

Milton Abbot School



Early Years Foundation Stage: Values and Policy

Context: Milton Abbot School Early Years provision combines Foundation 1 and 2 within the same dedicated classroom environment: Little Owls Foundation Class. This provision is led by an Early Years Leader, a qualified and highly experienced teacher, who is supported by a learning support team that more than meets the required ratios for our youngest learners. The Governors support and challenge the effectiveness of this provision, in line with their whole school and pre-school duties.

Governors Committee: Quality of Learning Committee
Review Required Annually or on Change of Model Policy
Current Model Policy: April 2019 Latest review: September 2021

Little Owls Early Years Class: Inspire - Believe – Succeed



At Little Owls, our child-centred approach means our highly-qualified team, led by our Early Years teacher, ensure that all our activities are designed to nurture the whole child, so they succeed and grow emotionally and academically - all with a smile and a giggle!

Little Owls is a wonderful place to play and learn and we find that the children really benefit moving up to their Reception year in the same place they enjoyed their Nursery year.

They can explore indoors in the water, sand, cookery room or role-play and outdoors in their forest school wellies amongst the trees, giving children a great start to their education and friendships that will last a lifetime. Through stimulating situations and hands-on learning that will brighten any young mind, we are proud of what we can offer and how this blends into the Early Years of our popular Primary School, and as a result our popularity continually grows making available places limited depending on the time of year, so get in early - we always welcome a visit.

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy – Updated September 2021

At Milton Abbot School, we follow the EYFS framework (2021). Within this framework there are four guiding principles which shape our practice.

These are:

1. **Every child is a unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured.
2. Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**.
3. Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments** with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
4. Children **develop and learn at different rates**. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

EYFS learning and development requirements

Our curriculum encompasses seven areas of learning and development. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

Three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships, and thriving.

These are called the prime areas:

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social, and emotional development.

Four areas help children to strengthen and apply the prime areas.

These are called the specific areas:

- literacy and mathematics
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design

Throughout their time in our Little Owls Early Years class, our children enjoy an ambitious curriculum which is designed in a sequential way to ensure progress towards the end of Reception goals. These goals are defined as Early Learning Goals (ELGs) The descriptors for these can be found in the appendix.

As previously outlined, our curriculum incorporates learning through play, learning by adults modelling, by observing each other and through guided learning and direct teaching. It is also important to highlight that our plans are flexible to allow us to respond quickly to children's new interests and/or needs.

Weaving throughout the EYFS curriculum at Milton Abbot are three **Characteristics of Effective Learning**.

- **playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- **active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

These elements underpin how we reflect on each child's development and adjust our practice accordingly. Supporting children in their individual learning behaviour and observing the context of children's play is essential.

The Early Learning Goal Descriptors

Communication and Language

ELG: Listening, Attention and Understanding

- Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions.
- Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding.
- Hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers.

ELG: Speaking

- Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary.
- Offer explanations for why things might happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, non-fiction, rhymes, and poems when appropriate.
- Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

ELG: Self-Regulation

- Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly.
- Set and work towards simple goals, being able to wait for what they want and control their immediate impulses when appropriate.
- Give focused attention to what the teacher says, responding appropriately even when engaged in activity, and show an ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.

ELG: Managing Self

- Be confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience, and perseverance in the face of challenge.
- Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly.
- Manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet, and understanding the importance of healthy food choices.

ELG: Building Relationships

- Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others.
- Form positive attachments to adults and friendships with peers.
- Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs.

Physical Development

ELG: Gross Motor Skills

- Negotiate space and obstacles safely, with consideration for themselves and others.
- Demonstrate strength, balance and coordination when playing; Move energetically, such as running, jumping, dancing, hopping, skipping, and climbing.

ELG: Fine Motor Skills

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases.
- Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paint brushes and cutlery.
- Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing.

Literacy

ELG: Comprehension

- Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary.
- Anticipate – where appropriate – key events in stories.
- Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes, and poems and during role-play.

ELG: Word Reading

- Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs.

- Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by sound-blending.
- Read aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent with their phonic knowledge, including some common exception words.

ELG: Writing

- Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed.
- Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters.
- Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.

Mathematics

ELG: Number

- Have a deep understanding of number to 10, including the composition of each number.
- Subitise (recognise quantities without counting) up to 5.
- Automatically recall (without reference to rhymes, counting or other aids) number bonds up to 5 (including subtraction facts) and some number bonds to 10, including double facts.

ELG: Numerical Patterns

- Verbally count beyond 20, recognising the pattern of the counting system.
- Compare quantities up to 10 in different contexts, recognising when one quantity is greater than, less than or the same as the other quantity.
- Explore and represent patterns within numbers up to 10, including evens and odds, double facts and how quantities can be distributed equally.

Understanding the World

ELG: Past and Present

- Talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society.
- Know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.
- Understand the past through settings, characters and events encountered in books read in class and storytelling.

ELG: People, Culture and Communities

- Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts and maps.
- Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.
- Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and –when appropriate – maps.

ELG: The Natural World

- Explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants.
- Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.
- Understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter.

Expressive Arts and Design

ELG: Creating with Materials

- Safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools, and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function.
- Share their creations, explaining the process they have used.

- Make use of props and materials when role playing characters in narratives and stories.

ELG: Being Imaginative and Expressive

- Invent, adapt, and recount narratives and stories with peers and their teacher.

- Sing a range of well-known nursery rhymes and songs; Perform songs, rhymes, poems, and stories with others, and – when appropriate – try to move in time with music.

Safeguarding Matters – Everyone has a duty to safeguard children and protect them from harm.

At Milton Abbot School we place safeguarding our pupils and promoting positive wellbeing front and centre of all we do. We especially know that our youngest learners can be most vulnerable due to immature speech and language skills. We therefore ensure that there is a Level 3 Safeguarding lead as part of the Early Years Foundation Class team, along with ensuring all staff received regular safeguarding. Communication across the team is key.

We aim 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. We encourage children to take risks and highlight the importance of keeping themselves safe by teaching them how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See Milton Abbot's [Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy](#)).

Good Health - All children are provided with a healthy fruit snack each. They have access to water at all times. As part of our Healthy Schools Plan and Relationship and Health Education curriculum across school, we educate pupils on healthy choices and how to care for their bodies and minds. Each year we put a special focus on caring for our teeth.

Intimate Care - "Intimate" care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. However, depending on a child's age and stage of development, they may need some support, for example dressing, wiping after using the toilet and changing underwear following toileting difficulties. In most cases, intimate care is to do with personal hygiene and it is good practice for the school to inform the School Nurse of all children requiring intimate care.

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. No intimate care is to be given without the express written permission of the parent or guardian of that child and all parents and guardians will be asked to provide that permission when their child joins Foundation 1 or 2 at Milton Abbot.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of those working in Nursery and Reception to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Headteacher and EYFS Link Governor will carry out monitoring on EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule. This policy should be reviewed annually.

Transition – a smooth start and a warm welcome

Parents should contact the Main School Office to enquire about their child starting their nursery phase with us in Little Owls. All transition opportunities will be planned together with parents from our experience we know that every child will require a different transition, some will be fine after an afternoon or morning whilst others will require something a little more personalised and bespoke.

Starting school can be a time of mixed emotions for our youngest children, full of excitement and wonder but also anxiety and feelings of separation; we therefore plan this time carefully to support children with the transition and to ensure it is as smooth as possible for each child and that they settle in to their new class quickly and happily.

Starting Reception – Parents of all children starting in the next academic year will be invited to an Induction Meeting in the Summer Term before their children are expected to arrive at the school to meet their child’s new teachers and other key staff and learn more about the Reception curriculum. This is an opportunity for staff to:

- Go through the school handbook;
- Explain about uniform, PE kit and school dinners/ free school meals;
- Explain about holidays and absences;
- Purchase uniform and book bag if requested;
- Explain the arrangements for induction of their child(ren) into Reception; this can be done to suit your child generally speaking.

We’ve always found the ‘School Run’ website to be a helpful and friendly site to find out more as a parent: [School starting age and deferred entry explained for parents | TheSchoolRun](#), who state:

*Although most children start school in the September after turning four, **they are not obliged to be in education until they are of Compulsory School Age**. This is a set point in the year following their fifth birthday.*

- *Children who turn five between 1 September and 31 December reach Compulsory School Age on 31 December.*
- *Children who turn five between 1 January and 31 March reach Compulsory School Age on 31 March.*
- *Children who turn five between 1 April and 31 August reach Compulsory School Age on 31 August.*

*This means that **‘summer born’ children** – those born between 1 April and 31 August – don’t have to start school until a full year after they could have been admitted.*

Though obviously parents should contact the Admissions team at Devon County Council for further information: [School admissions - Education and Families \(devon.gov.uk\)](#) or telephone **0345 155 1019**.

Our aim is to ensure that before they join their new class the Reception environment is already a familiar place to our children. Arrangements are also made for the children’s new class teacher to visit them in their current nursery setting.