



# Meldreth Primary School Early Years Curriculum



*“Learning together for life”*

## STARTING SCHOOL FOR THE FIRST TIME

Starting school is a very important time for you, your child and school. We need to work together to make the transition smooth and rewarding. In the term prior to their entry, new pupils are invited into school for class visits. This will help them become familiar with the surroundings and routines of school. During this period, there will be meetings for parents to discuss our partnership with you and talk about any concerns you might have.

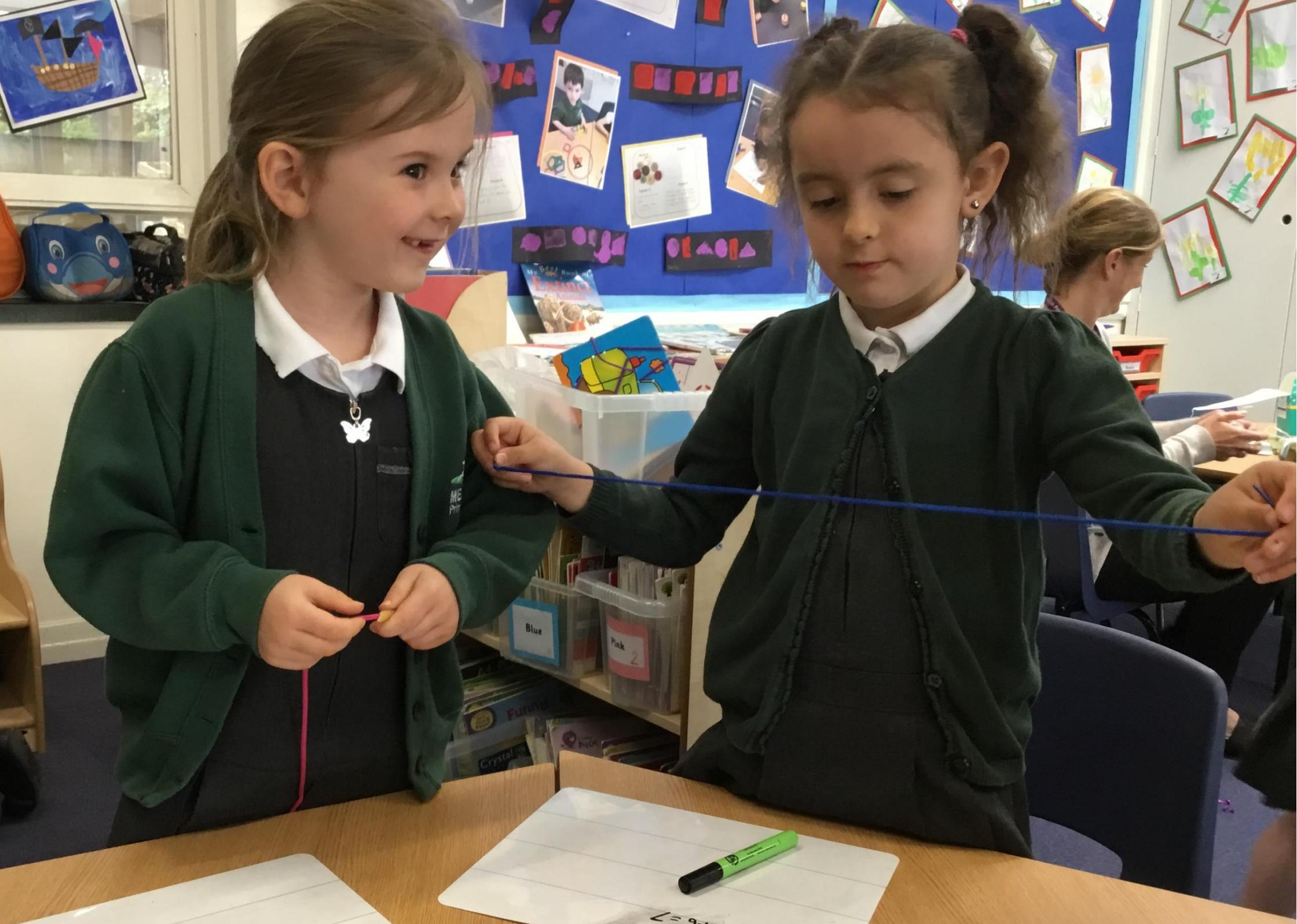
Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in their early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. Good parenting and high quality early learning **together** provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.

Our Early Years Curriculum is grounded in active learning. Through practical activities, purposeful play and talk, we aim for our youngest pupils to develop an understanding of the world and of the basic concepts, they will need for their later learning. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all Early Years' providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

Seven areas of learning and development are grouped into two categories – prime areas and specific areas. The prime areas are important because they lay the foundations for children's success in all other areas of learning and of life: **Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Physical Development and Communication and Language**

The specific areas provide the range of experiences and opportunities for children to broaden their knowledge and skills: **Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World, Expressive Arts and Design**

At Meldreth Primary School, we value the potential of home-school links and make every effort to involve parents in the learning and development of their child. We use the online journal, **Tapestry** to help record all the learning we do in school and can join in the fun of your child's early years education.



## Communication and language

### Listening and attention:

- Children listen attentively in a range of situations.
- They listen to stories, accurately anticipating key events and respond to what they hear with relevant comments, questions or actions.
- They give their attention to what others say and respond appropriately, while engaged in another activity.

### Understanding:

- Children follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.
- They answer 'how' and 'why' questions about their experiences and in response to stories or events.

### Speaking:

- Children express themselves effectively, showing awareness of listeners' needs.
- They use past, present and future forms accurately when talking about events that have happened or are to happen in the future.
- They develop their own narratives and explanations by connecting ideas or events.





## **Physical development**

### **Moving and handling:**

- Children show good control and co-ordination in large and small movements.
- They move confidently in a range of ways, safely negotiating space.
- They handle equipment and tools effectively, including pencils for writing.

### **Health and self-care:**

- Children know the importance for good health of physical exercise, and a healthy diet, and talk about ways to keep healthy and safe.
- They manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs successfully, including dressing and going to the toilet independently.

## Personal, social and emotional development

### Self-confidence and self-awareness:

- Children are confident to try new activities, and say why they like some activities more than others.
- They are confident to speak in a familiar group, will talk about their ideas, and will choose the resources they need for their chosen activities.
- They say when they do or don't need help.

### Managing feelings and behaviour:

- Children talk about how they and others show feelings, talk about their own and others' behaviour, and its consequences, and know that some behaviour is unacceptable.
- They work as part of a group or class, and understand and follow the rules.
- They adjust their behaviour to different situations, and take changes of routine in their stride.

### Making relationships:

- Children play co-operatively, taking turns with others.
- They take account of one another's ideas about how to organise their activity.
- They show sensitivity to others' needs and feelings, and form positive relationships with adults and other children







## Literacy

This area of learning is about stimulating your child's love of books, reading and writing. When we introduce children to books, they can enter into the magic and imaginative worlds that they offer. Many stories are allegories about real life so by reading them with your child you are taking an essential step in helping them make sense of people, their personalities and emotions that they will encounter at all times in their life.

It is easier for your child to work out feelings and how to deal with them, if they have discussed them through the literature they read. We introduce children to the tools of language, such as the alphabet, dictionaries, early grammar and sentence structure. These basics, which improve vocabulary, understanding, and sentence construction.

The teaching of phonics has a high priority in the Early Years. Our phonics scheme 'Storytime Phonics' is used daily to immerse children in language and promote a love of reading and stories. Activities from [Letter and Sounds](#) are used to ensure that phonics is taught systematically in order for children to build their knowledge and skills effectively. Stories, rhymes and actions are used as an effective teaching tool.

Children are taught through discrete phonics lessons as well as having regular opportunity to explore phonic activities within their extended indoor and outdoor learning environment.

### Reading:

- Children read and understand simple sentences.
- They use phonic knowledge to decode regular words and read them aloud accurately.
- They also read some common irregular words.
- They demonstrate understanding when talking with others about what they have read.

### Writing:

- Children use their phonic knowledge to write words in ways, which match their spoken sounds.
- They also write some irregular common words.
- They write simple sentences, which can be read by themselves and others.
- Some words are spelt correctly and others are phonetically plausible.

### How to Help at Home

Play word games like 'I spy' (emphasising initial sounds), enjoy alliteration (when words begin with the same letters), and rhyming words (when words end with the same sound). Try not to expect reading too early though, it's about enjoying words and stories and rhymes in the early years.



## Maths and Numeracy

Early mathematics is all about using mathematical concepts whenever possible in communicating ideas. Counting the steps on the stairs as you walk up and down, counting parts of your body and singing number songs all help your child learn basic maths skills. There are lots of books that you can borrow from the local library that help your child practice counting and comparing sizes.

### Numbers:

- Children count reliably with numbers from 1 to 20, place them in order and say which number is one more or one less than a given number.
- Using quantities and objects, they add and subtract two single-digit numbers and count on or back to find the answer.
- They solve problems, including doubling, halving and sharing.

### Shape, space and measures:

- Children use everyday language to talk about size, weight, capacity, position, distance, time and money to compare quantities and objects and to solve problems.

- They recognise, create and describe patterns.
- They explore characteristics of everyday objects and shapes and use mathematical language to describe them.

### How to Help at Home

Involve your child in daily tasks that match and compare patterns, such as setting the table, sorting out clothing into categories, matching socks and gloves, comparing the sizes of everyday objects such as towels, cups, spoons, shoes, etc. Write shopping lists with your child, take them to supermarkets and other food markets, and teach them to investigate the details about weights and measures, as well as about spending money.

Children love to be engaged in important decisions about food, and they are much more likely to eat what they have cooked themselves so teach them about how to create simple and tasty dishes.





## Understanding the World

This area of learning concerns exploring and investigating the natural and manufactured world.

### People and communities:

- Children talk about past and present events in their own lives and in the lives of family members.
- They know that other children don't always enjoy the same things, and are sensitive to this.
- They know about similarities and differences between themselves and others, and among families, communities and traditions.

### The world:

- Children know about similarities and differences in relation to places, objects, materials and living things.
- They talk about the features of their own immediate environment and how environments might vary from one another.
- They make observations of animals and plants and explain why some things occur, and talk about changes.

### Technology:

- Children recognise that a range of technology is used in places such as homes and schools.
- They select and use technology for particular purposes.



## How to Help at Home

Give your child safe access to the outdoors, taking them on walks to parks and places of interest such as museums and galleries. Children are never too young to enjoy seeing sculpture and paintings and it is essential that they learn from the earliest time to value creative arts and expression. Parents should take children to free museums to learn about the past and to a range of galleries to explain contemporary as well as ancient cultures.

Also, take your child to visit farms and zoos so that they can learn about domestic and wild animals. Help them to understand where they come from, and the conditions in which they flourish. By taking an interest in live animals, children can make associations with the animals and environments that they read about in books and stories. Real experiences broaden their comprehension, as well as their ability to develop caring and sympathetic attitudes to living creatures.

Improve your child's knowledge of technology by teaching them to use a wide range of electronic equipment as well as develop an interest in how they work by allowing them to take old circuits or old clocks apart so that they can inspect their innards. Taking things apart and putting them together again, or not, stimulates interest and curiosity.



## **Expressive Arts & Design**

### **Exploring and using media and materials:**

- Children sing songs, make music and dance, and experiment with ways of changing them.
- They safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function.

### **Being imaginative:**

- Children use what they have learnt about media and materials in original ways, thinking about uses and purposes.
- They represent their own ideas, thoughts and feelings through design and technology, art, music, dance, role-play and stories.

### **How to Help at Home**

Give your child as much encouragement to express themselves through art. Taking positive steps to visit galleries and museums will inspire them to make their own art.

Think of ways for your child to be creative with a wide range of tools and resources:

- Modelling with malleable materials such as dough, plasticine, clay, etc.
- Painting with wide or narrow paintbrushes with water based or acrylic paints – on wallpaper in the garden, or sugar paper indoors, etc.
- Drawing with pencils, crayons, and pens.
- Building models with recycled materials.
- Cutting and sticking magazines and photos.

Stimulate your child's imagination by letting them make dens with cushions and blankets under the kitchen table. Create opportunities for them to take in their toys and let them have tea with a toy tea set. Empower your child to dress up in your old clothes, shoes and bags. They will re-enact the experiences they have learned about through stories and in real life.

Make music an important part of your child's life. Listening to a variety of classical as well as contemporary music will help children learn about rhythms and beats, and will inspire them to take an interest in dancing and playing musical instruments as they grow.

