



مدرسة جيمس متروبول الواحة
GEMS Metropole School
AL WAHA

Foundation Stage

Approved by:

Jeremy Hallum (Principal)

Last reviewed on:

August 2023

Next review due by:

August 2026

MISSION

Lead, nurture and succeed.

VISION

A sustainable and inclusive community hub, nurturing future leaders.

Nurturing
LEADERSHIP



This policy is applied at MTW alongside our school's vision, mission and values. Alongside the principles of High Performance Learning; VAA and A.C.P. characteristics.

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.

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.” (Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage August 2021)

This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) at GEMS Metropole School Al Waha. The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of practitioners working in the FS setting, including both teaching and non-teaching adults. In the policy the term ‘practitioner’ refers to the members of staff working with children within the setting. The EYFS applies to children from birth to the end of FS2.

Purpose of Policy

At GEMS Metropole School Al Waha, we are committed to underpinning our provision with the four themes of the Early Years Foundation Stage in our FS1 and FS2 classes.

- Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

Unique Child

The characteristics of effective learning support the child to become a motivated and effective learner. Children will **play, explore** and **‘have a go’** at using all available resources, developing their experiences. Children will develop resilience and enjoy achievements through **active learning** and will make links, explore their ideas and strategies for problem solving through **creating and thinking critically**. Practitioners support the children in developing all of these characteristics through playing alongside children and, where necessary, scaffolding and supporting their thoughts. It is important to us that all children at MTW are **‘safe’**. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them to develop these important life skills. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognize and avoid hazards, both within school and in the wider environment. We encourage a healthy lifestyle including taking exercise and eating healthy food.

Positive Relationships

We aim to promote positive relationships between staff, parents and children. Children are taught how to deal with difficult situations and friendships through our Personal, Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning as well as through their daily interactions with adults and other children. We recognize that parents and carers are the child’s first educators and their importance for the child’s welfare and education is paramount. All the children are greeted as they come into the classroom and have a familiar routine. Staff will work with each child either on a one-to-one basis, in a small group or as part of a larger group.

Enabling Environments

At MTW we recognise the importance of a rich learning environment both inside and outside. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The environment is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. There are two outdoor learning spaces for children to access. These have a positive effect on the children’s development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children



the opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. As far as possible we offer the same opportunities and areas of learning in all of our environments and the children have free flow between different areas. We observe the children during child initiated learning and offer additional resources and support to enrich their learning. To ensure that we meet the individual needs of all of our children we make progressive observations of the children's interactions, interests, skills, and development of concepts. These observations are used to inform our planning for groups of children, for individuals and our provision for resources as appropriate.

Learning and Development

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programs in Early Years settings. British values are interlinked with our EYFS curriculum and where possible links are made to the UK to promote and develop these fundamentals. All areas of learning and development are important and interconnected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These three areas, the prime areas, are:

- **Communication and language development-** involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.
- **Physical development-** involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity and to make healthy choices in relation to food.
- **Personal, social and emotional development-** involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behavior in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

Providers must also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied;

- **Literacy** – involves children learning to recognize print in their environment. Later learning how letters link to the sounds and begin to read and write
- **Mathematics** – children have opportunities to develop counting and calculation skills, to use numbers in everyday activities and recognize and describe shapes and measures
- **Understanding the World** – children have opportunities to find out about people and communities, the environment and technology
- **Expressive Arts and Design** – involves exploring feelings and ideas through music, dance, role play and design

Active learning through play

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 setting has an ethos of learning through play. We recognize the importance of children's play. It is an essential and rich part of the learning process, supporting children in all areas of development. In the Foundation Stage, practitioners provide both structured and unstructured 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. Planned, purposeful, play opportunities are set up to provide children with opportunities to apply newly acquired knowledge, demonstrating their skills and level of understanding.



Child-initiated learning is an important part of our daily routine and whenever possible adult-directed activities are play based, active and related to the children's interests. We aim to help children with their learning through observing, getting involved in their play, supporting their thinking and asking open-ended questions. At MTW we believe that the early years' education is important in its own right and should not be viewed simply as preparation for the next stage of children's education. We believe that the EYFS framework allows a natural progression into the National Curriculum at the beginning of year one.

Assessment and record keeping

On-going assessment is an essential aspect of the effective running of the EYFS at MTW. Regular, planned and focused assessments are made of children's learning and individual needs. A record of each child's progress in all areas of their learning is kept by retaining their assessment data. The main EYFS assessment method is through practitioners' observations of children in different teaching and learning contexts, including both adult focused activities and child-initiated play. Regular moderation and pupil progress meetings will support planning and next steps for practitioners. All practitioners participate in observing children. Assessments are updated at least once each term to track individual progress. Baseline assessment is carried out using the EYFS framework during the children's first three weeks upon entering school. Judgements made on children's development are based on practitioners' evidence of children's behavior observed independently and consistently in their self-initiated activities across all areas of learning and development. At end of FS2, in line with statutory requirements, using all the assessments information which has been collated teachers assess children against the early learning goals. They make a judgement as to whether a child is on track, or if they are working at a greater depth level, or 'not on track'. This is the EYFS Profile. A written report is sent to each child's parents annually. It is a summative record of the child's yearly achievement and identifies targets for the child's next steps for learning.

Monitoring

The Head of Foundation Stage, supported by SLT are responsible for monitoring teaching and learning in FS. This involves observing lessons, looking at data, looking at children's work and checking planning to ensure that we are providing the best for and expecting the best from our pupils. We use the information gathered to inform future planning and identify particular strengths and weaknesses in our practice.

Planning

The EYFS framework and progression maps provide a long-term plan to follow by ensuring that all development statements are covered throughout the academic year leading towards the achievement of the Early Learning Goal (ELG) at the end of FS2.

Parents and Teachers as Partners

At MTW we recognise the importance of establishing positive relationships with parents. We understand that an effective partnership between school and home will have a positive impact on children's learning and development.

The sharing of information with parents is done in a variety of ways. Through questionnaires completed with the parents before children start school in September and informal chats at the beginning and end of the day and formal parent consultation meetings, 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 practitioners in establishing interesting and stimulating learning experiences, responding to children's needs and interests. Parents are kept informed of what is happening in the setting through weekly newsletters, our website and face to face conversations. Parents can support their children's learning at home; consolidating and building on what has been covered in school. Parents are invited to attend parents' consultation evenings during the course of the academic year. There are opportunities for parents to help with activities such as educational visits and reading, as well as offering their particular skills to support children's learning. Parents may be invited into school on other occasions and special events e.g. class assemblies, coffee mornings, workshops etc.

Admission and induction FS1



- In Term 3 an open day is held when parents can visit FS1 with their child to meet the teachers, Head of FS and FS Leader to see the setting.
- Parents are offered an individual meeting with their teacher prior to their child starting FS1, during the induction week. We feel this provides a valuable opportunity for the staff to meet the child, discuss important and where necessary confidential information and begin to collect evidence for baseline assessments.
- From September children attend the setting on a full-time basis after a staggered part-time start which lasts one week. We strive to be sensitive to the needs of individuals. We work closely with parents and if a child needs a longer period of part-time education, before attending full-time, we ensure this occurs.

FS2

- In the summer term before they start in the setting, all FS1 children already in the setting have a transition afternoon. The purpose of this initial visit is for the children to meet the teachers, Head of FS and Head of FS2 to become familiar with the classroom environment and meet the other children.
- In the induction week, the new children are invited to a stay and play session to become familiar with the classroom environment and meet other children.
- At this meeting information packs are distributed detailing the induction process, school routines and expectations. There is also time for informal chat and parents' questions.
- Parents are offered an individual meeting with their teacher prior to their child starting FS2. We feel this provides a valuable opportunity for the staff to meet the child, discuss important and where necessary confidential information and begin to collect evidence for baseline assessments.
- From September children attend the setting on a full-time basis. We strive to be sensitive to the needs of individuals. We work closely with parents and if a child needs a longer period of part-time education, before attending full time, we ensure this occurs.

Settling-in

Parents are welcome to stay for an agreed amount of time during the child's first day in the FS 1 and can wait in the café area, where a teacher will update them. Some children take longer than others to settle and some settle more quickly and then become distressed a few weeks later. The school will work with the child's parents to support their child through this transition period. It is important that parents and child are relaxed and happy in the school.

When a child starts to attend, we explain the process of settling-in with their parents and jointly decide on the best way to help the child to settle into the school.

When a child starts in the FS1 they are welcome to bring a transitional item e.g. toy or blanket with them for as long as they need the comfort gained from this item. We judge a child to be settled when they have formed a relationship with their teacher, the child is familiar with where things are and is pleased to see other children and participate in activities.

Equal opportunities

In FS, as in all areas of school life, we believe that equal opportunities should exist for all children irrespective of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture, religion, disability or social circumstances. This has caused us to review the ways in which we approach children, our attitude towards them and how we develop their self-esteem. We respect the experiences children bring to school and would seek to expand them by providing further new experiences and stimuli.

Transition to Year One

Teachers in year one plan from both the EYFS and National Curriculum in the first half of the autumn term. They have carefully organised their classrooms to ensure there is continuity of provision from the EYFS and there are familiar resources and activities for the children e.g. construction kits, malleable materials and role play. Outside learning environments offer more FS based provision for those children still requiring elements of the EYFS curriculum. During this time they will be using equipment to develop their gross motor skills e.g. skipping ropes, hoops and balls. When appropriate, teachers endeavor to ensure there are opportunities for child initiated activities particularly in the first term.

Monitoring and review

This policy is monitored by MTW Senior Leaders and will be reviewed every three years or earlier if necessary.