



**Monksdown  
Primary School**  
*Where Children  
Come First*

## **Our Vision for Early Years**

### **Children**

In the Early Years at Monksdown Primary School our children are happy, excited and motivated to learn through rich and challenging learning experiences; opportunities to explore and take risks, and first-hand experiences.

We have high ambitions for all our children and recognise that children have different starting points to their learning. We plan according to children's stage of development so all can thrive and develop. We aim for children to be well-rounded individuals who are respectful, resilient, resourceful and responsible in themselves and with others.

### **Parents and Carers**

Our partnership with parents and carers means that parents have the opportunity to work closely with our Early Years practitioners to support children's transition into the setting. We would like parents to feel secure in the knowledge that their child is well cared for and happy at school.

Our parents and carers are welcome to be actively involved in their children's learning in school and are able to share learning experiences through the online journal 'Tapestry', 'stay and play' sessions, learning journeys and parent workshops. We recognise that parents and carers are the first educators in children's lives and value contributions to judgements about children's development. We use this information to support our assessments and share information about what children need to do next to develop and thrive.

### **Tapestry**

Tapestry is an online journal that allows parents and carers to read and share observations and experiences that their child is experiencing in school. Parents and carers can add to observations and share experiences with their child.

### **What is it like in the Early Years on a day to day basis?**

Every day, we provide opportunities for children to come together to share their experiences and have fun. Our children are happy, proud and feel secure knowing that we celebrate their successes and value their achievements. The curriculum is centred around children's interests with a balance of child-initiated and adult-led learning.



## **Learning Environment**

Our learning environment facilitates child-initiated play and provides children with carefully planned opportunities which allow children to explore, create and learn through exciting, stimulating, interactive and accessible resources. Areas of learning are enhanced to allow for development and learning centred around the child's interests.

## **Role of our Early Years practitioners and teachers**

We are a united team with play-based child centred learning at the heart of our practice. We aim to communicate and work cooperatively with parents and carers to support our children's development.

## **Nursery & Reception**

Children learning in Nursery and Reception classes are known as the Early Years. We follow the national Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework.

( add section 'meet the staff' add photographs of our staff in early years)

## **Early Years Foundation Stage**

The EYFS is a very important stage in a child's life as it helps prepare for school 'readiness' as well as preparing them for their future learning and successes. Children's early years' experience should be happy, active, exciting, fun and secure; and support their development, care and learning needs. 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 before the age of five will have a major impact on their future life chances.

The EYFS framework explains how and what children will be learning to support their healthy development and provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.

The EYFS specifies requirements for learning and development and for safeguarding children and promoting their welfare.

Children will learn skills, acquire new knowledge and demonstrate their understanding through **7 areas of learning and development**.

Children should mostly develop the **3 prime areas** first. These are:

- Communication and language;
- Physical development; and



- Personal, social and emotional development.

These prime areas are those most essential for a child's healthy development and future learning.

As children grow, the prime areas will help them to develop skills in **4 specific areas**. These are:

- Literacy;
- Mathematics;
- Understanding the world; and
- Expressive arts and design.

All 7 areas of learning are used to plan children's learning and activities. The professionals teaching and supporting your child at Monksdown will make sure that the activities are suited to your child's unique needs. This is a little bit like the curriculum in the rest of the school but it's suitable for very young children, and it's designed to be really flexible so that staff can follow your child's unique needs and interests.

Children in the EYFS learn by playing and exploring, being active, and through creative and critical thinking which takes place both indoors and outside. It is very important that they develop social skills, such as turn-taking, sharing and independence, which help them greatly in the next stages of their learning. The guiding principles that shape our practice in the Early Years are that children are born ready, able and eager to learn. They actively reach out to interact with other people, and in the world around them. Development is not an automatic process, however. It depends on each unique child having opportunities to interact in positive relationships and enabling environments.

This does not mean that all your child's learning is divided up into specific areas. One experience may provide a child with opportunities to develop a number of skills and concepts across several areas of learning. Our expectation is that your child's records will be passed on from Nursery and/or Pre-school groups, enabling us to ensure continuity throughout the Early Years Foundation stage.

## **Phonics**

Phonics teaching and learning are a key part of the Foundation Stage and help to develop early reading and writing skills. At Monksdown Primary school we follow the 'Little Wandle' program, which continues throughout the school. Children will explore letters and sounds within their play and



during adult led activities which are carefully planned to allow for a variety of stages within the children's learning.

## **Curriculum**

At Monksdown we ensure our areas of learning are inviting, exciting and challenging. Enhancements are added to areas weekly from the children's interests and to encourage development. Adult directed learning is carefully and is taught in a fun and exciting way.

See medium term plans