



# MARISH

## Academy Trust

# Foundation Stage Policy

Updated Oct 2017

# **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

## **Introduction**

At Marish Academy Trust, children come first. At our schools we greatly value the important role that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development and as a preparation for life. We ensure that children's first experiences of school are happy and memorable. We seek to provide a happy, welcoming and secure child centred environment, enabling children to make the best of their abilities and talents as they grow up. We ensure that our provision promotes safety and helps the children to thrive. All children begin at Marish Academy Trust with a variety of experiences and learning. We aim to build upon these through working in partnership with parents. We endeavour to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. We aim to support children in their learning through "teaching and experiences that gives children the broad range of skills that provide the right foundation for good progress through school and in life." (Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2012)

## **Principles and Aims**

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

**A unique child** – developing resilient, capable, confident and self-assured individuals.

**Positive relationships** – supporting the children in becoming strong and independent.

**Enabling environments** – where opportunities and experiences respond to the individual needs of the child by developing a strong partnership between practitioners, parents/carers and the child.

**Learning and developing** – An acknowledgement that children learn in different ways and at different rates

## **A Unique Child**

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 assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

## **Inclusion and Special Educational Needs (SEN)**

All children and their families are valued at Marish Academy Trust. Children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all provisions available. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. Assessments take into account contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential special educational needs is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage. Appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the school's inclusion policy for SEN. Children's home or first language is used, where appropriate, to support learning.

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.

## **Welfare**

It is important to us that all children in the Trust 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. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See Whole School Safeguarding Children Policy).

At Marish Academy Trust we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2012. We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare and safeguarding 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.

### **Positive Relationships**

At Marish Academy Trust we recognise that children learn to be strong independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional 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 school;
- making home visits to see the children in their environment;
- ensuring the children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during transfer sessions;
- supporting children through the transition from two year old provision to Nursery to Reception
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school and again during the first half term of the child's Reception year in order to detail how we aim to work with their child particularly in relation to reading and phonics;
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents two times a year at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year. Those children in the two year old provision receive daily feedback as well as opportunities to view profiles throughout the year;
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: stay and play sessions and school visits
- providing parents an opportunity to celebrate their child's learning and development by recording observations for the children's Learning Journeys;
- ensuring all parents know their child's teacher and Nursery Nurse

### **Enabling Environments**

We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident and 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. Effective learning builds and extends upon prior learning and following children's interest. Effective planning is informed by observations of the children to ensure we follow their current interests and experiences. These observations are recorded in the children's individual Learning Journeys. Play based learning is paramount and children direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities provided by staff. Staff will enhance play and extend as needed to further individual learning.

### **Learning and Development**

We follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum which is outlined below. We aim to provide a well-planned and resourced curriculum to take their learning forward and provide opportunities for all children to succeed in an atmosphere of care and of feeling valued.

There are seven areas of learning and development of which three are "prime areas," and four "specific areas." The prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development.

The specific areas are:

Literacy

- Mathematics
- Understanding of the world and
- Expressive arts and design

Through careful assessments and observations, including information provided by parents and other settings, children's development levels are assessed. 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 prime area gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents and/or carers and agree how to support the child. For those children under 3, a two year old check will be completed.

We believe these seven areas are equally important and depend on each other to support a rounded approach to child development. We aim to deliver all the areas through planned, purposeful play with a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. None of these are delivered in isolation from the others; all are integrated for a holistic approach to learning.

Planning and guided children's activities will reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. At Marish Academy Trust we support children in using the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning. These 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.

(Taken from statutory framework for the EYFS 2012)

### **Equal Opportunities**

All members of the Trust are treated as individuals. We aim to meet the needs of all, taking account of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, special educational needs, disability, and social circumstances. All staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect cultural diversity and the need to prepare pupils for life in a diverse and multi-faith society.

### **Transition**

#### **From Two Year Old Provision to Nursery**

The two year old provision work in collaboration with Nursery throughout the year and are very much one unit. Access is based upon the unique child and their development stage, rather than age. This allows for transition into Nursery to be seamless.

#### **From Nursery to Reception**

During the summer term prior to a child's entry into the Reception year parents are invited to a meeting to ensure they know about school procedures and allocation of classes and any concerns they may want to express which will ensure a smooth transition is made. Visits to their new setting are also encouraged.

#### **From Reception Class to Key Stage 1**

During the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile includes on-going observation, all relevant records held by the setting, discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution. Each child's level of development is assessed against the Early Learning Goals. The profile indicates whether children are meeting **expected levels of development**, or if they are **exceeding expected levels**, or **not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')**. Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This informs the dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1.

### **Monitoring and Review**

This policy was agreed by staff and is monitored by the Governing Body.

It was ratified by the Governors: Feb 2016

It will be reviewed: Spring 2018