

Meppershall Church of England Academy

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

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Our Christian Vision

At Meppershall Church of England Academy, we aim for academic and personal achievement through:

- helping each child to grow their own potential, in an environment of faith, creativity, aspiration, challenge and celebration;
- equipping each person to make their own unique contribution to the school, community, the wider world and the kingdom of God for the benefit of all.

This is based on two texts from the Bible:

- “I have come that they may have life in all its fullness.” John 10:10
- “What does the Lord require of you except to do justly, to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God?” Micah 6:8

1. Rationale

1.1 At Meppershall CE Academy we believe that early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. Our aim is to provide a caring and stimulating environment where every child develops individually with a love of discovery and learning. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) staff provide children with opportunities that build upon their experiences and interests to enable all children to reach their potential in every aspect of their development.

1.2 At Meppershall CE Academy we embrace the Early Years Foundation Stage framework and the principles and commitments which it requires. The EYFS is a statutory document which details the standards for learning, development and care for all children within the Foundation Stage. At the end of the EYFS the children's learning and achievements are recorded by the completion of the Early Years Profile.

2. A Unique Child

2.1 Meppershall CE Academy recognises that children arrive in the EYFS with a wide range of skills, abilities and particular interests. Before the children start school, staff obtain information from pre-school settings about the children who will be starting school. Foundation Stage staff visit as many pre-school settings as possible at least once. There are opportunities for the children to come to the school in the summer term. Extra visits can be arranged if needed as we aim to ensure all parents and children feel positive about starting school in September.

2.2 Our Early Years Lead, and where necessary, our Acting SENDCo, Ms Jessica Rogers, work with Foundation Stage staff, families and children, offering appropriate support with any additional educational needs in order to ensure that every child's needs can be met.

2.3 We recognise that children's individuality means that they will cope with starting school in different ways. Initially Meppershall Pre School are invited to a performance of our Christmas Play in December. We invite all new starters into

school for 'stay and discover' sessions in the summer term before they start school in order to familiarise them with the classroom and outdoor areas. Children who do not attend Meppershall Pre School are also invited to these sessions. New entrants are also invited to attend our Sports Day at the end of the summer term and can join in the pre-school race. On 'Step Up' (transition) day the children will come to spend another session in their new class.

2.4 Starting School.

Foundation Stage children will start school on a full time basis at the start of the year. If for any reason the class teacher and parents feel that a child is not yet ready to start full time this can be discussed with the Head of School and a flexible, phased starting pattern can be agreed.

3. Positive Relationships

3.1 At Meppershall CE Academy we recognise the huge contribution that parents and carers make to their children's learning and we work hard to develop and sustain positive links with parents. We actively encourage parents to become involved in the life of the school, and operate an open door policy in which we encourage parents to speak to their child's teacher to share any celebrations, concerns or worries. We actively encourage parents to become involved with their child's Early Years Profile, by sharing observations through use of the Tapestry app.

3.2 Parents are encouraged to meet with teachers both before their children start school and during the academic year. Foundation Staff are easily accessible to parents every day after school.

4. Learning and Development

4.1 At Meppershall CE Academy we believe children learn best through real experiences and active learning. We know children learn at their highest level when at play; therefore, we do not make a distinction between play and work. We provide a daily routine for the children, which includes 'adult led, 'adult initiated' and 'child initiated', which is referred to as 'Discovery Time', learning opportunities. We facilitate children's learning throughout Discovery Time and plan play activities influenced by their interests. In doing so, we ensure that children have opportunities to engage and thrive in all aspects and areas of learning.

4.2 The statutory identified seven areas of learning comprise:

Three Prime Areas:

Communication and Language

Physical Development

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

And

Four Specific Areas:

Literacy	Understanding the World
Maths	Expressive Arts & Design

4.3 We believe that it is vitally important for adults to support children's learning through play. Learning should be personalised by building on the child's interests and involving them fully in reflecting on what they have learned and how they may build on their skills. Children are intrinsically motivated to be lifelong learners through our adopted approach of *In the Moment Planning*. The views of the learners are sought at the end of each day, to gather suggestions and ideas of activities that the children believe would support their learning.

4.4 At appropriate opportunities the adults will:

- Question, respond to questions and engage the child in extended conversations that support sustained shared thinking
- Extend vocabulary, knowledge and skills
- Encourage independence
- Add resources that stimulate motivate and engage the learner · Demonstrate / model and work alongside
- Help children to see links in their learning
- Support and encourage
- Encourage children to be problem solvers and investigators
- Re-direct the play if necessary
- Help children to learn how to negotiate and resolve conflict
- Promote children's well-being
- Observe and assess learning
- Record judgments and plan for next steps in learning
- Provide feedback to child/other adults/parents
- Ensure the environment is safe and secure
- Encourage children to 'plan, do and review' child initiated activities
- Encourage children to become confident and competent users of ICT.

4.5 At Meppershall CE Academy we model and foster respect, empathy and caring relationships. We encourage understanding of self and a responsibility to others. So that we can play and learn safely and happily at Meppershall we encourage the children to:

- Be kind to each other
- Look after each other
- Listen to one another

5. Foundation Stage Environment

5.1 We aim to provide a rich and varied learning environment as we know this will evoke the children's curiosity and increase their motivation to investigate, explore and to become involved; extending their ideas and experiences. The learning environment comprises of the inside and outside areas. Both, which are of equal importance, will be available to the children and resources will be reviewed regularly in order to make the best provision for the children's learning and development. Children will have the freedom to move from one to the other during their Child Initiated time (Discovering Time). Both the indoor and outdoor areas address the 7 areas of Foundation Stage learning.

6. Observing and Assessing

6.1 We use information from parents and pre-school settings to inform our knowledge and understanding of every child. In school all Foundation Stage staff are involved in observing the children, noting down what is observed. Judgements are made about children's attainment in each of the seven areas. At the beginning of EYFS at Meppershall Academy a Baseline assessment is conducted within the first six weeks of them joining us. This helps us to understand where children are when they join us. Following this, half termly assessments are made by the Foundation Stage staff and the Early Years Profile (EY Profile) is updated. At the end of the year the profile is finalised.

6.2 We maintain online profiles via an app for parents called Seesaw, which document the child's learning journey. These include observations, photos / video recordings and examples of their work. We encourage children and parents to make contributions to their child's profile and to access them. In our Reception Class we use our knowledge of the children and evidence collected in the children's profile, to inform our judgements and to support completion of the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile.

6.3 We analyse and review what we see or know about each child's development and learning, and then we will make informed decisions about the child's progress. This enables us to plan appropriate next steps and is an ongoing process throughout the school year.

7. Transition to Year 1

7.1 In the summer term the reception children experience two transition sessions in the Year 1 class. Foundation Stage and Year 1 staff works closely together to ensure a smooth transition from Foundation Stage to Year 1, ensuring that the principles of the Foundation Stage are built upon. Some of the transition events include Visits from Year 1 teacher into Year R class; EYFS teacher takes children to the Year 1 class for sessions; Reception children visit year 1 classroom; Introduction to morning playtime in second half of summer term. Increased structured teaching approach in summer term. Finally discovery time is included in Year 1 timetable for the first half term.

8. Equal Opportunities and Racial Equality (Refer also to these specific policies)

8.1 All school policies have an explicit aim of promoting race equality and will be reviewed in terms of their contribution and effectiveness in achieving this aim. Meppershall CE Academy provides a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils including those in the Foundation Stage. We recognise that citizenship presents opportunities for encouraging respect for diversity. Our co-coordinators are responsible for ensuring their subject programmes/schemes of work raise awareness of multi-cultural issues and challenge stereotypical views of different racial and cultural groups and nomadic communities. In the purchase of resources, our co-ordinators will ensure that materials reflect and celebrate ethnic and cultural diversity.

9. Looked After Children

9.1 As for all our pupils, Meppershall CE Academy is committed to helping every Looked After Child to achieve the highest standards they can. To this end staff will ensure that in delivering the curriculum they set suitable learning challenges for LAC, respond to the diverse learning needs of LAC, and help to overcome the potential barriers to learning and assessment for LAC.

10. Intimate care

10.1 Policy.

Intimate care is given to children who need it in line with our school policy. This is any care that involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. However, depending on the age and stage of a child's development, they may need some support, for example, dressing, wiping their bottom after using the toilet and changing underwear and clothes following an accident.

10.2 Procedure

A parent will inform staff if their child is likely to require such care and a discussion will take place to agree how their needs can be met as closely in school as they would be met at home. Parents provide clean clothing and wipes if needed. Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child. Privacy is maintained as far as possible and members of staff are always expected to change a child within sight of another member of staff. Parents are informed when this care is given.

11 Monitoring and review

Monitoring of the standards of the achievement and of the quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is the responsibility of the Head of School and SLT.