: a child's pattern of attendance (Nursery) and work closely in partnership with parents/ carers to support their varied needs.

Our curriculum:

- Ensures all pupils have equal access to all areas of learning;
- Ensures continuity and progression through communication, monitoring and recording;
- Recognises the diversity of its pupils' backgrounds and reflects its cultures in a positive way;
- Acknowledges specific learning needs and provides appropriate support and resources to enable successful progress to be made;
- Acknowledges and values children's home languages;
- Values partnership between home and school;

I like playing in the water and making potions.

I like building.
This is a rocket.
This is a stable.

Children's comments

I like counting.

I can count up to ten.
I am 4!

I can write my name.
I know this sound.

I am good at climbing.
I jump!

Painting and making things.
I like drawing my family.

I am good at running.

I enjoy playing with my friends outside.
The monster is coming!
Play Mr Wolf

I like singing and dancing.

I like playing the tambourine.

I like book time and nursery rhymes.