



## Marazion School

### Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

**Reviewed by Reception Class Teacher and staff team; Assistant Headteacher and Link Governor for Early Years Foundation Stage: March 2024**

**Approved by Full Governors' Board: March 2024**

#### **Introduction**

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.'

*Early Years Foundation Stage Profile - Department for Children, Schools and Families 2012*

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. At Marazion School children are admitted to reception in the September following their fourth birthday.

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Marazion School we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development.

However, we also believe that early childhood is valid in itself as part of life. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

#### **Aims & Objectives**

We aim to support all children to become independent and collaborative learners. We provide a broad, balanced and diverse curriculum that will enable children to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential.

At Marazion School, we:

- Provide a happy, safe, stimulating and challenging programme of learning and development for the children to experience as they begin their journey through school.
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant, creative and diverse curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond and enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence.
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress.
- Develop excellent relationships with parents and carers to build a strong partnership in supporting their children.

- Provide a caring and inclusive learning environment which is sensitive to the requirements of the individual child including those who have additional needs.

The early-years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- It builds on what our children already know and can do
- It enables children to experience the awe and wonder of the world in which they live
- It ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged
- It offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children, and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors
- It provides a rich and stimulating environment
- It acknowledges the importance of a full working partnership with parents and carers.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based on 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 Development** – An acknowledgement that children learn in different ways and at different rates.

### A Unique Child

- At Marazion School we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We understand that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates, whilst their attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others. We use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning. We listen to the voices of our children, creating an environment where children feel safe and secure to express themselves – they are heard.

### **Inclusion**

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

At Marazion School we believe that all of our children matter, and take pride in giving them every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning. In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds. 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 and the schools SENCO is called upon for further information and advice. Appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the school's Inclusion Policy for SEN.

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.

### Positive Relationships

At Marazion School we recognise that children learn to be strong, confident and independent from being in secure relationships. Building strong positive relationships is integral and staff are sensitive to children's needs, value their feelings and children know that they are special and an important part of our Marazion School family. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with our children and their families.

#### **Parents as Partners**

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

- Talking to parents/carers about their child before they start school at our open afternoons and 'Beginning School' parent's meeting
- Arranging, where possible, visits by the teacher to all children in their home setting and childcare provision prior to them starting school
- Providing a Transition Meeting to give all parents relevant information about Marazion School
- Inviting parents/carers and children the opportunity to spend time in Reception Class for transition visits before starting school
- Operating an open-door policy for parents/carers with any queries or concerns. Conversely, if Foundation staff have concerns about the progress of a child, they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss them
- Encouraging parents to contribute to their child's *Seesaw* profile by sharing and celebrating achievements and moments from home and family life
- Sending out Curriculum Information detailing the areas of learning and the overarching theme of the term or half-term
- Inviting parents to attend informal meetings about areas of the curriculum, such as using *Seesaw*, phonics and Early Reading meetings
- Offering a formal parent/teacher consultation meeting once a year at which their child's progress is discussed
- Sending a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of their time in reception
- Asking parents to sign a generic permission form for educational visits, food tasting and phonographs etc
- Parents are invited to a range of activities throughout the school year such as workshops, Christmas Nativity and sports day etc
- Offering a range of activities, throughout the year, to encourage specific collaboration between child, school and parents eg Parents and Pancakes reading event
- Keeping parents up to date with their child's learning via *Seesaw*, emails and social media.
- Invite parents to 'Outcome' of topics and sessions to showcase new skills

All staff involved with the EYFS team aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them.

### Enabling Environments

Our Early Years team value the fact that children are born ready, able and eager to learn. We know that every child is unique and constantly learning and evolving. We create enabling environments that respond to the children's individual need and interests, providing them with exciting, stimulating resources and rich real-life learning opportunities through play.


At Marazion School, we believe that play is crucial and is a right for every child. Play is essential for children's development, enabling opportunities for children to build confidence, explore, solve problems and interact with

others. We know from research that the best outcomes for children’s learning occur where most of the activity within a child’s day is a mixture of:

- child-initiated play, actively supported by adults
- focused learning, with adults guiding the learning through playful, rich experiential activities.

Through a balance of child led and adult initiated activities, children lead their learning but are also guided by adults to challenge themselves and reach their full potential.

At one end, too little adult support can limit learning. While play without adults can be rich and purposeful, at times it can become chaotic or repetitive activity which is ‘hands-on, brains-off’. At the other end of the scale, too much tightly directed activity deprives children of the opportunity to engage actively with learning. Effective Early Years practitioners will organise the time, space and activities in the daily routine to reflect the overall combination which best supports children’s well-being and learning. In the Reception Class of Marazion School you will see this continuum being demonstrated throughout the school day. It may look like this:

Unstructured	Child-Initiated Play	Focused Learning	Highly Structured
			
Play without adult support	Adult support for an enabling environment, and sensitive interaction	Adult-guided, playful experiential activities	Adult-directed, little or no play

We focus our teaching on skills, where the emphasis is on the process and child-driven pedagogy rather than an outcome or final product. Opportunities for these skills to be transferred and developed are planned into the indoor and outdoor classroom learning environment. Within the learning environment, a free-flow between the indoors and outdoors is constantly available, where children independently access continuous provision in their playful learning to apply and re-apply their learning.

Our Early Year’s team work hard to ensure children experience the awe and wonder of the world in which they live and have real-life experiences both in the outdoor learning area and within the world around us. There is frequent use of our school minibus to visit inspiring places that give meaning and to embed their learning. Children are also provided with daily ‘focus sessions’, concentrating on key literacy and numeracy skills in short bursts. These are planned from the on-going assessment gained from adult observations which also continually influence planning to suit the ‘now’ in children’s development. Highlights of children’s learning are recorded in observations using ‘Seesaw’ which parents can readily access and interact with.

The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision. Play-based learning is paramount and children have opportunities to direct their own learning with planned opportunities provided by staff. We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning and reflects the individual’s interests, passions and abilities. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning. We ensure that resources and spaces are safe to use and checked regularly.

## Learning and Development

The EYFS Curriculum - Our curriculum for the Foundation Stage reflects the areas of learning identified in the Early Learning Goals.

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. None of the areas of learning can be delivered in isolation from the others. Our children’s learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skill across a number of learning areas. They require a balance of adult led and child initiated activities in order for most children to reach the levels required at the end of EYFS.

The three **Prime Areas** are:

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

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

### **Specific Areas**

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

Reading is at the heart of our curriculum. We promote and celebrate the love of reading and we prioritise creating a 'language rich' environment through the use of songs, nursery rhymes, stories and quality interactions. Phonics sessions are taught daily using the [Smart Kids Letters and Sounds Phonics Programme](#). Pupils move through the phases of learning, building up a bank of recognised sounds from the simple to the more complex. The programme teaches the skills of blending for reading and segmenting for writing. Pupils have the opportunity to revisit sounds that they may not yet recognise in smaller groups or individually.

### **Characteristics of Effective Learning (COEL)**

We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning and these are reflected and celebrated with parents via Seesaw and 100% work.

**Playing and exploring** - children will have opportunities to investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'. *'Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development.'* Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

**Active learning** - children will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements. *'Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.'* Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence, they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

**Creating and thinking critically** - we encourage and support children to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things. *'When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understanding and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.'* Children should be given the opportunity by showing interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open ended questions. Children can access resources and move around the classroom freely and purposefully to extend their learning.

## **Observation, Assessment and Planning**

The planning within the EYFS follows the school's Topic Based Immersive Approach and is based around projects that are related to children's passions and interests. These plans are used by the EYFS teacher as a guide for weekly planning, however, the teacher may alter their termly Bubble Planning in response to the needs, achievements and interests of the children. This will be indicated on weekly planning. We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs.

Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, and this involves the whole EYFS team and other adults as appropriate. These observations may or may not have a specific focus, and highlights are captured in children's individual *Seesaw* profiles. *Seesaw* also contains memorable moments and achievements provided by parents. During the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed and each child's level of development is recorded against the Early Learning Goals (ELG). Children are assessed whether they are 'emerging' towards the ELG or if they have achieved the 'expected' standard towards the ELG. Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress against these ELG's and also a description about the main characteristics of how their child learns. We also give the parents an opportunity to discuss these judgements with the EYFS teacher.

## **The Learning Environment**

The Foundation Stage classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are specific areas where the children can be active, be quiet, creative etc. Our setting offers a unique opportunity for children to explore within an enriching environment both indoors and outdoors everyday. The EYFS team continually review and adapt the environment to incorporate the children's ideas and to meet their developing needs. As well as their own outdoor classroom, children also take part in Forest Friday sessions where children learn and develop skills and a love for the natural environment in the woodland area. Children also take part in Beach School sessions using the unique environment that is right on our doorstep. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and in different scales than when indoors. The children can explore, using their senses and be physically active and exuberant. Our unique setting

## **Teaching & Learning Styles**

The features of effective teaching and learning in our school are defined in our Quality of Education Policy. The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the Foundation Stage are;

- the partnership between teachers and parents/carers and other setting that helps our children to feel secure at school, and to develop a sense of well-being and achievement
- the understanding that teachers have, of how children develop and learn, and how this must be reflected in their teaching
- the range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions, and extend and develop the children's play, talk or other means of communication
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the ELG by the end of the Foundation Stage
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests, and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management
- to support for learning, with appropriate and accessible space, facilities and equipment, both indoors and outdoors
- the identification through observations, of children's progress and future learning needs, which are regularly shared with parents
- the good relationships between our school and the other educational settings in which the children have been learning before joining our school
- the clear aims of our work, and the regular monitoring of our work to evaluate and improve it
- the regular identification of training needs for all adults working at the Foundation Stage

## **Transition**

We know and understand that starting school is an exciting and sometimes difficult time and we recognise that all children can be vulnerable at a time of change. It is important that all children experience a positive transition to Marazion School to ensure they settle into their new class quickly and happily.

## **Starting Reception**

Children start school with us in the September following their fourth birthday. We aim to make the transition from their pre-school setting to school as smooth as possible. Hence, we arrange:

- A close working relationship with our preschool that shares the same site, Marazion Oasis Childcare Centre. Which includes shared training, a series of transition visits and frequent communication and discussions with children's key workers throughout the year prior to the children starting Marazion school.
- A series of visits to other feeder pre-school's by our Reception staff in the summer term, including discussions with the children's key workers
- Several opportunities for children to spend time in school, both with and without their parents
- Extra transition sessions for some pupils
- Home Visits in September
- Summer term 'Beginning School' meeting for parents to meet the EYFS team and learn more about;
  - the Reception curriculum
  - our uniform, and where school sweatshirts can be purchased
  - school dinners/free school meals
  - explain the arrangements for the gradual induction into reception

## **Health and Safety**

At Marazion School, there are clear procedures for assessing risk (see whole school risk assessment policy and risk assessments in place) which include procedures for keeping children safe during educational visits and for any aspects of the environment or provision that may require a further risk assessment. In addition to this, an annual risk assessment is conducted of the EYFS indoor and outdoor provision, there are safeguarding and child protection policies and there is detailed information and procedures to ensure the safety of the children.

In line with the EYFS statutory framework 2021, we undertake;

- Whole school medical procedures (See Health and Safety Policy), ensuring that 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. Prescription medicines will not be administered unless they have been prescribed for the named child by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist. Non-prescription medicine, such as Calpol can be administered with permission from parents. 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. At Marazion School a written record is kept each time a medicine is administered to a child and the child's parents/carers are informed on the same day.
- Fresh drinking water is available at all times
- Children's dietary needs are recorded and acted upon when required
- Each classroom has a snack and sink area that can provide healthy snacks and drinks. All EYFS staff have received level 2 food hygiene training.
- A first aid bag is accessible at all times and a record of accidents and injuries is kept (see accident and injury policy).
- The EYFS leader as the lead behaviour manager for the Early Years in liaison with the Head Teacher and Deputy Head Teacher (refer to Inclusions policy, behaviour policy, physical restraint policy)
- A health and safety policy and procedures which cover identifying, reporting and dealing with accidents, hazards and faulty equipment.

- A fire and emergency evacuation procedure and policy
- A safeguarding policy stating how mobile phones are stored securely whilst children are in the setting.
- Appropriate clothing. Staff are expected to wear clothing that supports them in getting to a child's level and playing and engaging with children at floor level.
- An Intimate Care Policy to ensure children are treated with sensitivity and respect when supported for example with dressing/undressing; assisting a pupil requiring medical care; or cleaning a pupil who has soiled him/herself.
- A Sun cream policy. Every adult in the Early Years is responsible for ensuring the children in the setting are safe and well. In very hot weather Early Years staff will support the children in applying sun cream unless specifically told not to by their parents. A letter to this effect will be sent to the parents, asking for parents to apply sun cream to their child before school and provide their child with a sun hat and water bottle.

### **Monitoring and review**

This policy will be regularly reviewed and any feedback from teachers, parents/carers and pupils will be considered. There is a named Governor, Caroline Peers, who is responsible for EYFS. This governor will discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion. The Head teacher and various subject coordinators will also carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.