



**THE FEDERATION OF
MELLERS PRIMARY SCHOOL
AND NOTTINGHAM
NURSERY
Early Years' Policy
November 2024**

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THE FEDERATION OF MELLERS PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NOTTINGHAM NURSERY

EARLY YEARS' POLICY

Our Ethos and statement of intent:

This policy has been developed in conjunction with the relevant DfE guidance and legislation to ensure that each child has a happy and positive start to their school life in which they can build a foundation for a love of learning. Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. It is not just preparation for the next stage, it is vitally important in itself. Therefore, the foundation stage is the stage whereby children acquire and develop learning attitudes, social integration, and the skills of personal organisation and decision making. It is also the phase of education which through carefully balanced structured and child-initiated play, children can be switched on to learning for the rest of their school lives.

The Federation between Mellers Primary School and Nottingham Nursery School is the only one of its kind within the Local Authority and our overarching vision is:

'Nottingham Nursery and Mellers Primary Federation is a unique fusion which will create exceptional provision for the community of Radford. The Federated Governing Body has a vision in which it will break glass ceilings and will be an advocate for all in its care. It will create the very best opportunities for its children, supporting them to achieve their full potential, through the promotion of equality for all, in an atmosphere of trust, honesty and compassion.'

At Mellers Primary and Nottingham Nursery School, we are committed to providing a high-quality early years' education, which gives children a secure and confident start to their school life and nurture a lifelong love of learning. We are fully committed to the purpose and aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework. The EYFS states and we endorse that:

'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.'

The Learning Environment

As the Ofsted guidance from the 'Early Years Inspection Handbook' clearly states: *'It is the role of the setting to help children experience the awe and wonder of the world in which they live, through the seven areas of learning'*. This means Mellers and Nottingham Nursery staff should use the EYFS curriculum to offer a range of activities that ignite curiosity, inspire learning, and encourage children to explore the world around them. We aim to create an engaging, welcoming and stimulating learning environment which will encourage children to explore, investigate and learn through first-hand experience.

The EYFS learning environment is split into 'zones' with areas that are planned to promote learning and development of skills. The zones contain activities planned to meet the needs of children and have provision designed for pupils. During the Summer Term, levels of learning challenge increase to prepare pupils for working beyond the Early Learning Goal and at National Curriculum level. Staff support children to participate in activities appropriate for their developmental stage.

All sessions include free-flow access to the outdoor area. Practitioners are aware of the need to be flexible, to respond to unplanned things that the children are interested in.

Resources are clearly labelled and organised within the areas, 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.

Children and staff refer to the EYFS unit as our 'Learning Environment' children are encouraged to talk about what and how they are learning, rather than what they are doing.

Curriculum and Planning

In EYFS we follow the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS Statutory framework that applies from September 2021 (updated 2024) and the assessment and reporting arrangements for Reception Baseline assessment (RBA).

Our children are working towards achieving the Early Learning Goals, which describe the statutory expectations regarding the knowledge, skills and understanding which young children should have acquired by the time they reach the end of their reception year.

They cover learning in three prime areas:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

As well as in four specific areas of learning:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning through providing experiences that allow children to practice the *characteristics of effective learning*: playing and exploring, active learning, creating and thinking critically. Furthermore, planning has a sharp focus on the children's starting points, their needs, interests and 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.

Phonics teaching take place in groups based on children's developmental stage. Phonics planning is based upon the 'Little Wandle Letters and Sounds – Revised' teaching program.

The school takes a 'Mastery' approach to mathematics and children are taught in mixed-ability groupings within Nursery and Reception.

Reception children complete guided math's and English activities with a teacher each week.

Long Term Planning

Our long-term planning 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 Mellers Primary and Nottingham Nursery School, we deliver a creative, book-based curriculum. 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 our children.

Short Term Planning

Short term planning shows the learning opportunities that will be available over the week. It includes differentiated adult led experiences for curriculum areas, as well as showing how the learning environment will be set up. Our Continuous Provision activities are enhanced in response to the observations and assessment of the children and their needs.

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. Children are encouraged to discuss what they have been 'learning', rather than what they have been 'doing' during an activity.

We aim to provide an attractive, challenging learning environment that offers high quality opportunities for the children to learn through play, 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 or specific questioning from adults, based on the previous week's observations and discussions with pupils.

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. Adults also take the important role of 'Playful Teacher' in Continuous Provision. Here adults will engage with pupils in their area of interest and extend learning. For example, by modelling drawing a road, including signs, to pupils learning with toy cars or writing a shopping list to children learning in the role-play shop.

The Wider Context

We work closely with outside agencies to support children's development. Where appropriate, we involve health and social care professionals, family support workers and other members of the local community. We have a diverse school, and we actively promote community cohesion. We meet regularly with other local schools and nurseries with a view to double-checking our judgements when assessing children, and to ensure that children who join us from other settings have accurate assessment data. The link with these schools and nurseries also helps us to strengthen the continuity for families who join us from them.

Inclusion

We value all our children as individuals, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meets the needs of the individual child and supports them at their own pace so that most of our children achieve and even exceed the Early Learning Goals. We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need. In doing so, we work closely with parents and outside agencies. Our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENDCo) will support us to ensure that we are appropriately

meeting all the needs of our children here at Mellers. See our separate school policies on Equality of Opportunity, SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) and Teaching & Learning.

We will work in close partnership with our Focus Provision team to ensure that we are a deaf friendly, deaf aware and deaf inclusive school which strives to use as much British Sign Language as possible with all children.

Equal Opportunities

The Foundation Stage will be taught in accordance with the present Equal Opportunities policy for The Federation of Mellers Primary School and Nottingham Nursery. Additionally, as a multi-cultural and dynamic school, we aim to help children to develop a positive attitude towards all their peers inclusive of ethnic group, culture, beliefs, gender and ability. We celebrate a range of festivals here in The Federation and we love to learn all about different faiths.

We agree:

- Cultures will be shared, celebrated and experienced by all.
- Resources and learning experiences will be accessible to all children.
- Children will be given opportunity to discuss share and celebrate their ideas and experiences with their peers.
- British Values (Democracy, Individual Liberty, Rule of Law, Mutual Respect, Tolerance of Those with Different Faiths and Beliefs) will be appropriately taught throughout the foundation stage.
- The teaching of Religious Education is statutory in Reception, and this is adhered to throughout our planning.

Observation and Assessment

Evidencing Assessments

At The Federation of Mellers Primary and Nottingham Nursery School, 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. We are careful to ensure that assessment activity does not detract from adults supporting learning and engaging with the children. We use floor books to capture significant learning within the curriculum and aim to try to capture some child led learning experiences. Notes about guided activities and next steps are recorded on teacher/class focus sheets. The use of occasional detailed observations are focused on pupils that staff feel may require a little extra support. Targeted experiences based on observation findings are planned for the children the following week.

Staff members are provided with a school device. They must use a device provided by school to record observations/special/assessment activities and must not use their personal mobile phone for this.

Assessment Processes

Our assessment processes are consistent with the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA): the assessment and reporting arrangements (May 2023). The DFE guidance sets out the statutory requirements for the reception baseline assessment (RBA) and reporting arrangements for the 2024/2025 academic year, which is produced by the Standards and Testing Agency (STA), it is relevant until the end of the 2024/2025 academic year.

Pupils in Nursery and Reception complete assessment activities within the first 6 weeks of attendance to provide a baseline assessment of attainment. The teachers use their knowledge of each child to decide which

stage of learning children are at expected, working towards, and below, in each area of the curriculum. This allows learning opportunities to be pitched appropriately and provides a baseline of the children's attainment. This information is closely monitored to ensure that all children are making good progress. Extra support and interventions are put into place as required. Children making smaller steps of progress will be tracked using pupil progress meetings.

Nursery and Reception pupils' progress is tracked every term and interventions are planned to 'narrow' gaps in attainment. Staff all have an input into discussions surrounding pupil progress. The progress of Nursery and Reception pupils are further discussed with senior leaders. Internal moderations between staff are conducted at least once every half term to ensure that there is consistency in judgements against evidence towards the Early Years outcomes.

The EYFS Profile

In the Summer term, for Reception pupils, practitioners consider the 17 ELGS in the EYFS Profile to decide whether each child is working at or towards the expected levels. Judgements against the ELGs are based on ongoing observations; 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 EYFS 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.

At the end of the year, Year One teachers are given a copy of the EYFS Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This helps to create a smooth transition and assists with the planning of activities in Year One.

The EYFS profile results are reported to the local authority, who monitor and moderate the judgements made.

Staffing and Organisation

At Mellers Primary School, we have both Nursery and Reception classes, and these are situated within different spaces. School will ensure that people looking after children are suitable to fulfil the requirements of their roles. We have effective systems in place to ensure that practitioners, and any other person who may have regular contact with children (including those living or working on the premises), are suitable.

Across the Federation, Nursery (F1):

For children aged two:

- There will be *one member of staff for every five children*. At least one member of staff will hold an approved level 3 qualification and at least half of all other staff will hold an approved level 2 qualification.

For children aged three and over:

- When there is a staff member who holds QTS, EYPS, EYTS or another approved level 6 qualification who is working directly with the children the ratio will be *one member of staff for every 13 children*. There will be at least one member of staff who holds an approved level 3 qualification.
- When there is not a staff member who holds QTS, EYPS, EYTS or another approved level 6 qualification present then the ratio will be *one member of staff for every eight children*. At least one member of staff will hold an approved level 3 qualification and at least half of all other staff will hold a relevant level 2 qualification.
- Children generally attend nursery using the 15-hour entitlement funding code or 30-hour code entitlement funding code, however we do also offer some top up paid places as part of our childcare/education offering.

Reception (F2):

- In reception there will be the equivalent of one QTS qualified teacher to 30 pupils.
- Reception children attend school full-time in most cases.
- Suitable students on long term placements and volunteers (aged 17 or over) and staff working as apprentices in early education (aged 16 or over) may be included in the ratios at a level below their level of study, if the we are satisfied that they are competent and responsible.
- We employ some level 1 assistants to supplement staffing levels, but must not override the staffing legal ratios as set out above.

Support for Transition

Starting in Nursery across the Federation

All pupils are invited to visit the setting before they start in Nursery. During this time, we meet with parents and outline daily routines and expectations. We also liaise with any prior settings to share information. Children are invited to some short transition visits prior to starting with us and some children might need a more staggered transition to their session times.

From Nursery to Reception

The unit and staffing structure ensure that there is a smooth transition for pupils who already attend school or Nottingham Nursery. In the summer term, we organise opportunities for pupils who do not attend our setting to visit us. All children will be offered short transition visits before starting in their new class.

We hold a transition and admissions meeting for new parents in the summer term, where we outline daily routines and expectations.

From Reception to Year One

In the summer term, we begin a programme of transition to support the children with their move to Year One. This involves visits to the Year One classroom, discussion with current Year One teachers, walks to look at where they will enter school and opportunities to ask any questions about the next year. The school holds Transition sessions, giving the children a taste of their new class.

The Year One classrooms are initially organised to reflect aspects of EYFS provision. The first half term of Year One is based on the principles of the EYFS, allowing the children to feel secure in their new environment.

Working in Partnership

Partnerships with families

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 half term, we publish a newsletter 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' evenings and in the summer term we send home detailed reports and offer meetings with staff to discuss these. Parents and Carers are encouraged to contribute towards the evidence gathered towards the Early Years' outcomes through incidental discussions with staff. There is also the opportunity for parents to share observations from home.

The children take reading books home to share. Throughout the year, there are parent's meetings and open mornings where parents can find out how their child learns in school.

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.

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 going ice-skating. The children take part in educational experiences and 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.

Partnerships with other settings

We recognise that children may access EYFS provision through other providers throughout the week and that all providers have an equally important role to play in their early year's experiences. We seek information about the other settings that our children attend so that we can establish communication about their learning and development.

Safeguarding and Welfare

We understand that we are legally required to comply with safeguarding and welfare requirements. *This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.* All staff receive annual safeguarding training, updates and monitoring procedures are also in place.

Intimate care and toilet training

Intimate care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children can carry out themselves. However, depending on a child's age and stage of development, they may need some support, for example dressing, wiping their bottom after using the toilet and changing underwear following an accident. In most cases, intimate care is to do with personal hygiene. Intimate care procedures are discussed with parents and permission is gained prior to starting school.

Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child. Please also refer to our schools' policy on procedures for continence/intimate care.

We understand that some children will take longer to become fully toilet trained. Parents/carers should provide ample additional clothing and return any borrowed clothing. Parents/carers are also expected to provide a supply of nappies and baby wipes for any children who need to remain in nappies due to their stage of development/medical/SEND need.

Health and Wellbeing

Being Active

We recognise that a healthy body is essential for the development of a healthy mind. The children have access to an outdoor area, which provides a range of physical activities; including climbing equipment, large balls, bats and balls, rockers and digging equipment. The children take part in at least one PE session each week.

Food and Drink

Children must have ‘adequate supervision’ while they are eating at school. This means that children must be within sight **and** hearing of an adult. We provide a daily snack. A range of healthy snacks are available, supplied by “The School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme”. Fresh drinking water is always available and more opportunities for drinking water will be provided in hot weather. We will discuss any special dietary requirements with parents/carers, food allergies and any special health requirements.

Activities to promote a healthy eating and oral hygiene are planned throughout the year in taught sessions, continuous provision and as a part of the wider school community, such as the 28-day fruit and walk to school challenge.

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. The school dinner menus are displayed in the school entrance area.

Illnesses

Parents and carers are asked not to send their child to school if they are unwell and to inform the school/nursery office of their absence. Parents and 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:

- Phone the parents/carer, 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 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.

Advice relating to notifiable diseases is displayed in the school/nursery office.

First aid and injuries

All staff in the EYFS are qualified in paediatric first aid. A first aid kit is kept in the classrooms 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 lunchtimes. Staff should ensure that a suitable first aid kit is available and taken for use during offsite trips and nature garden sessions. The contents of first aid kits should be regularly checked and replenished as needed.

Accidents are recorded in one of the school’s accident forms and signed by the member of staff who dealt with the incident, including in the case of a head injury, and a photocopy of this is sent home with the child. Parents/carers will be contacted by telephone to inform them of an injury if deemed necessary, for example for a head injury with a bump or if a child has received an injury to an intimate area that staff are unable to examine.

Parents will be informed verbally and usually also in writing (accident form) of any incident that required first aid. Staff members follow a questioning procedure designed to ensure that adequate first aid has taken place. This is especially relevant when one, more obvious injury may overshadow another on the same child or when an injury does not present as severe, but actually is.

In the case of a more serious accident to a child, the practitioner/school will contact the parent/guardian to agree a course of action if time permits. If the parent/carer cannot be contacted the practitioner/school will seek appropriate medical attention or treatment for the child. The child should not be given anything to eat or drink. If a child or adult needs to be transported to hospital, every effort should be made to use a car with fully comprehensive insurance including business use. Two adults must accompany the child, and one adult must accompany a member of staff. Should an ambulance be required, one adult must accompany the child or adult. The child's details must be taken to the hospital with the child.

Medicines and medical needs

We will promote the good health, including the oral health of the children within the FSU. This might include our staff facilitating a toothbrushing session time in school.

Only children who have individual care plans or prescription medicine will have medicine administered by staff. Records of these are kept each time medicine is administered. Written permission for the administering of medicine should be obtained from the child's parent/carer. Staff should ensure that medication needs are considered when leaving the school site on visits etc. so that the child has access to this, if necessary, e.g., inhalers.

Training for prescribed medication that is invasive (e.g., an EPIPEN) is available via the Community Training Team. If an individual child requires a care plan, this will be drawn up in partnership with parents and health practitioners.

All staff working with a child who has a known medical need or allergy should be aware of this condition and the associated care plan that should be followed in the event of the child needing assistance/intervention relating to this.

Keeping Children Safe in School

Premises and Security

The office staff are responsible for verifying the identity of any visitors before they enter school. Visitors are asked to sign in to the school visitor's log and are given a visitor sticker to wear.

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. The register is used to check how many children are present. When moving from one area of school to another, head counts are used to check that all children are present before leaving.

A DBS check certificate must be provided and checked for all staff, students and volunteers, along with photo ID. Staff, students and volunteers will be given an appropriate induction. For year 11 work experience pupils, appropriate supervision of these students must be in place.

Arrival and Collection of Children

Each child is marked in on the day's register by the class teacher both for the morning and the afternoon session. Parents/carers use the external classroom doors when collecting their child(ren) at the end of the school day. If a child needs to be collected during the school day, parents report to the school office.

Under no circumstances is a child allowed to leave with anyone other than those named on the child's information form, unless the parent has given written or verbal permission. Parents write a list of people

who can collect their child. If there are queries regarding a child's collection, staff will contact the child's parent/guardian to discuss the situation with them.

If a child is not collected and the parent/guardian is uncontactable, the other names on the child's registration form will be called to collect the child. If no-one on the child's registration form is contactable, the head teacher should telephone the Social Care Duty Officer or Out of Hours Duty Point. Arrangements should then be made for the child to be removed to an appropriate place of protection agreed by the Social Care. It remains the responsibility of the Social Care in conjunction with the Police to contact the parents and if appropriate, to inform them of their child's whereabouts.

If a child of non-compulsory school age in Nursery is consistently late either being dropped off or collected from school or Nursery or is frequently absent their place will be withdrawn. Discussions with parents/carers and prior warnings will always take place to avoid this.

If a child in Reception is consistently late or frequently absent from school without explanation from parents/carers, they will receive a visit at home from the school's attendance officer.

Missing Child Procedures

If a child goes missing 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, surrounding playground, the vicinity if offsite 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.

There are strict measures in place to prevent this from happening, with the EYFS unit and Nursery having locks on doors inside and gates outside. Frequent registers and head counts of the children are taken throughout the day and a board accessible to all staff informs staff of absent children/ children who have left for medical appointments.

Outings

Written parental permission to take the children into the local environment is sought upon admission to the nursery/school. Further written permission will be obtained for any other outings. A local trip planner form should be completed by staff and a copy given to the office prior to a visit taking place. Risk assessments are completed for each type of outing to ensure that we take steps to remove, minimise and manage any risks and hazards. The assessment must also include consideration of adult to child ratios. Vehicles transporting children, and the driver of those vehicles, must be adequately insured. Further information can be found in our offsite 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 in the real world and online and, involve them in discussions about health and safety issues.

Risk Assessments

In addition to the school's risk assessments, a specific EYFS Risk assessment is in place. Daily informal risk assessments are completed to ensure that any hazards are identified and managed before the children enter the classroom. Regular rigorous checks of equipment are conducted by EYFS staff. Any faulty equipment is removed/ child access restricted and is reported to the site manager.

Statutory child/ staff ratios are always adhered to and routines are in place to ensure an even spread of adults across the unit. Classroom furniture and staff members are positioned in ways to ensure that children can be seen and heard by adults. Measures, such as closing off classroom areas are taken if required when a member of staff is absent.

Admissions

Both Mellers Primary and Nursery School and Nottingham Nursery School have admissions policies in place that discuss how we admit children and the criteria for this. All reception school places must be applied for via the local authority.

Other Relevant Whole School Policies and legislation

The following whole school policies also contain information which relates to the policies and procedures within EYFS in the relevant policy areas. You can find them on the school website:

- Behaviour and relationships policy
- Safeguarding and intimate care policy
- SEND
- Equality & Diversity
- Digital safety policy
- Complaints
- Admissions

Legislation

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1153546/2023_Reception_baseline_assessment_assessment_and_reporting_arrangements.pdf

Date of Next Policy Review: November 2025