



Merchant Taylors' Schools, Crosby

EYFS Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum Merchant Taylors' Prep

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1. Purpose

“All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives, so their experiences in early years 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 provide the foundation children need to fulfil their potential.”

(‘Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework for Group and School-based Providers’ Dated: 14 July 2025 Effective: 01 September 2025)

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) covers the development of children from birth to the end of their Reception Year. It sets the standards that all early year’s providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe, promoting teaching and learning to ensure children’s ‘school readiness’ and gives children the right foundation for good future progress through school and life. The EYFS is about what children learn, as well as how they learn. It recognises how effective practice is a mix of different approaches, and how children learn through play, by adults modelling, by observing each other and through adult-guided learning.

The EYFS seeks to provide:

- **Quality and consistency** in all early years settings, so that every child makes good progress, and no child gets left behind.
- **A secure foundation** through planning for the learning and development of each individual child and assessing and reviewing what they have learned regularly.
- **Partnership working** between practitioners and with parents and/or carers.
- **Equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

We follow the EYFS Statutory Framework for Group and School-based Providers and the four overarching principles that shape practice within Early Years settings:

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**.
- Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.



- Importance of **learning and development**. Children develop and learn at different rates. (See “the characteristics of effective teaching and learning” at paragraph 1.18). The framework covers the education and care of all children, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

2. A Unique Child

At Merchant Taylors’ Prep, we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We know that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Children’s attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by their school and home environments and we begin to build links with their families.

We observe how each child learns to gain an understanding of the characteristics they develop in order to become effective learners. We use questioning, praise and encouragement to develop a positive attitude to learning and high self-esteem.

During their first year at school, the children are introduced to the learning habits. They are taught to be observant, investigative, curious, determined, imaginative, adventurous, co-operative and to use reasoning. Children begin to understand the concept of the growth mindset. They are taught that they can ‘grow their brains’ so that they understand that everyone can learn with practice and effort. The children are taught how to learn and how to become successful learners.

In our school we believe that all our children matter and help all our children to achieve their best. This includes boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children’s range of life experiences when planning for their learning. We set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning opportunities that build upon and extend children’s knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence.

We also aim to:

- Use a wide range of teaching strategies based on children’s learning needs.
- Provide a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively.
- Provide a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued; • use resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping.
- Plan challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills
- Monitor children’s progress and take action to provide support.



It is important to us that all children are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy)

3. Equal Opportunities, Inclusion and Special Needs

The Early Years Foundation Stage is taught in accordance with the present policy for Equal Opportunities. Children are encouraged to develop a positive attitude towards people of different ethnic groups, cultures, beliefs, gender and ability. We support the belief that everyone is unique in their own right and act upon it.

Ramps, a lift and a disabled toilet are available within the school to cater for children with physical disabilities.

Our curriculum respects a child's ethnic faith and cultural heritage, and the special needs of each child, by ensuring that these areas are covered within our indoor and outdoor activities, circle time and assemblies, visitors, role play, books and positive images.

It is the responsibility of the school to ensure that we identify and help those children in our care with additional educational needs including gifted children. We liaise with the school's SENDCO to identify next steps in learning in partnership with the parents.

(See SEND Policy and Equal Opportunities Policy)

4. Welfare

"Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them."

At Merchant Taylors' Prep, we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2025.

We understand that we are required to:

- Promote the welfare of children
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill



- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs
- Ensure all adults who look after children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment are safe and suitable for purposes.
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children
- Comply with the Merchant Taylors' Schools Code of Conduct for taking photographs and/or videos on authorised equipment, or using images and storing them securely. (*See 'Use of Mobile Phones and Cameras EYFS Policy'*)
- We do not give or threaten corporal punishment or any punishment which could negatively affect a child's well-being. If physical intervention was taken to avert immediate danger of personal injury to any person (including the child) or to manage a child's behaviour if absolutely necessary, a record will be kept of any such occasion, and parents and/or carers will be informed on the same day, or as soon as reasonably practicable.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

5. Child Absences

The School aspires to high levels of attendance from all pupils. Good attendance is essential for all pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, well-being and wider life chances.

Morning registration is at 8:40-8:45 am, and afternoon registration is 12:35-12:40pm.

5.1 Reporting absence:

- If a pupil is to be absent from School for any reason, the parent / carer should contact the following below by email / telephone by 8:45am on first morning of absence;
- Where a pupil is ill, the School should be notified of the nature of the illness.
- If a child is absent for a prolonged period of time, or if a child is absent without notification from the parent or carer, attempts will be made to contact the child's parents and/or carers and alternative emergency contacts.



5.2 Arrangements for reporting subsequent absence:

- Absence will be recorded on the Attendance Register.
- Authorised absence means that the School has either given approval in advance for a pupil to be away (granted an authorised leave of absence) or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

The Head of EYFS is also one of the School's Senior Attendance Champions. When analysing attendance data, any patterns and trends in a child's absences and their personal circumstances will be taken into consideration. Any concerns must be referred to local children's social care services and/or a police welfare check requested.

(See Attendance Policy and Procedure for additional information)

5.3 Missing Pupils During the School Day

A pupil who has been registered as present at School but is subsequently found to be absent for no known reason is deemed to be a missing pupil. Once it has been ascertained that a pupil is missing, the procedure below should be followed with the Assistant Head [Pastoral] identified as the lead member of staff.

- 1) Staff should let the Assistant Head Pastoral know as soon as possible that there is a missing pupil. [S]he will then coordinate the search.
- 2) The Assistant Head Pastoral will then contact teachers and pupils who have been with the missing pupil prior to the disappearance to determine at what point in the day the pupil was last seen.
- 3) If this initial search fails to locate the pupil the Assistant Head will arrange for a larger team of adults to search the immediate area/grounds.
- 4) If the pupil is not found within 30 minutes, the Headteacher will be informed and a fire drill/whole-school evacuation will be considered to identify if the pupil is on site.
- 5) If the pupil is still not located, the Assistant Head Pastoral will contact the pupil's parents to explain what has happened and the procedure that has been followed.
- 6) Following this, the School may contact the Police at which point Police procedure will be followed.
- 7) If the pupil's home is within walking distance, the Assistant Head [Pastoral] will consider sending a member of staff to walk the route.
- 8) The Deputy Head Pastoral will contact the Sefton Safeguarding Children Partnership and will cooperate fully with any safeguarding investigation by Social Care.
- 9) If stage 6 has been reached, and the pupil is subsequently located, this will be communicated to teaching and support staff by email or telephone.
- 10) Others who may need to be informed depending on the outcome of searches are the Chair of Governors, ISI and the School Insurers.
- 11) If the pupil is located but has been injured, a report will be made, under RIDDOR, to the HSE if required.
- 12) A full report will be completed with a review of all actions taken, and shared with the relevant Safeguarding governors.

5.4 Procedure to be Followed if a Pupil Goes Missing on a Trip or Visit

During a trip/visit, risk assessment provides guidance on ensuring the location and safeguarding of



pupils at all times, including staff responsibility for this. If a pupil is found to be missing during a school trip or visit, the following procedure should be followed:

- 1) An immediate head count should be carried out in order to ensure that all other pupils are present.
- 2) Confirm with the members of the group when and where the missing pupil was last seen.
- 3) A member of staff will search the immediate vicinity.
- 4) The SLT link should be informed by telephone.
- 5) The remaining pupils should be taken back to transport or, on a residential trip, the accommodation. If the trip is local, pupils should be taken back to school, whilst a member of staff remains 'on location'.
- 6) If the trip is to an enclosed area, the venue manager should be contacted to arrange a search.
- 7) The Assistant Head Pastoral will inform the Headteacher, and then will contact the pupil's parents as soon as possible and explain what has happened and the procedures that have been followed.
- 8) Following this the Assistant Head Pastoral will contact the Police, and the School will act in accordance with Police advice.
- 9) The Assistant Head Pastoral will inform the Sefton Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- 10) The School will co-operate with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Social Care.
- 11) Others who may need to be informed depending on the outcome of searches are the Chair of Governors, ISI and the School Insurers. If the pupil is located but has been injured, a report will be made, under RIDDOR, to the HSE if required.
- 12) A full report will be completed with a review of all actions taken, and shared with the relevant Safeguarding governors.

5.5 Procedure to be Followed if a Pupil is Not Collected from School

If a child is not collected at the end of a session, from after school care, at the end of the school day or after an extra-curricular activity, the following procedures are used:

- Every effort is made to contact parents using contact numbers.
- Emergency contact adults numbers are also used.
- These numbers are tried repeatedly for up to two hours.
- Two adults will remain with the child during this time.
- If after two hours no contact has been made with parents on emergency numbers, social services will be contacted.
- The Headteacher or Assistant Head Pastoral (or another available member of the SMT/SLT) staff will return to school.
- Children will not be allowed to go home with another parent unless permission has been given previously by the child's parent or carer.

6. Supervision

Consideration of the safety and emotional welfare of pupils is our utmost concern and we ensure the needs of all children are met. Pupils are adequately supervised, especially whilst eating, and risk



assessments are undertaken to assess the level of supervision that is required throughout the school day. Children are usually within sight and hearing of staff and always within sight or hearing.

We follow the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (September 2025) for ratios when teaching and general supervision:

“For children aged three and over in independent schools (including in nursery classes in free schools and academies) where a person with Qualified Teacher Status, Early Years Professional Status, Early Years Teacher Status, an instructor, or another suitably qualified overseas trained teacher, is working directly with children:

- For classes where the majority of children will reach the age of five or older within the school year, there must be at least one member of staff for every 30 children.
- For all other classes there must be at least one other member of staff for every 13 children.
- At least one other member of staff must hold an approved level 3 qualification, or have received approval to be included in the ratios at level 3 after attaining experience-based route status.

For children aged three and over in independent schools (including in nursery classes in free schools and academies) where there is no person with Qualified Teacher Status, Early Years Professional Status, Early Years Teacher Status no instructor, and no suitably qualified overseas trained teacher, working directly with children:

- There must be at least one member of staff for every eight children.
- At least one member of staff must hold an approved level 3 qualification or have received approval to be included in the ratios at level 3 after attaining experience-based route status.
- At least half of all other staff must hold an approved level 2 qualification”

(See also Supervision Policy)

7. Health and Safety

We have clear procedures for assessing risk which include procedures for keeping children safe during outings and for any aspects of the environment or provision that may require a further risk assessment. In addition to this, an annual risk assessment is conducted of the EYFS (see EYFS risk assessment) and in the staff handbook, safeguarding and child protection policies. There is detailed information and procedures to ensure the safety of the children. We have a whole school Designated Safeguarding Lead. In addition, the Head of EYFS is also a Designated Safeguarding Lead for the EYFS, all of whom attend appropriate training.

In line with the EYFS Statutory Framework 2025, we undertake:

- A whole school medicines policy ensuring that there are systems in place to ensure that medicines and the systems for obtaining information about a child's needs for medication are kept up to date; “Providers must keep a written record each time a medicine is administered to a child and inform the child's parents and/or carers on the same day the



medicine has been taken, or as soon as reasonably practicable.”
(‘Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework for Group and School-based Providers’
Dated: 14 July 2025 Effective: 01 September 2025)

- Promotion of good health, including the oral health, of pupils.
- A first aid box is accessible at all times, and a record of accidents and injuries is kept (see accident and injury policy). All Teaching Assistants are paediatric first aid trained.
- The Head of EYFS is the lead behaviour manager for the Early Years (see Behaviour Policy).
- A Health and Safety Policy and Procedures which cover identifying, reporting and dealing with accidents, hazards and faulty equipment.
- A Safeguarding Policy and Use of Mobile Phones and Cameras EYFS Policy state how mobile phones and cameras are to be used and stored securely whilst children are in the setting.
- Staff are expected to wear clothing that supports them in getting to a child’s level and playing and engaging with children at floor level.

8. Food and Drink

- Where children are provided with meals, snacks and drinks, these are healthy, balanced and nutritious. Water is always available for children to drink.
- Parent/carers are required to provide the school with details of any special requirement, preferences and food allergies and any special health requirement, where applicable. This information is recorded and acted upon.
- Menu items are published on our website and food options are discussed with pupils prior to every lunchtime.
- Children are supervised by a member of staff who is paediatric first aid trained whilst they eat. To minimise the risk of choking every care is taken to ensure:
 - any stones and pips are removed from fruit before serving



- small round foods (like strawberries and cherry tomatoes) are cut lengthways and into quarters
- large fruits (like melon) and hard fruit or vegetables (like raw apple and carrot) are cut into slices instead of small chunks
- sausages are cut into thin strips rather than chunks
- bones have been removed from meat or fish
- we are a nut-free school
- whole seeds are not given to children under five years old
- cheese is not served in the form of chunks
- marshmallows or jelly cubes from a packet are not given to children, either to eat or as part of messy play activities, as they can get stuck in the throat
- we do not give children hard sweets

9. Positive Relationships

Children learn to be strong independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with children and their families. Each child is assigned a key person who is their class teacher, who is responsible for their care, learning, and development.

10. Parents as Partners

Parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We do this by:

- Gathering information from parents about their child as their child starts our school.
- Inviting the children to spend an afternoon with their teacher in the classroom before starting school.
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school.
- Encouraging parents to attend parents' evenings in the first two terms to discuss their child's progress.
- Providing parents with a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.
- Encouraging parents to contribute observations and comment on their child's progress at



the end of each half term in their child's Learning Diary folder.

- Sharing our approach to the teaching of phonics and reading.
- Inviting parents to a curriculum workshop where key information is explained.
- Sharing our curriculum aims each term and providing some suggestions for parents to engage with at home.
- Inviting parents to our 'Stay and Play' sessions.

Staff develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. We encourage parents to talk to the child's key person, if there are any concerns.

(See Working in Partnership with Parents Policy)

11. Enabling Environments

The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

12. Observation, Assessment and Planning

At Merchant Taylors' Prep we place the individual child at the center of our planning. This is achieved through detailed observation and assessment. This observation and on-going formative assessment is at the heart of effective early years of practice.

We achieve this through:

- Observing children as they act and interact in their play, everyday activities, child-initiated activities, and planned activities.
- Learning about what the child does at home and encouraging parents to share their observations.



- Observing what children can do and identifying their stages on their developmental pathway.
- Considering ways to support the child to strengthen and deepen their current learning and development.
- considering the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in our care. This information is then effectively used to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all areas of learning and development.

The EYFS requires us to undertake summative assessments in which staff review children's progress and share a summary with parents at the end of the foundation stage through the EYFS Profile.

In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, we complete the EYFS profile for each child. The profile provides parents and carers, practitioners, and teachers with a clear picture of a child's development, knowledge, understanding and abilities, as well as their progress against expected levels. It furthermore prepares Year 1 teachers for individual children's readiness, needs and next steps. The teacher will determine whether the child is meeting the expected levels or continuing to work towards expected levels of development. The child's level of development is assessed against the seventeen Early Learning Goals.

In compliance with Early Years regulations, parents may have access to developmental records about their child.

13. The Learning Environment

The setting is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet, and rest. The unit is set up to help the children find and locate equipment and resources independently.

Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It presents the children with opportunities to explore, use their senses, and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children develop in all seven areas of learning.

14. Learning and Development

Children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are interconnected.

14.1. Teaching and Learning Style



- We use a range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions, and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication.
- A carefully planned curriculum helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS.
- Children take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social, and emotional abilities.
- Children are encouraged to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management.
- Learning needs are supported with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space and equipment.
- We identify the progress and future learning needs of children through observations.

14.2 Play

“Play is essential for children’s development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals, and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play and learning that is guided by adults.”

Through play our children develop and explore a develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. The adults model play and play sensitively with the children fitting in with their plans and ideas. The children are encouraged to try new activities and judge risks for themselves. We talk to them about how we get better at things through effort and practice and that we can all learn when things go wrong. They practice and build up ideas, learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own.

14.3 Active Learning



“Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.”

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence, they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

14.4 Creativity and Critical Thinking

“When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.”

Children should be given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children’s thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the unit to extend their learning.

14.5 Areas of Learning

Children learn skills, acquire new knowledge, and demonstrate their understanding through the seven areas of learning and development.

The *prime* areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social, and emotional development.

The *specific* areas are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the world and



- Expressive arts and design

The prime areas are those most essential for a child's healthy development and future learning. As they grow, these skills will support the child as they extend their development in specific areas. None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

Practitioners should be ambitious for all children, considering the individual needs, interests, and development of each child in their care. They must use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all areas of learning and development. Practitioners working with the youngest children are expected to ensure a strong foundation for children's development in the three prime areas. The specific areas of learning provide children with a broad curriculum and with opportunities to strengthen and apply the prime areas of learning. This is particularly important in developing language and extending vocabulary.

The fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs are already implicitly embedded in the Early Years Foundation Stage. We promote these values through our school mission statement, aims and values, our curriculum and enrichment activities.

15. Transition

From Pre-school /Feeder settings

During the summer term prior to a child's entry into the reception year, the following procedures have been put into place to ensure successful transition.

- Parents are invited to a meeting to ensure they know about school procedures and allocation of classes and any concerns they may want to express.
- During the summer holidays parents are encouraged to complete a scrap book with their child entitled 'Me and My World'. It is used during the Autumn term to support transition and to inform planning.
- The children are invited to visit their reception class for an afternoon to meet their new



classmates and teacher.

- Children receive a letter sent to their home during the summer holidays, reminding them of their visit to school and welcoming them into the MTS community.
- EYFS teachers will endeavour to visit children at their pre-school setting and/or speak with each child's Key Person within their setting.
- Children requiring extra support will be offered additional visits regardless of their setting.

From Reception Class to Key Stage 1

During the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. Profiles provide parents and carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile includes on-going observation, all relevant records held by the setting, discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults to whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

Each child's level of development is assessed against early learning goals. The profile indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development or not yet reaching expected levels (emerging'). Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report which may also include a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This informs the dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1.

16. Role of the Head of EYFS

The role of the Head of EYFS is to provide professional leadership for the Early Years to facilitate the highest standards of teaching and learning and to secure effective use of resources.

This will involve:

- Monitoring of pupil progress
- Pupil conferencing
- Analysing data
- Taking the lead in policy development
- Auditing, purchasing and organising resources



- Supporting colleagues in their CPD
- Keeping up to date with recent developments in the area
- Checking that assessment of the EYFSP is carried out in line with the school's Assessment Policy and statutory requirements

17. Monitoring and Review

The EYFS will be monitored in line with the School Development Plan by the Head of EYFS in the first instance. The EYFS team regularly discusses EYFS practice, providing feedback to the Head of EYFS and the Head of School / Assistant Heads, raising any issues that require discussion. Work scrutiny by curriculum subject leaders will take place on a termly basis. A two-year rolling programme of rigorous monitoring of the curriculum is in place.