

Alverton Primary School **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

Introduction

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 Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. (Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2021)

At Alverton School our Foundation Stage is for children from 2 to 5 years. In partnership with parents and carers we enable the children to begin the process of becoming active learners for life and we ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. We promote teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and give children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life. (Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2021)

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.

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 2021. 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:

- * Having regular focus child meetings with Parents and carers throughout their time at Nursery
- Holding a 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
- Offering "phonics" workshops to all parents
- Having thorough handovers in the morning and afternoon so that all adults are aware of how the child is on that particular day
- Using the Family app throughout Nursery to keep in contact with parents and carers
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress at focus child meetings and parent consultations
- Using Tapestry in the reception classes to keep parents informed about their child's learning through weekly newsletters and to share agreed "next steps" after focus child meetings.
- Encouraging parents to contribute to the child's Tapestry profile by including WOW moments from home and family life.
- Parents receive a report on their child's attainment at the end of each school year in both preschool and reception classes;
- Parents are encouraged 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 or Nursery nurses. Nursery staff in the preschool and toddler rooms are also responsible for Key children.

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 Reception classes 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. In Nursery, mini topics based around stories form the basis for planning and provide a "hook" for activities, stories and enrichment opportunities in the setting.

Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support. Ongoing assessment (also known as formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process. It involves practitioners knowing children's level of achievement and interests, and then shaping teaching and learning experiences for each child reflecting that knowledge. In their interactions with children, practitioners should respond to their own day-to-day observations about children's progress and observations that parents and carers share. (Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2021.)

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.

Teaching staff in the EYFS are clear about what they want children to know and do and how appropriate these goals are for the children in their care. We ensure all our staff are trained to understand child development and are clear about what they want children to be able to do in order to be successful at the next stage of their learning and development. Staff are trained to recognise when children may be displaying special educational needs and those who might need additional support.

At the end of their time in EYFS 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 classrooms are 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, each EYFS class has its own enclosed outdoor area which have been developed as versatile and creative spaces 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 plan to help every child develop the vital skills of communication and language and we value all areas of learning and development 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

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 which is guided by adults. Practitioners need to decide what they want children in their setting to learn, and the most effective ways to teach it. Practitioners must stimulate children’s interests, responding to each child’s emerging needs and guiding their development through warm, positive interactions coupled with secure routines for play and learning. As children grow older and move into the reception year, there should be a greater focus on teaching the essential skills and knowledge in the specific areas of learning. This will help children to prepare for year 1.
(EYFS Statutory Framework 2021)

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.

Active Learning

Opportunities to play and explore freely, indoors and outside, are fun. They also help babies, toddlers and young children to develop their self-regulation as they enjoy hands-on learning and sometimes talk about what they are doing. 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, 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. We offer children many different experiences and opportunities to play freely and to explore and investigate and make time and space for children to become deeply involved in imaginative play, indoors and outside whilst supporting and scaffolding them through skilled questioning and a genuine shared interest.

Areas of Learning

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 2021, 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 sunscreen unless specifically told not to by their parents. A letter to this effect will be sent to the parents, asking for parents to apply sunscreen to their child before school and provide their child with a sun hat and water bottle.

Transition

From Toddler room to Preschool Room

Children are transitioned into the preschool room the term of their third birthday. In some cases it is not appropriate for the child to transition at this point and a more staggered approach is needed in order for the child to confidently settle in their new classroom. Each child is considered on an individual basis.

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 already at Alverton Nursery will have visits into school with familiar members of staff, 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 bespoke settling in sessions 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 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. There are named Governors responsible for the EYFS. These governors will discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion. The Head teacher and various subject coordinators will also carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

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 Monitoring	
Policy Written	Kate Hall
Reviewed	February 2022

Next Review	February 2024
QA check by Chair of Policy Group	