

Alverton Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Introduction

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life, as well as support to reach their full potential. A child’s experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure safe and happy childhood is important in its own right, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. When parents choose to use early years services they want to know the provision will keep their children safe and help them to thrive. The Early Years Foundation Stage is the framework that provides that assurance.” EYFS 2012

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. At Alverton School our Foundation Stage is for children from 3 to 5 years. Children are able to join us part time in Foundation 1 (nursery) the term after they are 3, then they move up to the main school (reception) in the September before they turn 5. In partnership with parents and carers we enable the children to begin the process of becoming active learners for life. We endeavour to ensure that children “learn and develop well and kept healthy and safe.” We aim to support children in their learning through “teaching and experiences that gives children the broad range of skills that provide the right foundation for good progress through school and in life.” (Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2012)

The EYFS is important in its own right and we recognise it as a crucial stage in education, preparing children with the basic skills that they will need for their later school years. The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A unique child – developing resilient, capable, confident and self-assured individuals.
- Positive relationships – supporting the children in becoming strong and independent.
- Enabling environments – where opportunities and experiences respond to the individual needs of the child by developing a strong partnership between practitioners, parents/carers and the child.
- Learning and developing – An acknowledgement that children learn in different ways and at different rates

A Unique Child

At Alverton CP School we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We understand that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates, whilst their attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others. We use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration/ sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of ‘differences’. All children are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

At Alverton School we believe that all of our children matter, and take pride in giving them 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.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of 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. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage and the school SENCO is called upon for further information and advice. Appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the school’s Inclusion policy for SEN.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children’s knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence.
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children’s learning needs.
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively.
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued.
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;

- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

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.” (EYFS)

It is important to us that all children in the school 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.

We understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2012. 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 the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
- 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.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

Positive Relationships

At Alverton School we recognise that children need to learn to form strong, independent and secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators, and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, as well as their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- Holding parents Induction Meeting before children start their Transition into school
- Inviting all children to attend "Learning Together" sessions before they start in the Foundation 2 class;
- A "starting school" parents meeting for each individual child
- Inviting parents to stay and settle their child when dropping them in the morning
- Offering "phonics" workshops to all parents
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress.
- Using the Tapestry program to complete observations on the children in the setting which the parents have free access to.
- Encouraging parents to contribute to the child's Tapestry profile by including WOW moments from home and family life.
- There is a formal meeting for parents each term at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher.
- Parents receive a report on their child's attainment at the end of each school year;
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns;
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: Open afternoons, Class assemblies, Sports Day etc;

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At our school each EYFS teacher acts as a 'Key Person' to all children in their class, supported by the Teaching Assistant. As we run our Foundation Stage 2 classes together children build up good relationships with all staff and we ensure that there is continuity and coherence by sharing information about all of the children. on a need to know basis.

Enabling Environments

At Alverton Primary School we recognise that 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.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

The Planning within the EYFS is based around topics which have stemmed from the children's own interests. These plans are used by the EYFS teacher as a guide for weekly planning, however the teacher may alter these plans in response to the needs, achievements and interests of the children. This will be indicated on the daily planning.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. These observations may or may not have a specific focus, and are built through out the year using the Tapestry programme. They also contain information provided by parents and other settings. All EYFS staff are proficient at making relevant and insightful observations of the children and these are used to plan the next steps for that child.

Progress is tracked using the Development Matters document using the age bands to ascertain "typical" or otherwise development and plan lessons and activities that are appropriate for the children in the setting.

We use the EYFS Profile to record our judgements. Each child's level of development is recorded against 17 Learning Outcomes.

Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress against the ELG's and their characteristics of effective learning. We give opportunities for the parents to discuss these judgements with the EYFS teacher.

The Learning Environment

The EYFS classroom 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 classroom is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and located equipment and resources independently. In addition, the EYFS class has it own enclosed outdoor area which has been developed as a versatile and creative space to enhance the learning opportunities in the school. The outdoor learning environment is seen as incredibly important at Alverton School with its impact on health and well being being a significant factor, especially for young children. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children 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 to develop in all 7 areas of learning.

Learning and Development

At Alverton Primary School we recognise that 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 inter connected.

Teaching and Learning Style

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in the EYFS just as much as they do to the teaching in Key Stage 2. Features that are specific to the EYFS are:

- The partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement.
- The understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching.
- The range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions to extend and develop play, and talk or utilise other means of communication.
- The carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS.
- The provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities.
- The encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management.
- The support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment.

- The identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents.
- The good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school.

Playing and exploring

“Children’s play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children’s development.” EYFS

Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences which enable them make sense of the world. They practice and build up ideas, learning how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. Our children have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own, whilst being given the space to communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

“Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Play is used as an essential part children’s development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. There is an on-going judgement to be made by practitioners about the balance between activities led by children, and activities led or guided by adults. Practitioners must respond to each child’s emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. As children grow older, and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1.” (Statutory Framework for EYFS 2012)

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.” EYFS

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

Creating and thinking critically

“When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, the 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.” EYFS

Children should be given 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 classroom to extend their learning.

Areas of Learning

Teachers and teaching assistants provide the curriculum in the reception classes of up to a class size of 23 children.

There are seven areas of learning and development of which three are “prime areas,” and four “specific areas.”

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

Through careful assessments and observations, including information provided by parents and other settings, children's development levels are assessed. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas. However, if a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents and/or carers and agree how to support the child. This may also include a discussion with the school SENCO in order to access Special Educational Needs support. 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. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

Health and Safety

At Alverton Primary School, there are clear procedures for assessing risk (see whole school risk assessment policy and risk assessments in place) which includes 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), safeguarding and child protection policies and there is detailed information and procedures to ensure the safety of the children. The EYFS risk assessment must be read in conjunction with other relevant whole school policies (see EYFS risk assessment)

In line with the EYFS statutory framework 2012, 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. Medicines will not be administered unless they have been prescribed by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist. Training is provided for staff where the administration of medicine requires medical or technical knowledge. Medicines (both prescription and non-prescription) are only administered to a child where written permission for that particular medicine has been obtained from the child's parent and/or carer." At Alverton School a written record is kept each time a medicine is administered to a child and informs the child's parents and/or carers on the same day." (Statutory framework for EYFS 2012)
- Fresh drinking water is available at all times
- Children's dietary needs are recorded and acted upon when required
- Each classroom has a snack and sink area that can provide healthy snacks and drinks. All EYFS staff have received level 2 food hygiene training.
- A first aid box is accessible at all times and a record of accidents and injuries is kept (see accident and injury policy).
- The EYFS leader as the lead behaviour manager for the Early Years in liaison with the Head Teacher and Deputy Head Teacher (refer to Inclusions policy, behaviour policy, physical restraint policy)
- A health and safety policy and procedures which cover identifying, reporting and dealing with accidents, hazards and faulty equipment.
- A fire and emergency evacuation procedure and policy
- A safeguarding policy stating how mobile phones and cameras are to be used and stored securely whilst children are in the setting. Cameras that are used in school must not be used for staff own personal use.
- Appropriate clothing, in particular in relation to the wearing of heels (stilettos or a heel that comes to a point). 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.
- A Sun cream policy. Every adult in the Early Years is responsible for ensuring the children in the setting are safe and well. In very hot weather Early Years staff will support the children in applying suncream unless specifically told not to by their parents. A letter to this effect will be sent to the parents, asking for parents to apply suncream to their child before school and provide their child with a sun hat and water bottle.
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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. .
- The children are invited to "Learning Together" sessions in their reception class. Parents are encouraged to leave their children but are equally welcome to stay should they feel the need.

- Members of staff make visits to feeder settings. The number of visits will depend on the child's needs and how much information gathering is required in order to support the child's transition.
- Children requiring extra support will have additional visits regardless of their setting. Often these children will have been identified as requiring additional support or are part of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) process.
- Children at Alverton Nursery and "Once upon a time" Day Nursery will have visits into school with a member of staff from those settings where they have the opportunity to join in with child initiated sessions.
- Parents are invited to an individual parents meeting to talk specifically about their child in the term before their child starts school.
- Children in the Nursery have the option of a home visit or a parent teacher meeting prior to them starting Nursery.

From Reception Class to Key Stage 1

During the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides 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 whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

Each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals. The profile indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are exceeding expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the 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 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.

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS co-ordinator to monitor the development of this policy through year group planning sessions and classroom observations. The Head teacher and various subject coordinators will also carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule. The EYFS is also discussed at Governor meetings.

The Head teacher and Foundation Stage Co-ordinator will review this policy every 2 years. The Governors will be advised of any changes to this policy.

Policy Reviewed January 2018

Next review date January 2020