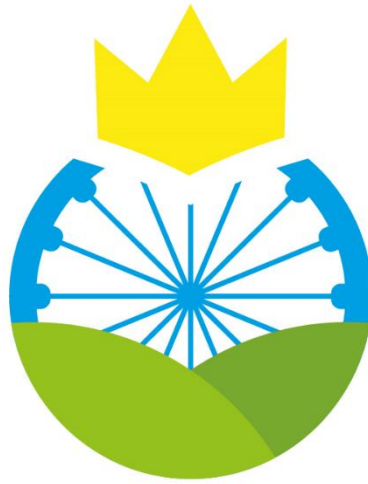


King's Meadow Academy



King's Meadow
Academy

EYFS Policy

Reviewed: September 2024

Next Review: September 2025



Introduction

Early Years education is the foundation upon which young children build the rest of their schooling. It is a holistic education that encompasses all learning and development.

This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) at King's Meadow Academy.

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of practitioners working in the EYFS setting, including both teaching and non-teaching adults.

In the policy the term 'setting' refers to the Early Years educational provision at King's Meadow Academy. In the policy the term 'practitioner' refers to the members of staff working with children within the setting.

The Early Years setting is available to children who enter Reception in the academic year of their fifth birthday.

Our Vision and Aims

At Kings Meadow Academy we believe every child should enjoy coming to school and feel happy and safe while they are here. We nurture individuals and provide support to children and families throughout their time in Early Years. We want their first experience of school to be exciting and memorable.

We provide high quality experiences that are engaging, motivating and relevant to our learners. These are based on an excellent knowledge of how children learn, the curriculum as well as their personal needs and interests. We develop all aspects of a child both academic, practical and social skills, aiming to develop a resilience and thirst for learning that they will carry with them for life.

It is our role to provide meaningful opportunities for children to learn, practise and apply skills in a range of contexts. This includes returning to concepts regularly to build on knowledge, skills and understanding in order to develop a deep understanding. We encourage children to make links in their learning across all areas of the curriculum, so that they are able to draw on the necessary skills to solve new problems. In order to succeed, we believe children need to learn to take risks and learn from their mistakes. This only occurs if there is a culture in the classroom that is supportive and the children feel safe. Our classroom is a space where children are encouraged to work in collaboration both with peers and adults to find answers to the questions that interest them. Through working in partnership with children we have found that they begin to understand that learning is a lifelong process and that we can find things out together.

We believe that in order for learning to be effective, children need to be engaged and feel connected to their learning. We may provide 'hooks' that really spark a child's imagination and interests which lead to high quality outcomes as the children have real enthusiasm from the initial spark. The adults may take the child's lead and follow their own learning interests. This is a powerful approach and encourages children to take responsibility for their own learning with the adults providing appropriate feedback and challenge to move the learning forwards.

We build in reflection time within the day so that children have a chance to reflect on the learning that has taken place. When children share their learning, other children become involved and ideas are developed further. This supports, encourages and leads to children becoming more open-minded about other's ideas, how resources can be utilised and to respect others. This develops the qualities that will ensure that the children we teach become responsible and caring citizens of the world.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Framework

Teaching in the EYFS setting at King's Meadow Academy is delivered in accordance with the government's statutory guidance 'Early Years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework' (September 2021). This document sets out the standards that school and childcare providers must meet for the learning development and care of children from birth to 5.

The curriculum is centred on 3 prime areas of learning:

1. Communication and Language (CL)
2. Physical Development (PD)
3. Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)

Providers must also support activities through four specific areas. These are:

1. Literacy (L)
2. Mathematics (M)
3. Understanding the World (UW)
4. Expressive Arts and Design (EAD)

These seven Areas of Learning and Development address children's physical, cognitive, linguistic, social and emotional development.

No one aspect of development stands in isolation from the others as all areas are closely interlinked. This ensures the delivery of a holistic, child-centred curriculum which allows children to make links in their learning.

Initially, when children join our setting there is a strong emphasis on CL, PD and PSED. This is based on our knowledge of the needs of the children and the typical levels of development that they enter at. Staff use Wellcomm to screen children's expressive and receptive language skills within their first term in school. Those children requiring intervention are identified and immediately given the appropriate support.

Curriculum Design

The EYFS framework provides a long term plan to follow to ensure that children can meet the Early Learning Goals at the end of their Reception year. There is a curriculum map for Reception. The curriculum at King's Meadow Academy is sequential, building on the key skills our children need for learning and to be prepared for KS1. Our curriculum has been designed so that children know more and remember more. The key vocabulary has been identified and is explicitly taught as we are aware that is something our children need to develop. Our curriculum is taught through broad topics which have been carefully chosen to engage and follow young children's interests. We provide high quality experiences that are engaging, motivating and relevant to our learners.

Medium term planning is created with all early years' practitioners' involvement and takes into account the individual children's learning and developmental needs. These highlight specific skills and knowledge that children will develop during the half term.

Short term plans are created based on observations and assessments made by all practitioners.

Staff use the NCETM Mastering Number programme for Maths and Read Write Inc for phonics teaching.

All areas of learning are planned for and available to access within the setting. The learning opportunities provided include a range of adult focused and child initiated activities indoors and outdoors. These learning opportunities are scaffolded according to the child's stage of development and link with AfL.

Educational visitors and visits within the local community and further afield are also planned to support children's learning within the classroom.

Our learning environment

In our environment children have the experience of both the indoor and outdoor environment all day every day.

Indoor Environment

Children have access to all areas of the curriculum through continuous provision. This is available all the time throughout the year and regularly enhanced based on identification of needs through assessment for learning. Our space has areas dedicated to particular play, for example, creative, messy or large-scale block play. We have a wide range of high quality resources to support learning.

Outdoor Environment

Children have opportunities to be outside on a daily basis all year round. We provide free flow play, allowing children to experience the areas of the curriculum both indoors and outdoors.

Being outdoors:

- has a positive impact on children's sense of well-being and helps all aspects of children's development.
- offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors.
- gives children first-hand contact with weather, seasons and the natural world.
- offers children the freedom to explore, use their senses, and be physically active and exuberant.

We have recently further developed our outdoor environment and we have invested in resources provided by Early Excellence, where some of the staff were trained to use the equipment to enhance the children's learning and development effectively.

At King's Meadow Academy we recognise that young children learn best when they are active. We understand that active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods. Therefore, we believe that Early Years education should be as practical as possible and our EYFS setting has an ethos of learning through play. We recognise the importance of children's play as an essential and rich part of their learning process, supporting them in all areas of development. Play is a powerful motivator encouraging children to be creative and to develop their ideas, understanding and language. It can provide multiple ways for children to learn a variety of different skills and concepts.

In the EYFS setting at King's Meadow Academy practitioners provide both adult and child initiated play opportunities inside and outside. These activities are designed to engage children in practical, first-hand experiences which will support children to discover, explore, investigate, develop their personal interests and areas of curiosity, and help to make sense of the world around them as they begin to understand specific concepts. Play opportunities are also set up to provide children with opportunities to apply newly acquired knowledge, demonstrating their skills and level of understanding.

Role of the adult

In the EYFS setting at King's Meadow Academy all the adults:

- Recognise that language development is key for success
- Encourage children to actively explore all the space and resources.
- Encourage children to use all of their senses to learn about the world about them
- Acknowledge the importance of activities that promote self-motivation and independence.
- Know when to step back and observe and allow children to find out things for themselves.
- Know when to intervene to support and extend a child's learning.
- Understand that children learn best when they have time to work through their ideas.
- Attempt to understand children's perceptions and reasoning
- Encourage children to observe and ask questions and develop ideas.
- Ensure there is a balance between adult directed and child led activities.

Assessment/ observations and Record Keeping

On-going assessment is an essential aspect of the effective running of the EYFS setting at King's Meadow Academy. Regular, planned and focused assessments are made of children's learning and individual needs.

The main EYFS assessment method is through practitioners' observations of children. Practitioners observe continually when they are with the children. They observe in order to capture significant moments of children's learning. This enables staff to identify and narrow gaps, identify need, scaffold, intervene and deepen their learning. All practitioners are involved in observing children. This enables staff to intervene early with tools such as, Launchpad to Literacy, Wellcomm and intervene daily as every day counts.

We observe in a variety of different ways, these include observing:

- An individual child (to observe general development or an area of concern)
- A group of children (to observe their interaction, a selection of their activities and their social relationships.)
- An activity (to observe how children respond to it.)
- An area of the classroom (How is the area being used? Which children visit it? Which equipment is used? How? Are there implications for future resources or the repositioning of equipment? Does one group or gender dominate the area? If so how can this be overcome?)

Practitioners use observations to support their developing knowledge of individual children. It informs them of children's abilities, needs, interests and play schemas. Observations are evaluated, children's learning priorities are identified and relevant learning opportunities are planned to support children to make the next steps and progress. These next steps may be addressed immediately or fed into the short term plans to enable children to make progress and then these are evaluated.

Children in Reception take part in the government Reception baseline assessment within the first six weeks of starting school. They are also assessed against milestones which have been developed Trust wide. The baseline covers the prime areas, literacy and maths. The outcomes of these are fed into our data system where children's progress is reviewed termly.

In the final term of their Reception year, the EYFS profile is completed for each child. The profile is a reflection of the on-going observations; all relevant records held by our setting; discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution. Each child is assessed on the Early Learning Goals, whether they are meeting expected levels of development. Judgments made on children's development are based on practitioners' knowledge of

children's learning across all seven areas. These are passed on to the Year 1 teachers along with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. We also share the results with parents/carers.

Assessment for Learning

Assessment for learning (formative assessment) takes place when learning is happening. Feedback is mainly given orally and takes place throughout the learning process. It is also discussed at the end of the session, the end of the day and at the end of the week.

Reflection on learning is an important element of AfL, it promotes independent learning, communication and support in the classroom. In our setting this occurs when adults model appropriate language and behaviour. It is sometimes developed through peer and self -assessment and evaluation which is given as oral feedback

Learning Journeys

Our learning journey records children's progress over the academic year. We record key moments in all areas of learning on our learning journey wall display which is updated each half term and a floor book which allows children to reflect on their learning over the year to date.

Parents/Carers as Partners

At King's Meadow Academy we recognise the importance of establishing positive relationships with parents/carers. We understand that an effective partnership between the academy and home will have a positive impact on children's learning and development. Practitioners endeavour to encourage the regular sharing of information about the children with parents/carers.

We value the role of parents/carers as children's primary educators. Practitioners encourage parents/carers to share their unique knowledge of their child, providing further insight into the child as an individual (e.g. characteristics, interests, experiences, likes, dislikes). This supports practitioners in establishing interesting and stimulating learning experiences, responding to children's needs and interests.

Parents/carers are kept informed of what is happening in the setting through regular class newsletters, Class Dojo messages, reading records and informal chatting at the beginning and end of the day. This also gives suggestions of how parents/carers can support their children's learning at home; consolidating and building on what has been covered in the setting. We send daily RWI videos to support the learning that has happened in class that day so parents can reinforce this at home. The Class Story on Class Dojo gives an insight into what the children have been learning in class. Parents can add information, including photos and videos, about their child to their Class Dojo portfolio.

Parents/carers are invited to attend parents' evenings during the course of the academic year.

- The first of these takes place during the Autumn term to allow practitioners and parents/carers to discuss how children have settled into the setting.
- Another parent's evening takes place during the Spring term where practitioners will feedback on children's learning and development progress.
- At the end of the year parents receive a written report which includes their child's EYFSP result.

Other opportunities for practitioners to share children's learning, development and well-being with parents/carers include our learning journey, Class Dojo stories, and celebration assemblies where children's achievements are recognised. Parents/carers are invited into school for a variety of experiences,

workshops where they can become involved in activities within the classroom with their child, for instance, to observe phonics lessons, participate in workshops, watch our Harvest Festival or Christmas concert.

The setting has a friendly, open-doors ethos and practitioners are available to talk to parents at the beginning and end of the day. Parents/carers are always welcomed into the academy and encouraged to discuss any concerns they might have.

Admissions and Induction

King's Meadow Academy provide full-time Early Years education for children in the Reception Year, this is for children who enter the Academy from September of the academic year in which they will turn five years old.

In the summer term before their child starts Reception parents/carers are invited into the academy. At this meeting information regarding the induction process and what goes on in the setting is shared. There is also time for informal chat and questions. Academy information packs will be distributed to parents/carers at this meeting, detailing academy routines and expectations.

Before they start in the setting, all children are offered a home visit and school visits in the term before they start. The purpose of these initial visits are for the children to meet their new practitioners and start to become familiar with the setting environment.

Practitioners, with parental permission, will also go to visit the children in their current pre-school settings. The aim of these visits is to support practitioners to develop their knowledge and understanding of each child in order to make the transition period to King's Meadow Academy as smooth as possible.

From September children attend the setting full-time. Every effort is made to make children feel safe, secure and happy. There is a relaxed and open ethos in the setting. Each child is assigned a key person. Established routines, a calm atmosphere and encouraging talk are some of the strategies practitioners use to maintain children's positive feelings about the academy.

See Admissions Policy for more information.

Equal Opportunities

All practitioners at King's Meadow Academy have a responsibility to maintain positive attitudes to diversity and difference, ensuring that inclusive practice is delivered in the EYFS setting. The Early Years practitioners exploit opportunities to teach children about British Values and protected characteristics.

All children, irrespective of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture or religion, and social circumstances, have the opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development within the EYFS setting at King's Meadow Academy.

See Equal Opportunities Policy for more information.

Special Educational Needs

See Special Educational Needs Policy.

Behavioural issues

See Behaviour Policy.