



**Millbay
Academy**

Early Years Policy

Date created: July 2020

1. Aims

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 anti discriminatory practice.

2. Legislation

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

3. Structure of the EYFS

Our setting at Millbay Academy welcomes children from 4-5 years old. The school day starts at 8.45 a.m. and ends at 3.00p.m.

4. Teaching and Learning

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2017 statutory framework of the EYFS.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

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

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

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

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, in those first few weeks of the child's school experience, practitioners focus strongly on the 3 prime areas with an understanding of Leuven scales and how these impact on the child's ability to engage and learn. Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience.

Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate. In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and adapt and adjust to include these in their practice.

Planning considers the 7 areas of learning and development and is effectively organised to ensure that the curriculum is broad, balanced and enriched for every child using both indoor and outdoor spaces to promote learning.

We recognise the importance of the role that all early years educators play in the care and education of our youngest children.

These roles include:

- Building relationships.
- Getting to know all of our children and families
- Observing children to identify their wellbeing and involvement, their needs , strengths, schemas and interests.
- Planning for next steps in learning.
- Supporting and extending child initiated activity.
- Engaging children in focussed activity.
- Maintaining and developing a stimulating, welcoming safe and challenging learning environment.
- Working as a team to ensure that all children reach their full potential.

Outdoor learning

Outdoor learning is a fundamental part of the Early Years and it has a positive impact on children's development. Being outdoors offers children opportunities to do things in different ways and on different scales compared to indoors.

Our outdoor environment provides a range of resources and activities for children to explore and we try to ensure each of the curriculum areas are incorporated into the outdoor environment each day.

Nursery and Reception share the outdoor areas and all of the children have free-flow access to them during continuous provision. Each area has a range of learning opportunities including climbing equipment, role play, balancing equipment, construction, water play and literacy and maths opportunities. Outdoors is both a teaching and learning environment, where there is a balance of child-led and adult-led learning. The outdoor area is comprehensively risk assessed and daily checks are completed by staff.

Continuous Provision

Children are taught how to access the equipment in each area of provision independently to enable them to follow their own ideas and interests. There is a high level of staff involvement in children's chosen activities and play.

There are planned age appropriate 'focused activities' for specific children, or groups of children providing a balance of child and adult initiated activities. Differentiated activities are organised to meet the learning needs of each child, and adults model and facilitate the development of vocabulary in each area of learning.

Children are given a wide variety of stimulating, exciting experiences which stimulate and develop, language, vocabulary, imagination and skills. Opportunities to develop characteristics of effective learning are provided in all areas of provision. In the Reception classes, whole class carpet times take place at the beginning and end of each session both morning and afternoon to ensure that children have access to daily phonics sessions,

mathematics, and topic-based inputs. Children have access to informative, purposeful learning walls, the use of which is modelled by adults, and which support children's independence in the learning environment.

Assessment

Adults engage in formative assessment, through in-the-moment engagement in continuous provision, as well as in focussed teaching activities. These are recorded on Tapestry, or in learning journals, and shared with children and parents.

We assess and track Characteristics of Effective Learning and recognise that these are fundamental to children's learning and development in the Early Years. Formative assessments are used to create a detailed profile of the child at the end of each half term, and this will be shared with parents via Tapestry. Data and analysis of data is used to inform adult-based inputs and continuous provision, in order to address identified gaps in knowledge and understanding through rich experiences.

Near the end of the reception year, pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

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

Welfare and Safeguarding

It is important to us that all children in our school are 'safe'. In the EYFS, 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 our children. "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." (Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2017)

Staff adhere to the Safeguarding Policy and expectations.

Health and Safety

At Millbay Academy here are clear procedures for assessing risk which includes procedures for keeping children safe during outings and for any aspects of the environment or provision that may require a further risk assessment

There are systems in place to ensure that medicines and the systems for obtaining information about a child's needs for medication are kept up to date. Training is provided for staff where the administration of medicine requires medical or technical knowledge. Medicines (both prescription and non-prescription) are only administered to a child where written permission for that particular medicine has been obtained from the child's parent and/or carer. A written record is kept each time a medicine is administered to a child and informs the child's parents and/or carers on the same day. Fresh drinking water is available at all times. Children's' dietary needs are recorded and acted upon when required. Milk and

fruit are available during the morning session. A first aider is accessible at all times and a record of accidents and injuries is kept. Further safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.