Old Moat Primary School

All different, all achieving

EYFS Policy

June 2024

"All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. A secure, safe, and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning provide the foundation children need to fulfil their potential." EYFS Framework, 2024

CLIC

Contents

1 Intent 3
2 Legislation and Guidance 3
3 Our Flexible Curriculum 3
3.1 The Big Question 3
3.2 The Areas of Learning 4
3.3 Healthy Lifestyles 5
4 Pedagogy 5
4.1 Adult-initiated Learning 5
4.2 Play 6
4.3 Schemas of Play 6
4.4 The Enabling Environment 7
4.5 Indoor Learning 8
4.6 Outdoor Learning 8
5 Coronavirus 9
6 Assessment 9
6.1 Everyday Formative Assessment 9
6.2 Formal Assessment Tools 10
6.3 Developmental Pathway 10
6.4 Summative Assessment 10
6.5 Differentiation Overview 12
7 Inclusion 12
8 Safeguarding and Welfare Procedures 12
9 Staffing and Structure 13
9.1 Key Workers 14
10 The School Day 15
11 Parental Involvement 15
12 Transitions 16
12.1 Transition to Nursery 16
12.2 Transitions within School 16
13 Monitoring Arrangements 17
14 References & Links 17

1 Intent

This policy aims to ensure:

- All children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life.
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child is left behind.
- A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

2 Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on requirements set out in statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) (2024). Curriculum guidance is drawn from 'Development Matters' (DfE, 2023).

3 Our Flexible Curriculum

Our EYFS curriculum has been designed to reflect the varying starting points of our children. When children begin their education at Old Moat, in the Nursery or Reception year, a thorough baseline assessment will be completed, in partnership with parents and carers. These baseline assessments will be interpreted individually and collectively, and adjustments to the 'flexible curriculum' will be made accordingly.

Moreover, the diversity of our school community, life in Manchester and life in the UK is considered. Our curriculum intends to teach the children how their environment compares to other places, cultures and nature in other parts of the world. Our 'flexible curriculum' is therefore unique to Old Moat Primary School.

3.1 The Big Question

Like in Key Stages One and Two at Old Moat, each half term, a Big Question is identified. The Big Question is used for cross-curricular and thematic planning. Each Big Question is planned and included in the curriculum for specific reasons. Moreover, EYFS Big Questions aim to prepare children for Old Moat's Key Stage One curriculum. Big Questions will always be introduced and supplemented with quality texts. Big Question learning will be evident

in lessons and in the enhanced provision. Nevertheless, children's interests, holidays and religious celebrations also play a key role in teacher's plan for the enhanced provision.

3.2 The Areas of Learning

Our curriculum follows the Areas of Learning set out in the Statutory Framework for the EYFS.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="4">Prime Areas</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Communication and Language</td><td>Personal, Social and Emotional Development</td><td>Physical Development</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Specific Areas</td></tr>
<tr><td>Literacy</td><td>Mathematics</td><td>Understanding the World</td><td>Expressive Arts and Design</td></tr>
</table>

The prime areas are particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. Our flexible curriculum has been developed to give Communication and Language skills high priority. This is in line with the expectations set out in Development Matters.

> *"The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial." (DfE, 2023)*

As well as this, the teaching of reading is also given high priority within our flexible curriculum. We aim to foster a love of reading and acknowledge that reading is key for all children's future success in education and life.

Our curriculum draws upon several research-based schemes and programmes, which we have invested in due to their proven track record.

Phonics and Reading	*Little Wandle*
Handwriting	*Nelson Thornes*
Communication and Language	*Wellcomm*
Vocabulary	*Word Aware*
Mathematics	*NCETM Mastering Number*

3.3 Healthy Lifestyles

Exploring how to live a healthy lifestyle is inbuilt within our day-to-day practice and overarching curriculum. We are a healthy eating school, and this is explored explicitly with children, through everyday conversations and Big Question work. Moreover, oral health is of high priority in our setting. Nursery and Reception pupils at Old Moat brush their teeth daily, under Manchester Local Care Organisation's oral hygiene programme.

4 Pedagogy

The Old Moat curriculum is ambitious and aims to foster the skills and knowledge needed for all children to meet the seventeen Early Learning Goals, as described in Statutory Framework. Resultingly, we teach through a range of teaching methods, including child-initiated play, whole class teaching, group teaching, investigations and problem solving. Play-based learning is valued, makes up most of our pupils' day and is understood to be where learning is consolidated. However, direct teacher-led time is required to ensure children gain essential knowledge and skills.

4.1 Adult-initiated Learning

Nursery		
Phonics	15 minutes	4x weekly
Literacy	15 minutes	4x weekly
Mathematics	15 minutes	4x weekly
Toothbrushing	5 minutes	Daily
Snack & Story	10 minutes	Daily
Home Time Story & Nursery Rhymes	10 minutes	Daily
Reception		
Phonics	25 minutes	5x weekly
Literacy	15 minutes	4x weekly
Guided Reading	20 minutes	3x weekly
Handwriting	5 minutes	Daily
Mathematics	25 minutes	4x weekly
Topic Carpets	15 minutes	Weekly
Toothbrushing	5 minutes	Daily

Story	10 minutes	Daily
Home Time Story & Nursery Rhymes	10 minutes	Daily

4.2 Play

Children need opportunities to develop their own play and independent exploration, as this is enjoyable and motivating. However, they also need adults to 'scaffold' their learning by giving them just enough help to achieve something they could not do independently. With this in mind, we scaffold and ignite play experiences ahead of time through skills-orientated planning. The children are active participants in planning: helping children to think, discuss and plan ahead is important, like gathering the materials they need to make a den before they start building. These are ways of helping children to develop the characteristics of effective learning. Timetabling is precise and ensures children are given extended periods of time in their play environment, fostering in depth and sustained play.

The Characteristics of Effective Teaching and 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

4.3 Schemas of Play

Each child is different, and hence play and interact with the world in different ways. An understanding of the schemas of play helps practitioners at Old Moat to have a better awareness of each child's interests and ways of thinking.

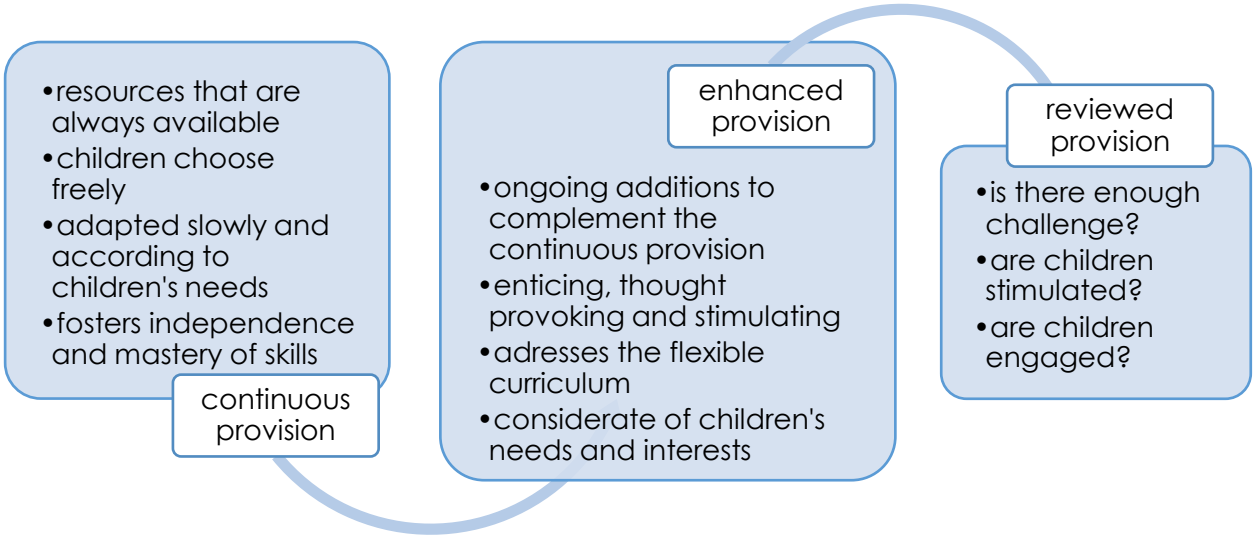
> *"A schema is a pattern of repeated actions. Clusters of schemas develop into later concepts." (Athey, 2007)*

The following schemas, taken from PACEY (2021), are helpful descriptors of play, but cannot be used to compartmentalise all play: sometimes, play will not fit within these schemas or will appear to cover many.

trajectory	creating lines in space by climbing up and jumping down dropping items from up high
positioning	lining items up and putting them in groups
enveloping	covering themselves or objects completely wrapping items up or placing them in containers
rotating	enjoys spinning items round and round likes to run around in circles or being swung round
enclosing	adding boundaries to play areas e.g. fences around animals adding borders to pictures
transporting	carrying or moving items from one place to another carrying items in containers or bags
connecting	setting out and dismantling tracks or constructing joining items together with tape or glue
transforming	exploring the changing states of materials, transforming them from a solid to liquid state and back again
orienteering	an interest in positioning themselves or objects in different places or positions e.g. upside down or on their side

4.4 The Enabling Environment

Our 'enabling environment' aims to push children to take risks and face challenges, while remaining safe and nurturing. Allowing opportunities for investigation, enquiry and discovery, our environment shifts throughout the academic year to meet the everchanging needs and interest of our children. We follow the below principles in our approach to fostering an enabling environment, adapted from Bartleton (2021).



4.5 Indoor Learning

While the Nursery and Reception classrooms will differ in the level of challenge presented, our continuous provisions each have several consistent 'areas'. Our planning for the enabling environment is skills-based, whereby practitioners consider how children can develop a certain skill. This is opposed to outcome-based, whereby practitioners only consider the outcome of any enhancement.

mark making / writing	creative	mathematics	transient art
listening / phonics	playdough	sand and water	reading
construction / small world	home		

4.6 Outdoor Learning

Outdoor learning is essential to children's health, development and well-being. Resultingly, it is vital that children's opportunities for learning and engagement outdoors are maximised and well planned, so that all seven Areas of Learning can be met through outdoor play. While our outdoor learning environment follows the same principles of self-selection and enhancement, we believe that outdoor learning should complement, but not mirror, the indoor environment.

painting / mark making	mud / sand kitchen	small world	construction

water	physical	mathematics	reading

Outdoor play is unique and planning for skill development will reflect this. For example, using crates and planks of wood to build a fort develops children's core strength skills and drives language development: such an exciting large-scale activity is not possible indoors. On the other hand, asking children to write using pencils in the outdoors during cold winter weather is inappropriate, disengaging, and harms the integrity of such an activity. Writing indoors, about what has been done outdoors, is more appropriate in this case.

When a 'play session' begins, children will be asked if they would prefer to play indoors or outdoors, with a limit on how many children can access the outdoor environment at once. This is to ensure children engage in a balance of learning opportunities, both indoors and outdoors, throughout their day, and to ensure learning in the outdoors is in-depth and sustained. This arrangement also ensures the outdoor environment is not overpopulated, as this increases risk of injury and disengagement.

5 Coronavirus

Communication, language and social skills, as well as children's physical development, have been hindered due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This was particularly true for children born during the pandemic, or who have spent most of their lives in it, which will describe the cohorts we will receive at Old Moat for several years.

To bridge gaps in learning and development, we will prioritise the development of children's communication and language skills and provide more opportunities for children to interact with each other to build on their social and emotional skills. To help foster progress in physical development, particularly as many children will have not accessed outdoor space during lockdown, we will further prioritise outdoor play.

6 Assessment

6.1 Everyday Formative Assessment

We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the

form of both formal and informal observations and through planned activities. Assessment is completed regularly, and involves the teacher, teaching assistants, parents and children, as appropriate. 'Snapshots' of children's learning are recorded on Tapestry, an online learning journal platform. Any evidence stored here is merely a snapshot: assessment will rely predominantly on practitioners' knowledge and professional judgement. Moreover, children will complete a focus task once per week.

6.2 Formal Assessment Tools

At the beginning of Nursery, and for new starters in Reception, practitioner observation will be drawn upon in the completion of our in-house baseline assessment. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust our 'flexible curriculum'. For assessment of Communication and Language, the Wellcomm assessment tool will be relied upon heavily, although we recognise this is not related to the Statutory Framework specifically and hence has limitations. The Wellcomm assessment tool is used, from this point and throughout children's time in Nursery and Reception, in three-month intervals, to determine progress and attainment in Communication and Language. Reception children will complete the statutory government baseline in their first six weeks in Reception.

6.3 Developmental Pathway

Our curriculum document includes our developmental pathway, based on Development Matters, which outlines what we expect of children's development and when. The developmental pathway aims to provide a breakdown of steps, which ultimately culminate in the Early Learning Goals. Through this document, teachers gain an overview of what developmental or learning achievements children should be making at various points of the year. This allows teachers to plan ahead, as well as assess whether children are making the necessary progress. Throughout the documents, Development Matters' checkpoints are provided to help teachers in making these judgements. Further 'Old Moat Checkpoints' are added to give further guidance where this is necessary. We aim to only treat the developmental pathway as a basis: all children are different, and child development cannot truly be as linear as presented within our developmental pathway.

6.4 Summative Assessment

Within the first six weeks of pupils starting in our Reception classes, a member of staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

Against the checkpoints and outcomes set out above, at several points in the academic year, we will assess children as being 'Beginning', 'Developing' or 'Achieving ELG (Age Related Expectation). Parents and carers will be informed of these judgements regularly, at parent-teacher conferences and end of year reports. Summative judgements are recorded on our whole-school data entry system, Insight.

At the end of the Reception year, the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) (DfE, 2024) will be completed for all children. Children will be judged at either an 'emerging level' or an 'expected level' against each Early Learning Goal. If a child achieves an 'expected level' against the Early Learning Goals relating to the Prime Areas, Literacy and Mathematics, then they will be considered to have achieved an overall 'Good Level of Development.' This information will be shared with our local authority, Manchester.

The 'best-fit model,' as set out in the Statutory Framework, will be used in all summative assessments, including against the Old Moat's Developmental Checkpoints and the Early Learning Goals at the end of Reception.

> *The best-fit model requires practitioners to consider the whole of each ELG description when making these judgements. 'Best fit' does not mean that the child has equal mastery against all aspects of the ELG. Teachers should not 'tick off' the bullet points one by one but should use their professional judgement to determine whether each ELG in its totality best fits the child's learning and development. (DfE, 2021)*

Nursery Assessment Cycle					
Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
○ Baseline assessment ○ Wellcomm	○ Number ○ Gross motor ○ Fine motor	○ Wellcomm ○ Number	○ Phonics ○ Concepts about print	○ Wellcomm ○ Number	○ Phonics ○ Concepts about print
Summative Judgement	*Summative Judgement*		*Summative Judgement*		*Summative Judgement*
Reception Assessment Cycle					
Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
○ Baseline assessment* ○ RBA ○ Wellcomm ○ Phonics ○ Number	○ Gross motor ○ Fine motor ○ Phonics ○ Number	○ Wellcomm ○ Phonics ○ Number	○ Fine motor ○ Phonics ○ Number	○ Wellcomm ○ Phonics ○ Number	○ Phonics ○ Number

*Summative Judgement**	*Summative Judgement*		*Summative Judgement*		*EYFSP*

**for children who did not attend our Nursery only*

6.5 Differentiation Overview

The Foundation Stage at Old Moat has employed 'Differentiation Overview' documents as a key tool in bridging assessment, curriculum and pedagogy. Teachers produce the Differentiation Overview documents termly for each of the Prime areas of learning, along with Maths and Literacy. The document will outline summative assessment judgements, along with children's names, and plan ambitious objectives for these groups, to support them in making the necessary progress. These documents will also provide a framework for interventions.

7 Inclusion

All children will receive quality first teaching on a daily basis and activities will be adapted accordingly. In addition to this, where children have been identified as having a specific need, intervention programmes will be implemented. Teachers and Teaching Assistants plan programmes together and, where needed, will liaise with Old Moat's Inclusion Manager. Through collaborative discussion with professionals and parents, we aim to ensure special educational needs are identified as early as possible in a child's education.

8 Safeguarding and Welfare Procedures

It is important to us that all children in the school are safe. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them gain self-worth. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Self-regulation is of a high priority for us: helping children understand and manage their emotions appropriately, using zones of regulation, is at the heart of all daily routines in Nursery and Reception at Old Moat.

Children should be allowed to take risks but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. Our EYFS Risk Assessment identifies and addresses potential risks in each area of the classroom. We know that children learn best when they are healthy and safe and when their individual needs are met. When children have built positive relationships with the adults and peers around them, they will flourish. The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are

outlined in our whole-school safeguarding policies, which have been written in accordance with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'.

We are a healthy-eating school and participate in the free fruit and milk for under-fives scheme. For our Reception children, we provide a universal free school meal and the menu is regularly monitored with the chef. We cater for those children who have special dietary requirements, including Halal and vegetarian meals, and have robust systems in place ensuring that all children receive the correct meal. We make sure that children with allergies or other dietary requirements are catered for in conjunction with our catering providers. Specifically, all Foundation Stage staff are trained in how to use an epi-pen.

Fresh water is readily available for all children: children may bring their own water bottle, or we will provide a cup for their use. Toilets are within both Nursery and Reception classroom environments and children may access them freely. Nevertheless, children in Reception particularly are encouraged to use the toilet at specific times and manage the timing of their toileting. In recognition that children may arrive to our setting unable to manage their toileting needs independently, we have written an Intimate Care Policy.

Several members of staff in the setting have a recognised paediatric first aid qualification, and we will aim to ensure at least one member of staff with this qualification is present at all times, in line with the Statutory Framework. We always abide by the staffing ratios set out in the Statutory Framework.

9 Staffing and Structure

The Foundation Stage unit at Old Moat consists of two large classroom environments and a shared outdoor space. In Nursery, we can admit up to 39 children. Nursery pupils attend our school full time. In Reception, we can admit up to 60 children. In Nursery, one teacher is accompanied by a Level 2 Teaching Assistant and a Level 3 Teaching Assistant). In Reception, two teachers will be supported by two Teaching Assistants. Additional 'Learning Support Assistants' may be present in the classroom to support children with special educational needs. A teaching Phase Leader oversees both year groups. The Foundation Stage unit at Old Moat is very much a part of the whole school community and operation, which is overseen by a Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and Assistant Headteachers.

9.1 Key Workers

In Nursery, children will be assigned a key worker, who will take a pastoral lead in their care throughout the day. However, all staff will work with children equally in adult-directed and child-initiated play, and the teacher will continue to oversee all aspects of the child's development. In Reception, the child's teacher acts as Key Worker.

10 The School Day

	Nursery	Reception
Start of Day	8:40 to 9:00	8:40 to 9:00
Lunch	11:25 to 12:25	11:25 to 12:25
End of Day	3:05	3:15

11 Parental Involvement

We recognise that parents and carers are children's first educators and we value having a positive partnership with parents in their child's education through:

- Contacting parents or carers before their child starts school at our open events, induction sessions and welcome packs.
- Inviting Nursery children and parents for induction sessions to ease transition into full days at school.
- Inviting parents to phonic and reading workshops to see how their children will begin learning to read and write and how they can support them.
- Operating an open-door policy for parents and carers with any queries or concerns.
- If EYFS practitioners have concerns about the progress of a child, they will approach parents and carers to discuss this.
- Written contact through reading records, termly newsletters and emails.
- Sharing photos and snapshots on Tapestry, our online learning journal platform.
- Offering two parent-teacher consultation meetings per year.
- Sending a written report on their child's attainment, progress and attitude at the end of the school year.
- Invitations to attend special events, including productions and sports day.

If support for parents or carers is required outside of the knowledge or time limitations of any EYFS practitioner, parents will be referred to Old Moat's dedicated Family Support Worker.

12 Transitions

12.1 Transition to Nursery

Starting school can be a stressful time for young children and their parents and carers. We therefore plan this time carefully to support children with the transition to school. We aim to ensure this transition is as smooth as possible and children settle in to their new class quickly and happily.

We have built a tried and tested transition programme for admission to Nursery, as detailed below. It is important to note, however, that this is flexible and does not fit each child. We adapt and mould our practice to meet the needs of all children. We aim for all children to be attending Nursery full-time as quickly as possible, ideally within the first three weeks of September.

1. Teacher visits child's home.
2. Child and parent attend school for stay and play sessions.
3. Child attends school for one hour.
4. Child attends school for two mornings.
5. Child attends school for full day.

12.2 Transitions within School

Transition from Nursery to Reception is planned to afford children confidence and excitement in their journey. Throughout the Nursery year, the Reception teachers and teaching assistants will be present in the daily lives of Nursery pupils, as Nursery and Reception children share an outdoor environment. At the end of the Summer term, teachers will identify times for Nursery and Reception children to be free to roam into each other's classrooms, through large double doors between them. This gives Nursery children good familiarity with their new classroom environment, without the pressure of staying there.

As children move from Reception to Year 1, transition sessions are built into the timetable for the final half of the Summer term. The Year 1 teacher will teach the Reception children on several occasions and Reception children will visit their new classroom environment and playground. Thorough conversations are held between teachers, in order to ensure teacher knowledge of the relevant welfare, academic and general information is shared.

13 Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by the Phase Leader for EYFS regularly, in collaboration with other members of Old Moat's Senior Leadership Team. Conversations will be conducted between EYFS Leaders at CLIC Trust sister schools, meaning some consistencies will be seen between policies. At each review, the policy will be shared with the governing board. The 'Flexible Curriculum' will be reviewed on an ongoing cycle.

14 References & Links

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