



# Early Years Policy

**Person responsible: Headteacher**

**Ratified by the governing body: Spring 2022**

**Date for review: Spring 2025**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anne Marie Renshaw', is positioned above the printed name.

**Reverend Anne Marie Renshaw**

**Chair of governors**

**“Giving top priority to the youngest age group is an investment in the future. They are the seed corn of the future, and their development will determine the fabric of tomorrow’s society.”** (Kellner Pringle)

### **Intent**

Early Years education requires a holistic approach, encompassing all learning and development and is the basis upon which children’s learning journey in school begins.

At Messing Primary School we aim to:

- recognise that all children are unique and special;
- recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates;
- use praise and encouragement to develop a positive attitude to learning;
- support all children to achieve their potential, identifying and supporting as soon as possible those who need additional help
- provide a secure, caring learning environment where children feel happy and know that they are valued,
- deliver a broad and balanced curriculum, including focus on our whole school key drivers, respect, resilience and reasoning;
- encourage and develop children’s natural desire, interest, excitement and motivation to learn through providing play-based learning experiences which reflect children’s personal interests and areas of curiosity as well as providing opportunities to try new things,
- promote independent learning in a range of environments, inside and outside;
- build on children’s existing knowledge and skills as well as broadening their experiences, encouraging them to enjoy and embrace new challenges and make links between their learning
- teach children to express and communicate their needs and feelings in appropriate ways, including opportunities to develop their well-being and the ability to self-regulate emotions;
- provide high expectations, encouraging children to develop perseverance and self-belief
- encourage children’s independence and decision-making, supporting them to take risks and to learn through their mistakes;
- support children to develop care, respect and appreciation for others, including those with beliefs, cultures and opinions that differ to their own;
- Enable children to feel confident in our school community, equipped with the tools needed to transition to Year 1 effectively;
- create a partnership with parents to support and enhance the development of the children.

### **Implementation**

#### **Teaching and Learning:**

Teaching in the EYFS at Messing Primary School is delivered in accordance with the government’s statutory document *‘The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage’ (March 2021 – Effective September 2021)*. Within EYFS, activities are planned on a half termly basis, using a topic approach to give children a variety of learning experiences and opportunities that support them to work towards the Early Learning Goals as well as preparing

them for the transition to year 1. Key texts are identified to use to ignite children's interest and develop understanding of books and print, comprehension skills and phonological awareness.

The curriculum is centred on 3 prime areas of learning:

1. Personal, Social and Emotional Development
2. Physical Development
3. Communication and Language Development

Activities are supported through four specific areas which strengthen the prime areas.

These are:

1. Literacy
2. Mathematics
3. Understanding of the World
4. Expressive Arts and Design

Throughout the day the children participate in a range of activities. Staff work with children individually and in groups within the different areas of the indoor and outdoor classrooms. Staff use these opportunities to support children in different ways such as introducing new concepts, scaffolding learning, supporting language development or challenging and developing children's thinking through use of questioning. Staff use these learning opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of each individual child. They also provide opportunities to gather evidence of the children's learning and development in different ways. Photos and videos are regularly shared with parents through Tapestry the online learning journal. Parents can also contribute and add their own evidence of their child's development to the journal.

Whole class carpet sessions happen at different times throughout the day with an emphasis on developing listening, speaking and language skills. These sessions incorporate activities such as song and rhyme time, story times and circle times.

The children also participate in a daily phonics session, involving a variety of online and physical resources. Intervention opportunities are provided for those children who find this area of learning challenging.

### **Play:**

At Messing Primary School we believe that play, both indoors and outdoors, is a fundamental part of how young children learn. Play is enjoyable and can be challenging. Through play, children will develop skills across all the Prime and Specific areas of learning, working towards achieving the Early Learning Goals.

In a secure environment with effective adult support, children will be able to:

- explore, develop and represent learning experiences that help them make sense of the world;
- practise and build upon concepts, ideas and skills;
- take risks and make mistakes;
- think creatively and imaginatively;
- investigate and solve problems, communicating with others;
- use talk to rehearse their feelings;
- be alone, play alongside or co-operate with others;
- learn to understand the need for rules and practise controlling their impulses;

- express fears in controlled and safe situations to relieve anxious experiences.

Adults in the setting will support play by:

- resourcing stimulating environments;
- planning a mix of adult supported and child-led activities;
- extending and supporting children’s spontaneous play;
- extending and developing children’s language and communication in their play;
- observing and listening to children’s communication and ideas; using these observations to develop play and to inform future planning;
- narrating children’s play;
- asking questions.

### **Special Educational and Disability Needs:**

Some children may find learning challenging and we provide effective and focussed interventions to support children who are not on track to meet expectations at the end of the year. This is provided in an inclusive way and communicated to parents so they can also support their child and give them every chance to achieve a good level of development by the end of the EYFS. Adaptions to the environment, equipment and resources are made as needed to meet individual children’s specific needs.

### **Equal opportunities.**

We aim to ensure that all pupils regardless of age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, attainment and background, have full access to the EYFS curriculum. Teachers respond to diverse learning needs so that pupils are appropriately supported and challenged to experience success in learning and achieve as high a standard as possible.

As an educationally inclusive school the teaching and learning, achievements, attitudes and well-being of every young person matters. We take into account pupils’ varied life experiences and needs, providing equal opportunities for all pupils, whatever their age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, attainment and background, to ensure that every child really does matter.

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all practitioners working in the EYFS.

### **Impact**

The impact of the EYFS curriculum is reflected in having well rounded, happy and confident children transitioning into Year 1.

We measure progress and children’s learning across the year through formative assessments which are based on the teacher’s knowledge of the child, their learning journeys and photographs and videos recorded on Tapestry. We moderate within the school with our year 1 teacher and head teacher. We are also part of the local early years consortium where we can share good practise and moderate. We aim to match or exceed the National and Local Authority data for children achieving Good Level of Development.

Summative assessments are also carried out. Within the first six weeks of being in school the children complete the national Reception baseline assessment. Staff also carry out a mixture of informal and planned observations, interactions with the child and along with regular discussions between staff these form our own “baseline assessment.” This is then

used to help track pupils progress throughout the year. At the end of the year the children are assessed against the early learning goals.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Target Tracker programme is used for baseline assessments and to monitor progress throughout the year.

### **Parents as Partners:**

At Messing Primary School we recognise the importance of establishing positive relationships with parents, as highlighted by the EYFS framework. We understand that an effective partnership between school and home will have a positive impact on children's learning and development. So, practitioners endeavour to encourage the regular sharing of information about the children with parents.

We value the role of parents as children's primary educators. Through regular, planned contact with parents and informal chats, practitioners encourage parents 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 the practitioners in establishing interesting and stimulating learning experiences, responding to children's needs and interests.

Parents are kept informed about what is happening at school through regular letters, half termly curriculum updates, informal chats, notes in home/school communication books, formal Parent Consultation sessions in the Autumn and Spring term and an end of year report in the Summer term.

We hold "Stay and Play" sessions during which the parents stay with their child in the classroom working on a variety of activities based on a particular focus for learning. During these sessions parents can look at Learning Journeys with their child.

We also hold Learning Partnership meetings that parents can attend to find out about how they can support their child's learning at home, consolidating and building upon what has been covered at school.

Parents are invited regularly to get involved with school life. There are opportunities for them to attend informal Parent Forum meetings and to support PTA events, along with helping in school by listening to readers or changing library books. Parents may be invited into school on other occasions, such as sharing their experiences related to particular topics, attending Sports Afternoon, or competing in pancake flipping races!

At Messing, we have a friendly open-door approach and practitioners are available to talk to parents at the beginning and end of the day. Parents are welcomed into school and encouraged to discuss any concerns they may have.