



MALVERN ST JAMES

Girls' School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

The policy is the responsibility of the Head of Pre-Prep working with the Director of Pastoral Care and the Director of Teaching and Learning to review and update annually.

Scope

“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 Department for Education, 2012

At Malvern St James we are committed to providing a high quality early years’ education, which gives children a secure and confident start to their school life and nurtures a lifelong love of learning.

This policy is designed to outline the provision made for EYFS pupils in line with regulatory requirements for:

- care and welfare
- teaching and learning provision

It is also designed to inform staff and parents of this provision for all EYFS pupils at Malvern St James.

Introduction

Malvern St James has exercised its right, as an independent school with a “good” or better inspection judgement for Early Years provision, to officially opt out of the EYFS Learning and Development requirements. This was done following consultation with parents and carers. Malvern St James recognises that we are still bound by the Early Years Welfare requirements and the Independent Schools Standards.

Aims for Pupils:

At Malvern St James we aim to:

- Provide a safe caring, welcoming and stimulating learning environment.
- Ease transition from home to School.
- Provide a good foundation curriculum
- Encourage creativity, individuality, curiosity and motivation, investigation and problem solving.
- Assess individual needs and encourage each child's unique potential.
- Encourage self-discipline and respect for oneself and others.
- Value each child's religious persuasion, racial origin, cultural and living background.
- Stimulate a life-long love of learning.

Aims for Parents:

We aim to make our Parents feel:

- Valued and respected
- Informed
- Consulted
- Involved
- Included

Aims Within the Wider Community:

- Maintain partnerships with pre-school providers
- Maintain partnerships with other local Early Years settings

Care and Welfare

At Malvern St James we provide a warm, welcoming and secure learning environment for all children. The provision of Care and Welfare for EYFS at Malvern St James is guided by the following frameworks and documents:

- EYFS Statutory Framework (April 2017)
- The Children Act 1989 – Guidance and Regulations
- The Childcare Act 2006
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2020)
- Independent Schools Inspectorate Guidance

Further guidance on EYFS provision may be found in the following Malvern St James policies:

- Safeguarding Policy (including Child Protection), Staff Behaviour and Code of Conduct Policy and Recruitment Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Photographic Images of Children Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy - Staff & Pupils

- E-Safety Policy

The use of personal mobile devices is not permitted in our EYFS setting.

Staffing, Organisation and the Learning Environment

At Malvern St James, our Pre-Prep 1 Classroom is for pupils in Reception and Year 1. The girls have use of a large classroom, an overspill classroom for noisy, messy or 1-1 activities and a dedicated outdoor area. The classroom has a carpet area and the rest of the space is organised into learning zones for the children to access. There is a classroom teacher, supported by a full-time teaching assistant. Other teaching staff from the Prep Department may be deployed in Reception based on the needs of the children.

Staff are organised to support the children in a balance of adult led and child-initiated experiences throughout the day. Practitioners are aware of the need to be flexible in order to respond to unplanned events that the children are interested in.

We aim to create an attractive, welcoming and stimulating learning environment which will encourage children to explore, investigate and learn through first-hand experience. Resources are clearly labelled and organised into learning zones, enabling the children to access them with a high level of independence. Practitioners regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the learning zones and make adaptations as necessary.

Teaching and Learning

Malvern St James offers structure for learning that has a range of starting points - content that matches the needs of young children and activity that provides opportunities for learning, both indoors and outdoors. The provision of Teaching and Learning for EYFS at Malvern St James is guided by the following frameworks and documents:

- EYFS Statutory Framework
- The National Curriculum in England
- Promoting Fundamental British Values Through SMSC

Our planning has a sharp focus on the children's needs, their interests and their stages of development. We recognise that the seven areas of learning cannot be delivered in isolation and seek opportunities to make links between them. We aim to deliver the curriculum through planned, purposeful play and present new concepts in meaningful contexts that enable the children to build on what they already know.

The Early Learning Goals are the knowledge, skills and understanding which young children should have acquired by the time they reach the age of five.

There are three prime areas of learning:

Communication and Language

Physical Development

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

In addition, there are four specific areas of learning:

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the World

Expressive Arts and Design

Planning in the EYFS

Although Malvern St James has opted out from the regulatory requirements linking to the Learning and Development requirements, these continue to form the basis of practice within the EYFS at Malvern St James. The Early Learning Goals establish expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. We follow the guidance provided by 'The British Association of Early Childhood Education' within their Development Matters document, to support our planning and delivery of the EYFS, which progresses to objectives determined by Malvern St James with links to the National Curriculum for Key Stages 1 and 2. We follow the EYFS guidance material demonstrating that:

- every child is unique.
- every child learns to be strong and independent through developing positive relationships.
- every child learns and develops well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents/carers.
- every child develops and learns in different ways.
- every child needs a curriculum that ensures challenge and playful opportunities across the prime and specific areas of learning and development, in addition to fostering the characteristics of effective early learning:
 - playing and exploring
 - active learning
 - creating and thinking critically

Long Term Planning

Our long-term planning shows our aims and values, demonstrates how our continuous provision meets the EYFS requirements and promotes learning within the areas of learning and development, tracks the learning objectives that have been covered and highlights any key events to be included.

Medium Term Planning

At MSJ, we deliver a creative curriculum, which is based around a new topic each half term. Medium term planning shows the key learning experiences for each area of the curriculum. Practitioners use this flexibly, choosing learning experiences to meet the needs of the children. At the beginning of each topic, practitioners lead the children in discussion to identify areas that they are particularly interested in. These ideas are incorporated into the medium-term plan.

Short Term Planning

Short term planning shows the learning opportunities that will be available over the week. It includes differentiated adult led experiences for all curriculum areas, as well as showing how the learning environment will be enhanced in response to the previous week's observations and assessment of the children.

Effective Teaching and Learning

We encourage the children to play an active role in shaping their learning experiences. Adults engage in discussion with the children about what they are interested in, which skills they would like to develop further and which resources they need to support their learning. Each half term, the children look at and discuss their learning journey as part of a review.

We aim to provide an attractive, challenging learning environment that offers high quality opportunities for the children to learn through play and structured activities, both indoors and outdoors. There is a range of "continuous provision" available in the classroom, that is designed to offer open-ended, practical learning opportunities. Children are supported to think creatively and imaginatively and explore how resources can be adapted. Each week, the provision is enhanced with additional resources, based on the previous week's observations.

Adult led activities are practical in nature and based on first-hand experiences wherever possible. The children are supported to develop problem-solving skills through open-ended tasks and opportunities to share their thinking with others. The number of adult led activities that the children take part in increases throughout the year, as their concentration develops.

At MSJ, we use a range of strategies to gather information about the children's learning and development and use this information to ensure that our planning meets the needs of all learners. During child-initiated activities, practitioners make 'snapshot' observations where they look, listen and note.. Each child has a Learning Journal to record their progress, where observations of a child's progress and next steps are made.

From the first half of the Autumn term onwards, the Reception teachers use their knowledge of each child, any additional pre-school information and discussions with parents/carers to decide which band of 'Development Matters' they are working on in each area of the curriculum. This allows learning opportunities to be pitched appropriately and also provides a baseline of the children's attainment. This information is closely monitored to ensure that all children are making good, or better progress.

In the Summer term, practitioners consider the 17 ELGS in the EYFS Profile to decide whether each child is working at the expected levels, exceeding the levels or emerging where they are working towards the levels. Judgements against the ELGs are based on ongoing observation; all relevant records; discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

The results of the Profile are shared with parents and/or carers, and there are opportunities for them to meet their child's class teacher to discuss this information. A log of experiences evidencing a pupil's progress is kept in her Learning Journey, an online tool which allows the

class teacher to share daily progress with parents. In addition, parents are also able to comment and add to the document with evidence from home.

As pupils at Malvern St James have the same class teacher in Reception and Year 1, transition is easy and can be fluid, with girls commencing work on KS1 targets when they are ready, whether that be whilst they are part way through their Reception year, or at the start of their time in Year 1.

For further information on the curriculum please refer to the

- The Curriculum Policy
- Assessment and Reporting Policy
- Inclusion Education (SEND) Policy and Accessibility Plan
- Equal Opportunities Policy – Pupils
- More Able Policy
- Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Policy

Parent Partnerships

We value the contribution that our parents and carers make to their child's learning and take every opportunity to work in collaboration with them. Each term, we send home a class letter to inform parents of what their child will be learning and how they can support them at home. In the autumn and spring terms we hold parents' consultations and in the summer term we send home a detailed report. There are regular opportunities for parents to view their child's school work, both formally, in Prep Drop-In Sessions and informally at a parent's request. The children take reading books home to share and also a practical homework activity to do together each weekend. Throughout the year, there are parents' meetings and open mornings where parents can find out how their daughter learns in school. Parents are also encouraged to comment on, or add entries to their child's online Learning Journal.

Community Links and the Wider World

Over the year, we arrange visits from members of the local community to support our topic work. We also arrange trips for children in the EYFS within the local community, for example visiting the dentist or the police station. The children take part in several educational visits linked to their topic work. Film clips, non-fiction texts and artefacts are also used to introduce new concepts in real-life contexts. We aim to develop the children's awareness of other cultures by exploring different countries and celebrations.

Behaviour Management

Please refer to the school's Rewards and Sanctions Policy.

Safeguarding

Please refer to the school's Safeguarding Policy (including Child Protection), Staff Behaviour and Code of Conduct Policy and Recruitment Policy

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

We have a responsibility to ensure positive attitudes to diversity and difference. We can support each child's needs by:

- Removing or helping to overcome barriers where these already exist;
- Being alert to the early signs of needs that could later lead to difficulties and responding quickly and appropriately, involving other agencies as required;
- Stretching and challenging all children.

Please refer to the Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy and the Equal Opportunities Policy

Premises and Security

Access to the school for Prep pupils is through the main school door, which is kept locked and leads into a Reception area which is covered throughout the school day and until 18.30. Staff use a code to gain access to the building and sign in and out. Prep Parents are able to come into school to drop and collect their children, accessing the Prep Department through a locked door with buzzer facility. The Receptionist is responsible for verifying the identity of any non-parent visitors before they enter school. Currently due to COVID-19, we have amended our drop off and collection arrangements so as parents do both from the Prep Playground and do not enter the main building at all.

Visitors are asked to sign in to the school visitor's log and are given a visitor lanyard to wear. Staff and pupils are aware of their role in challenging anyone who is not recognized and asking for identification from anyone claiming to be from an outside agency.

The external Prep Department doors are kept locked, except when the children enter and leave the setting, accompanied by an adult and when the children access the playground for playtimes and lunchtime. The outdoor areas of the school are not accessible except from inside the school. The gate from the Prep Playground to the staff car park is kept locked.

The external doors are closely monitored by staff when children are entering or leaving the setting, to ensure that they cannot leave unaccompanied. All staff are aware of the need to monitor the external doors to ensure that they are secure during the session. Registers are used to check how many children are present. When moving from one area school to another, head counts are used to check that all children are present before moving on.

Arrival and Collection of Children

Children can enter school from 07.45. Parents must hand over their child to the practitioner. In the mornings there is a Teaching Assistant manning the gate, welcoming children in. At the end of the day, a member of staff takes children to the gate and hands them over to their parent. Each child is marked in on the day's register by the class teacher. Parents/carers use the external classroom doors when collecting their daughter(s) at the end of the school day. If a child needs to be collected during the school day, parents should report to Reception.

Under no circumstances is a child allowed to leave with anyone other than those named by her parents. If there are queries regarding a child's collection, the class teacher will contact the child's parent/guardian to discuss the situation with them.

Late Collection of a Pupil

For information about procedures followed when a child is not collected at the end of the school day, please read the Late Collection of a Child Policy

Missing Child

If a child disappears during the school day, practitioners will; check with all members of staff when the child was last seen and that they have not been collected by a parent/carer, organise a thorough and systematic search of the building and surrounding playground etc, inform the head teacher of the situation and telephone the child's parents or other emergency contact to explain the situation and double check that the child is not there or their whereabouts known. If the child is still unable to be located, the school will notify the police of a missing person. At Malvern St James we will call parents within 15-20 minutes of finding that their daughter is missing. For more information, please see the Attendance and Children Missing from Education Policy

Outings

Written parental permission to take the children into the local environment is sought upon admission to the school. Further permission is obtained for any other outings. Risk assessments are completed for each type of outing. For more information please see the Educational Visits Policy.

Promoting Awareness of Dangers and How to Stay Safe

We encourage the children to take an active role in ensuring their own safety and involve them in discussions about health and safety issues. For example, the children may take on the role of a 'Danger Detective' and look for possible hazards around the classroom or use photographs of a place that they will visit on a school trip to complete their own risk assessment. Teachers encourage children to think about who can help them in different situations. We are supported by the council's 'Pedestrian Training' team to teach the children about road safety.

Risk Assessments

In addition to the school's risk assessment, daily risk assessments are completed in Reception for both the classroom and the outdoors area, to ensure that any hazards are identified and managed before the children enter the classroom. These checks are recorded in the classroom or on Smartlog

Complaints

Please refer to the school's Complaints Policy.

Information for Parents and Carers

We provide a pack for new parents and carers that includes information about our daily routines, the types of activities provided, staffing and food and drink. There is a parent notice

board located in the corridor area outside the classroom and this is regularly updated. Parents are encouraged to contact their daughter's class teacher if they have any questions.

Transition from Pre-school to Reception

We work closely with the pre-school settings which feed MSJ Prep to ensure that the children make a smooth transition to school. We have contact with local settings throughout the year and invite them to visit us on a regular basis. In the term before they join us, we organise opportunities for prospective pupils to visit for a Taster Day and to join us for Class Celebrations. Early Years staff have good links with local Pre-School Settings and liaise with their staff to ensure transition information is shared effectively and in good time.

We hold a transition meeting for new parents in the summer term, where we outline daily routines and expectations. In September, we hold a new pupil's Parents' Evening early in the term to discuss how each girl has settled at MSJ. We welcome open and regular communication with parents at their convenience in order to provide a triangulated approach to each girl's early learning experience.

Being Active

The children have access to an outdoor area, which provides a range of physical activities; including an age appropriate climbing frame, balls, bats and skipping ropes, ride-on toys and a sandpit. They are also able to access the Woodland School regularly for lessons and playtime. The children take part in two PE sessions each week, one of these being a Swimming lesson. There are also a variety of bespoke optional Sports Clubs aimed at this age-group.

Food and Drink

At Break and Tea Time we have our snacks in the Reception classroom, supervised by teachers and support staff. A range of healthy snacks are available each day and the girls are encouraged to have something at each break. We place a special emphasis on trying new foods and a large range of options are available over the course of the year. Tables are cleaned and children are supported to wash their hands with soap before selecting a snack and getting a drink. Pupils have their own water bottles, refillable from a fountain just outside the classroom and are encouraged to remain hydrated throughout the day.

Information about the children's dietary needs is sought when they enter the setting. A list of the children's dietary needs is available in the classroom and all practitioners have regard to this when putting out food and drink in the snack area or when leading a cooking or food tasting activity.

School Lunches are taken in the Alice Dining Room. Prep pupils start their lunch half an hour before the Senior School meaning that the atmosphere is calm and unhurried. Teachers support the girls in choosing a balanced meal from the excellent range of hot and cold food available. The considered menus and Prep salad bar ensure that there are lots of child-friendly food options to support a healthy diet. Pupils carry their choices to their table on a child-sized tray and are seated with a teacher who will monitor both their food intake and table manners during the meal as well as enjoying the sociability of a family-style meal.

Illnesses and Injuries

At the start of their first term at MSJ, pupils will undergo a medical assessment at the Health and Wellbeing Centre. As well as giving nurses a baseline to monitor the health of each pupil from, this will ensure that every girl has been to the Health and Wellbeing Centre, has met the School Nurses and feels comfortable about the possibility of attending in the future.

Parents and carers are requested not to send their child to school if they are unwell and to inform the school office of their absence. Parents/carers are asked to inform staff if their child is suffering from a minor ailment so that appropriate care can be given. Children must not return to school within 48 hours of a bout of sickness or diarrhoea.

If a child becomes unwell whilst at school, a member of staff will:

- Telephone the parents/carers, explain that their child is unwell, explain the symptoms noted and ask them to collect their child.
- Sit with the child in a quiet place away from other children, if possible, until the parents arrive.
- If parents are unable to collect their child, she will be accompanied to the Health and Wellbeing Centre, where she will be cared for by qualified nurses until parents arrive
- If the child has had sickness or diarrhoea, explain the policy of at least a 48 hour clearance of either symptom before the child may return.

In the case of an injury, appropriate First Aid will be administered by a qualified first aider. A first aid kit is kept in the Reception classroom and its contents are in accordance with advice from the Health and Safety Executive and the Community Health Physician. First aid cover is provided at playtimes and lunchtimes. All accidents are recorded on Smartlog by the member of staff who dealt with the incident. The parents are informed about any accidents incurred when they collect their daughter at the end of the school day, or via email. Parents/carers may be contacted by telephone to inform them of an injury if deemed necessary.

More information about the treatment of illness and injury, including advice relating to notifiable diseases can be found in the First Aid Policy and the Medical Policy and Procedures.

Medicines


Only medicines prescribed by a registered Medical Practitioner or age appropriate pain relief in labelled packaging will be administered to children. Parents should email the Class Teacher, copying in the Head of Year with details of the medication and how much, including when it should be administered. When it comes to you administering the medicine, to ensure we keep an accurate record of any medications administered, staff must attach the email giving consent from the parent to a CPOMS entry, the Health Centre will then have the record of consent and any medication issued.

Medicines must only be administered to the child for whom they are prescribed, and all medicines must be kept in the original container stating whom they are prescribed for and dosage information. Unwanted or unused medicines must be returned to the parent for disposal.

Training for prescribed medication that is invasive i.e. EPIPENS etc is available via a school nurse. If an individual child requires a care plan, this will be drawn up in partnership with parents and the Health and Wellbeing Centre.

A Final Word

At Malvern St James we recognise that the first stage of a girl's education sets the scene for her enthusiasm, confidence, happiness and courage in her subsequent school years. Because of this, we are committed to providing a bespoke Early Years' experience, working in collaboration with parents and starting to provide outstanding care, exciting learning opportunities and the opportunity to develop life-skills which will underpin a fulfilling educational journey.

Authorised by	Resolution of the School Council
Signature	
Date	30 June 2021
Effective date of the Policy	30 June 2021
Review date	August 2021 (because of Government changes)