

Our Early Years Philosophy at Mayflower Primary School

At Mayflower, we believe that creating an inclusive and enabling environment is essential for the children who join us in the Early Years, reflecting everything they bring to our wider learning community. Joy and wonder are integral to all of the learning opportunities we create, giving our children every opportunity to reach their full potential, develop deeper interests, and strengthen their character.

A number of years ago, we became very interested in the connection between effective early learning and the natural world. This prompted us to develop our outdoor learning areas, and consider how different aspects of nature could facilitate and enhance our children's learning. This also led to a change in the resources that we used, trying to focus on real objects that do not have a defined purpose. Such resources inspire our children to go further in their creative play, and help us to be more environmentally aware. Interestingly, some years later, an opportunity arose for us to build on this philosophy, through the Curiosity Approach. This linked seamlessly with the provision we had developed, and led to us gaining accreditation. At Mayflower, we wish to see our children thinking for themselves, making their own choices, and directing their learning.



We now use a range of authentic everyday items and recycled materials, which have multiple purposes. They allow our children to use their imagination and choose how to use the resources they been motivated to select. We feel such an approach will give our children freedom by igniting their natural curiosity and imagination. We aim to create thinkers and doers and this is evident as we observe characteristics of effective learning in our children throughout the year.

Nature and exploring natural materials are the cornerstones of our approach and we encourage the children to be outside in all weathers. This helps them to connect with the different seasons and the world around us. It is also somewhere where they can recognise the beauty and wonder of nature. Our school is a space where children can engage, practise and rehearse with big movements as well as developing resilience over time.

We recognise Schemas as a style of learning for individual children and strive to ensure they encounter different Schema within the enabling environment we have created. Practitioners give children time to understand the Schema that interest them.

Throughout our base and in all areas of provision, we strive to develop independence and for the children to progress with their resilience as they explore or encounter new challenges. Staff support them to develop their communication skills and act as good role models for hearing English and developing children's vocabulary through play and exploration. Staff are constantly engaged and developing sustained shared thinking as children explore objects they are interested in.

At Mayflower, we have a deep pride in the provision we offer to our youngest learners, and fully understand that excellence in the Early Years creates effective, life-long learners who embrace all of the wonderful opportunities our world can offer.