

Starting the Early Years Foundation Stage



Meole Brace C of E Primary School and Nursery
'Belonging, Believing, Becoming'

An Introduction Booklet for Parents and Carers

Welcome

Welcome to Meole Brace C of E Primary School and Nursery. Our School is a welcoming school that aims to reflect a warm, caring Christian ethos where everyone is valued.

We will:

- offer an excellent education within a framework of Christian values and beliefs
- be an inclusive community in which everyone feels happy, valued and secure
- build strong relationships with our families, carers, church and wider community
- promote an environment where children of all abilities can reach their full potential
- foster a desire for independent and life-long learning.

The Foundation Stage Unit

Our Foundation Stage unit is full of love, care, fun and excitement providing a wonderful learning environment for children.

In our Foundation stage you will find that:

- happiness shines through
- children learn through practical activities
- challenging activities are provided for all children
- respect for the child as an individual is of paramount importance
- the individual child is catered for both in the planning of the curriculum and assessment
- each child's progress is carefully monitored, recorded and passed on to the next teacher
- strong links are formed between home, school, church and the wider community

What is the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)?

The EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) is the Early Years Curriculum which supports children's development from birth to 5. At Meole Brace C of E Primary School, we provide education for children from the term after they are 3 years of age. Our Foundation Stage unit is designed for children from 3-5 years of age. The unit is divided into 2 stages, Foundation Stage 1 (Nursery) and Foundation Stage 2 (Reception). We work closely together as a unit catering for the individual needs of all children.

Why is the EYFS important?

The EYFS gives children secure foundations for later learning. Early experiences affect children's attitude to learning and so it is vitally important we get it right. All children learn best from experiences that are suitable for their later stage of development. Play is fundamental to the way young children learn. Through play children can develop the confidence needed for learning, the social skills needed for personal development and the skills needed for reading and writing. We encourage independence from an early stage to aid problem solving skills. Taking all this into account, the children will be given the opportunity to learn through a carefully planned, well-balanced Curriculum.

What does it involve?

There are 7 areas of learning in the EYFS. These consist of 3 prime areas and 4 specific areas:

1. Personal, Social and Emotional Development (Prime Area)

The development of confidence and independence, making relationships and managing feelings and behaviour,

2. Communication and Language (Prime Area)

Developing skills in speaking, understanding and listening.

3. Physical Development (Prime Area)

Developing control and coordination of the body in large and small movements such as climbing, running and using tools such as pencils and scissors, as well as the development of self-care skills.

4. Literacy (Specific Area)

Developing early reading and writing skills.

5. Maths (Specific Area)

Developing early counting and understanding of number, alongside skills in shape, space and measures.

6. Understanding the World (Specific Area)

Investigating and beginning to understand the things, places and people around them.

7. Expressive Arts and Design (Specific Area)

Using imagination through a variety of media and materials.

Throughout the EYFS learning will be introduced through practical, fun, stimulating and challenging activities. The children will be given opportunities to build upon their existing skills and interests to aid their development.

Life Before School

As parents, carers and family you are the most influential teachers in a child's life. With you, your child will have been watching, listening, touching, copying and generally experimenting with day-to-day experiences. They will have acquired amazing skills from you already. They will be learning about relationships and will be beginning to make sense of their feelings and emotions.

At School

Whilst they are with us we make further, more specific observations about their learning and progress. These are recorded in a Learning Journey. We encourage parents and carers to add any learning, events or experiences the children have outside of nursery. We assess children's progress regularly against and share this information with you at parents meetings each term.

We have an 'Open door Policy' in the Foundation Stage Unit. Please feel free to approach a member of the team if you have any questions, concerns or private issues that you would like to discuss.

The Role of the Key Worker

When starting in Foundation Stage 1 (Nursery), the children will be linked with a key worker in the setting. Our current core hour (9am to 3pm) key workers are:

Miss Louise Morris: (Foundation Stage Co-ordinator and Teacher in charge of Nursery)

Mrs Kathy Bridgwater (Teaching Assistant)

Mrs Lizzie Hulme (Teaching Assistant)

As a key person, it is our main role to:

- Get to know the child and their family, developing a close bond
- make time for each key child during the day/session
- help them to feel safe and secure in the setting
- liaise with parents and carers
- help children to develop friendships with other children

A Typical Day in Nursery (Foundation Stage 1)

Planning and teaching is shared between the teacher and the teaching assistants. We try to be as responsive to the children's interests and needs as we can, so no two days are the same!

8:50 am - The doors to the unit open and children hang up their own coats and have time to change their books from the book box. Parents and children are then invited to take part in a range of quiet activities to help the children settle. This might include helping the children to self-register, share a book or make a jigsaw together.

9:20 am - Parents leave the unit and the children meet together on the carpet to say hello to friends and meet with their key person.

9:25 am - Children work in an adult-led group based on the children's interests or particular needs.

10:00 am - The children have time to plan their own learning experiences in Child Initiated Play. This is an opportunity for the children to explore, investigate and develop their own interests. The children can choose to work with peers, adults or alone. They also have the option to work inside and outside, or a little bit of both! We have a café style snack bar, where the children are invited to help themselves to a drink of milk or water and a piece of fruit.

11:00 am - The children all help to tidy the nursery, both inside and outside.

11:10 am - Children work in an adult-led group based on the children's interests or particular needs.

11:35 am - We review the session. The children talk about what they have enjoyed doing, what they have created and share their achievements with the group. We also give opportunity for the children to talk about what they would like during the next session. This time may also be used for sharing a story, singing or circle time.

11:50 am - Parents and carers can collect children from 11:50-12:00 if their child is not staying for lunch.

12:00 am - The children who are staying for lunch club, wash their hands and the lunchtime supervisors take them over to our demountable building, 'Treasure Island'. Children either eat a hot lunch from the school kitchen or eat their own packed lunch from home. The children eat their lunch in a small, quiet setting and have an outdoor area to play in when they have finished eating.

1:00 pm - Afternoon welcome and registration, followed by story.

1:20 pm - The children work in an adult-led group activity based on the children's interests or particular needs.

1:50 pm - During this time, the children also have a child initiated session, where they are encouraged to explore, investigate and plan their own learning experiences, indoors and outside. Once again, the children have access to the snack bar throughout the session, where we encourage independence.

2:40 pm - After helping to tidy the nursery, the children come together for some whole group time. This may include music activities, story time and a review of the session.

2:50 pm -3:00pm - Parents may collect their children and talk about what has been happening in Foundation Stage 1 today.

Important to note: If someone different is collecting your children at the end of the session, please mention this to an adult in the setting. We are unable to let your child leave with someone else unless you have informed us beforehand.

Weekly newsletters are given out on a Friday, unless your child has an older sibling within school. If your child is not in Nursery on a Friday you can find the Newsletters in the Nursery entrance.

Parent and Carer Partnership

We have already acknowledged the importance of you in your child's development. You are welcome to stay in the morning for as long as your child needs in order to help them settle. We welcome visits from any parents/carers who have some expertise they could share or some interesting hobbies they could tell us about. We encourage strong links between home and Nursery and encourage you to contribute to your child's Learning Journey. These are kept in Nursery and are available for you to take home whenever you would like.

Health Matters

If you have any concerns about your child's health or if he/she has a medical condition that we should be aware of, please let us know before he/she starts Nursery. We can then discuss the matter with you and be fully aware of and prepared for any possible difficulties. Staff are able to administer prescribed medicines such as antibiotics as long as a form has been completed by you to enable us to do so. Those children with ongoing medical conditions such as asthma or diabetes are allowed to have inhalers or emergency medication in school. If your child has an inhaler and/or asthma we will need you to complete the School Asthma Health Care Plan. We also have an emergency inhaler in school that we can use if needed and you can give permission for this by completing a red consent form. If your child has an allergy please inform the school so that we can provide the best possible care. If your child has a bout of sickness and/or diarrhoea, please keep your child off school for 48 hours after

the symptoms have stopped to minimise the spread of infection. This type of illness spreads so quickly and easily amongst children and staff!

Nursery Breakfast Club (8-9am)

We offer a Nursery Breakfast Club, as part of wrap-around care, where children can be dropped off from 8am. This can be taken from within a child's free hours or additionally at a cost of £4 per hour and includes a breakfast.

Sandcastles (3-6pm)

As part of our wrap-around care, we offer an after Nursery club called Sandcastles which runs until 6pm. This can be taken from within a child's free 15 hour entitlement/ 30 hour extended entitlement (for working parents), or bought additionally at a cost of £4 per hour.

Dinners

Children are invited to stay for our lunch club. (12.00 -1.00 pm). Currently, we charge £4 for this service if it is not included in your free 15 hours provision/ 30 hours extended provision.

A hot school dinner is £2.20 or your child may bring a healthy packed lunch.

Hot school lunches are cooked to order on the day so you will need to see the member of staff taking orders each morning to make a choice from the menu. Children not arriving until 12:00 will need to have ordered their choice of hot school meal in advance, for example, the day or week before. A copy of the menu can be located in the Nursery entrance or ask a member of staff.

You can pay for lunches, Nursery breakfast Club, Sandcastles, or additional sessions through an online payment facility at www.schoolmoney.co.uk or by debit or credit card in school with Mrs Holloway, School Business Manager. We have an information leaflet about setting up an online school money account in the Nursery reception area.

Our school is a 'Healthy School' so please encourage your children to choose healthy options for their lunch boxes. i.e. cereal bars, yogurts and fruit rather than chocolate and crisps.

Additional Sessions

In addition to your child's free 15 hour entitlement in Nursery/ 30 hours extended entitlement (for working parents), extra sessions may be purchased at a cost of £12 per half day/ £24 per whole day, subject to availability.

Snack Time

We provide children with a piece of fruit/vegetable and a choice of milk or water for their snack. The range of fruit/vegetables varies from day to day.

Water

Children are encouraged to bring in drinking water from home in a secure plastic, named bottle, to access at any time.

Uniform

Uniform is not compulsory in Foundation stage 1, but if you wish to send your child in uniform jumpers and cardigans can be bought from Mrs Holloway. We would suggest that parents send their children in clothes which make it easy for them to use the toilet and which are not too special, as we encourage the children to enjoy messy play activities. Please ensure your child's name is written in their belongings. In the interests of safety for all of our children, items of jewellery should not be worn please.

Spare Clothes

Please help us by ensuring your child brings a bag to nursery each day, labelled with their name on the OUTSIDE, containing a set of spare clothes, as spills and accidents often happen. All items of clothing and shoes/boots should also be clearly labelled with your child's name please. Thank you for your co-operation.

Please contact me on 01743 351027. You will also find information on the school website www.meolebraceprimary.co.uk

Louise Morris, Foundation Stage Leader and Teacher-in-charge of Nursery
July 2017.