



Alveley Primary School
Member of the TrustEd CSAT Alliance
Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

FREQUENCY OF REVIEW: ANNUALLY

RATIFICATION:

DATE OF NEXT REVIEW

Reviewed by:

Approved by:

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Introduction

There are four main purposes to this policy:

- ☒ To establish an entitlement for all children in the EYFS with equality of opportunity;
- ☒ To establish expectations for all staff working with children in the EYFS to ensure quality and consistency;
- ☒ To state the school's approaches to the EYFS curriculum in order to promote parents' and carers' understanding of the curriculum;
- ☒ To promote continuity and coherence across the EYFS.

The importance of the Foundation Stage

'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) 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'. (Early Years Foundation Stage Framework, September 2022).

Expectations

For most children, the end of the Reception year will be the end of the Foundation Stage, when the expectation is that children will achieve the 17 early learning goals (ELGs). Although the early learning goals are intended for children at the end of reception, younger children will be provided with experiences which will support them in reaching the goals at the appropriate time. Those children exceeding the early learning goals will be given appropriate and sufficient challenge to support, extend and enrich their learning. A priority will be placed on each individual child's unique needs, interest and stage of development.

The aims of the EYFS curriculum and how these contribute to the school's aims

EYFS Principles

The EYFS principles which guide the work of all practitioners are grouped into four distinct but complementary themes:

- ☒ A Unique Child
- ☒ Positive Relationships
- ☒ Enabling Environments
- ☒ Learning and Development

Effective practice in the EYFS is built on these four guiding themes. They provide a context for the requirements and describe how practitioners should support the development, learning and care of young children. This policy outlines how we meet each of the four themes.

1. A Unique Child

We recognise that every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from parents/carers and practitioners; we use appropriate levels of challenge, praise and encouragement and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

2. Positive Relationships

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We value the importance of positive relationships and believe they are vital for adults to sensitively respond to children's needs, feelings and interests. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families. This positive ethos is at the heart of the EYFS at Alveley. It is extremely important that the children feel happy and comfortable within the setting; where they are constantly supported and encouraged. The children's achievements are recognised and celebrated. This ethos allows for and encourages problem solving, resilience, curiosity and high levels of engagement. All adults recognise the importance of developing a strong, positive, trusting relationship with each child, knowing each of them as an individual.

3. Enabling Environments

We recognise that the learning environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Resources and areas of learning are set out in such a way which encourages children to make independent and considered choices during their play. Children learn and develop well in enabling environments because they respond to their individual need.

4. Learning and Development

We recognise that children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. We aim to cater for all children by providing an inclusive setting.

Curriculum

The school aims to ensure that the curriculum for the EYFS underpins all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children's skills across the 7 areas of learning and by supporting them to develop characteristics of effective learning. The 7 areas of learning are split into Prime and Specific areas.

The Prime areas:

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

'There are three prime areas. These three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving.'
(EYFS, 2022)

The Specific areas:

- ☑ Literacy
- ☑ Mathematics
- ☑ Understanding the world
- ☑ Expressive arts and design

‘There are four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.’
(EYFS, 2022)

Provision

Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Play is essential for 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. The teachers and teaching assistants support and develop the children in their learning, focusing upon the child’s interests and taking opportunities to support and extend their learning in a meaningful context. Play is a child’s work, we follow their personal exploration and natural inquisitiveness to extend and develop learning opportunities. As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1.

Our ultimate aim is to help and guide the children to become independent, enquiring and evaluative learners. Through the use of termly topics we take account of children’s interests and the skills they need to develop, in order to fully engage them in their learning.

In planning and guiding children’s activities, practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- **playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’;
- **active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements; and
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

(Early Years Foundation Stage Framework, September 2022).

Learning and teaching

Children participate in whole class, small group and individual activities, with increasing times as the year progresses in order to accommodate children’s needs and stretch their learning.

In order to promote effective learning the teaching will provide opportunities and experiences for children to:

- ☑ have access to a wide range of opportunities and experiences which will allow them to explore, investigate, discover, create, practise, rehearse, repeat, revise and consolidate their knowledge skills and understanding;
- ☑ initiate activities that promote learning and enable them to learn from one another;
- ☑ have time to explore ideas and interest in depth;
- ☑ feel secure in order to become confident and independent learners;
- ☑ make links to other areas of learning;
- ☑ undertake creative and imaginative play activities that promote the development and use of language.

The staff will:

- ☑ work in partnership with parents and carers;
- ☑ use their strong, positive relationships with children to consider how to best support and extend their learning within their play

- ☒ promote children's learning through planned experiences and activities that are challenging but achievable;
- ☒ teach skills and knowledge;
- ☒ understand that children learn in different ways and at a different pace to each other;
- ☒ use rich and varied language to help children develop linguistic structures for thinking;
- ☒ use both indoor and outdoor provision to maximise opportunities for children's learning.

Inclusion

Planning will meet the needs of both boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children with disabilities, children from all social, cultural and religious backgrounds, children from different ethnic groups including travellers, refugees and asylum seekers and children from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

It is the school's intention to provide:

- ☒ a safe secure learning environment in which all children are valued;
- ☒ a wide range of opportunities to motivate support and develop;
- ☒ planned opportunities that build on and extend children's knowledge.

For those children with special educational needs, the focus will be on removing barriers to learning for children. Children's learning difficulties will be identified at an early stage and teaching will respond quickly to areas of difficulty. This will involve working closely with parents and developing an effective strategy to meet these needs. This may involve working with staff from other agencies in drawing up individual education plans.

Organisation

The learning environment in and out of doors will be planned effectively to meet the requirements of all areas of learning. It will be organised into areas, but also allow for overlap as children lead their learning, meaning that opportunities are found within but not restricted to each area. Open ended resources will be used to encourage and develop creativity promote endless possibilities.

The areas will include:

- ☒ attractive and comfortable places to read;
- ☒ sand with a variety of equipment;
- ☒ water with a variety of equipment;
- ☒ mathematical and scientific equipment;
- ☒ a writing area with a variety of paper and tools to mark, make or write;
- ☒ a role play area;
- ☒ a variety of creative media such as paint, collage, junk materials;
- ☒ malleable materials and equipment;
- ☒ opportunities to use technology to enhance learning e.g. computer, beebots, interactive screen.
- ☒ smallworld play areas focused on fantasy and real-life scenarios
- ☒ a variety of outdoor play equipment which allows children to develop skills across all 7 areas of learning

All areas will be attractive and suitably resourced so that children are encouraged to use them and engage in purposeful, challenging activities with or without the presence of an adult. Enhancements will be made to provision in response to children's needs, the theme and interests.

Resources will be organised in such a way that children are enabled to make informed choices, select independently what they need and take responsibility for clearing away.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

The planning within the EYFS follows the government document Early Years Outcomes as well as the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile document and takes account of the Development Matter guidance. We also use the White Rose Hub planning documents to support planning for maths. These documents are used to map out a long- and medium-term plans and to support weekly planning.

As part of our daily practice, we observe and assess children's learning. Adults will observe what an individual child or group of children is doing and will help develop their knowledge and understanding by asking them questions, providing information, or demonstrating a skill. Adults will use these opportunities to provide next steps in the moment, based on the adults relationship with and knowledge of the child. This teaching means that the new knowledge or skill is immediately useful and meaningful to the child, and is therefore more likely to be retained and used independently in the future. It ensures that the children are taught new skills and information at the appropriate level for them. Observations and interactions also inform future plans, enables us to address next steps and ensures we provide for children effectively. We record observations on Tapestry, in each child's individual online Learning Journal.

Observations are linked to EYFS age bands to enable us to identify what age and stage bracket individual children are working in. The evidence gathered along with the teachers knowledge of the child is used to inform termly assessments and also to complete the EYFSP (Early Years Foundation Stage Profile), a statutory requirement at the end of Reception. The data is analysed and used for planning interventions and informing future teaching.

Within the summer term, a report for parents is provided with a commentary on children's attainment, progress and characteristics of learning. Data is then analysed to look for patterns and trends. Information about individual children is then shared with Year 1 staff to ensure smooth transition.

We encourage all parties to contribute to discussions, assessment and children's learning journeys. Parents are encouraged to contribute on Tapestry, whereby they can view their child's observations from within school and record their own child's significant 'learning moments' outside of school. Assessment opportunities will be identified in planning and opportunities will be provided for:

- ☑ skilful and well planned observations of children;
- ☑ working in partnership with parents;
- ☑ evaluating the quality of provision and practitioners' training needs;
- ☑ ensuring baseline assessment is informed by observation, discussion and evaluation and in line with policy.

Baseline Assessment

Our approach to baseline assessment is designed to enable us to get an accurate picture of each child. Assessments are completed on entry (when the child has settled), these inform us of the child's starting point and allow adults to plan appropriately to support the child's learning. Many of the children in our Reception cohort have already attended our setting in Nursery and therefore final summer term assessments within the setting can inform our baseline. Parent/carer contributions as well as contributions from other settings are also used to inform baseline. Reception children also carry out a Reception Baseline Assessment. The RBA is a short task-based assessment. Pupils use practical resources to complete these tasks and teachers will record the results on a laptop, computer, or tablet. It is not used to label or track individual pupils. Schools are required to carry out the assessment within the first 6 weeks of pupils starting reception.

Leadership and management

Priorities relating to the EYFS will be identified in the school improvement plan as appropriate. Relevant staff training and development needs will be outlined in the school improvement plan.

It is expected that all staff and governors are aware of the requirements of the Foundation Stage and the importance of the key stage in relation to the children's learning and its impact on raising standards across the school.

Learning Outdoors

Emphasis is placed on ensuring that the outdoor learning environment contributes to all areas of learning. All children will be encouraged to take part in the full range of outdoor experiences and provided opportunities to access outside on a daily basis. As indoors, resources outdoors will enable children to be independent and lead learning through play. Our environment allows outdoor activities for all weathers. We have a woodland area on site which the children access weekly. We strongly believe in the importance of opportunities for outdoor learning.

Parents as partners

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

- ☑ Providing information sessions for parents/carers before starting at the setting.
- ☑ Offering parents a home visit (or alternatively a 1:1 meeting in school) with a member of the EYFS team before their child starts. This enables us to gather information about their child's likes, abilities and skills.
- ☑ Sharing updates via Tapestry of the children's learning and encouraging them to share and celebrate achievements outside of school.
- ☑ Offering more parents evenings in the autumn and spring terms at which the teacher and the parent/carer discuss the child's progress.
- ☑ Providing parents/carers with a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.
- ☑ Facilitating a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents/carers: sharing assemblies, outdoor learning, Sports day, opportunities to support parents when helping their child at home.
- ☑ Sharing regular updates about our learning on the school website.
- ☑ Regularly sharing things we have been doing in class on our school website's news feed.
- ☑ Encouraging parents/carers to come into school each morning, allowing for daily dialogue with the EYFS team.

Information for Parents and Carers

We ensure that parents/carers have the following made available through: documents on our school website, workshops, induction meetings and letters sent home:

- ☑ How the EYFS is delivered
- ☑ How to support learning at home
- ☑ How we provide for all children (inclusion)
- ☑ Policies and Procedures
- ☑ Staffing

Professionals as Partners

We recognise the importance of working closely alongside other professionals in order to fully support our children and their families from birth.

We do this through:

- developing communication with settings our children have previously attended.
- working alongside health professionals e.g. health visitors;

- working alongside specialised services
- Making referrals and liaising closely with the Shropshire speech and language therapy team.

Community links

We believe that building links with the community are beneficial in promoting children's learning. We actively seek out opportunities to work with the local community. The children enjoy the weekly Open the Book Assembly from the local church; we attend community events such as Pancake Day at the Pavilion and the Macmillan Coffee morning in the village. We also make connections between our topics and the local community, for instance a visit from the vet during our animals topic.

Welfare and Safeguarding

"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."

We understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2022. We understand that we are required to:

- ☑ promote the welfare of children;
- ☑ promote good health, good hygiene 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 staffing arrangements are organised to ensure safety and to meet the needs of the children;
- ☑ ensure that staff are suitable to fulfil the requirements of their role;
- ☑ ensure that staff follow procedures when storing personal equipment such as mobile phones;
- ☑ ensure visitors and parent helpers wear appropriate ID badges;
- ☑ ensure outdoor and indoor spaces, furniture, equipment and toys, are safe and suitable for their 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 recognise that most existing whole school policies cover the requirements of the EYFS. However, a separate risk assessment is in place for Early Years and it is important to highlight the following in regards to keeping children safe and well in the EYFS at Alveley Primary School.

Child Protection

All staff must ensure they are alert to any issues for concern in the child's life at home or elsewhere. They must ensure they fully understand and follow the procedures outlined in the school Child Protection Policy and attend training organised by the school. All staff must ensure that they have read the Keeping Children Safe in Education document.

Medication

If staff are taking any medication they must seek medical advice to ensure it will not impair their ability to look after children properly. Staff medication on the premises must be securely stored and out of reach of children, at all times.

Any child requiring medication will only have this administered if it can be done so according to School Policy. No medication can be administered without a prescription from a doctor or pharmacist.

Similarly, children requiring their inhaler at school can only have this administered in line with School Policy.

First Aid

Whole school policy must be followed. Any administering of first aid to a child in the EYFS requires a written record for staff and parent/carer. Any head injury requires a written record for staff and parent/carer in addition to a phone-call parent/carer as soon as possible. At least one member of staff who has a current paediatric first aid certificate must be on the premise at all times when children are present and accompany children on outings.

Managing Behaviour

Whole school policy must be followed. All staff must ensure they are fully aware of the expectations and complete any records required by the policy. Behavioural incidents are recorded in line with the behaviour policy.

Staff Qualifications, training and skills

All staff will be appropriately qualified and are encouraged and supported to further develop their expertise through courses provided by: the LA, other agencies, attending conferences, joining working groups, networking with others and professional reading. In addition, informal meetings are held with EYFS staff and specific CPD needs of staff are planned by the EYFS leader.

All staff are involved in annual performance management meetings in order to help them continuously appraise their performance and engage in activities to develop their skills.

Admissions

We follow Shropshire Local Authority's admissions policy for allocating places. We have places for 15 Reception pupils. Admission to our Reception classes must be applied for by completing the Local Authority's application form. Our child: staff ratios always meet the requirements for pupils in a Reception class, as set out in the EYFS Statutory Guidance 2022.

Transitions

Transitions are carefully planned to ensure we meet the needs of each individual child. We recognise that transition is not a one off event but a significant process in each child's life.

Complaints

Any complaint should be dealt with by following the Whole School Policy

Role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body plays a valuable role in supporting, monitoring and reviewing the learning and teaching policy. In particular they:

- ☑ support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources efficiently and effectively;
- ☑ ensure that the school premises are best used to support successful learning and teaching;
- ☑ monitor how effective learning and teaching strategies are in terms of raising children's achievement and attainment;
- ☑ monitor the effectiveness of the school's learning and teaching policy through the school's self-review processes
- ☑ ensure that the school is meeting it's regulatory and legal requirements
- ☑ the Foundation Phase link governor is Penny Jenkins

Monitoring and Review

We are aware of the need to review the school Learning and Teaching policy regularly so that we can take account of new initiatives, changes in the curriculum, staff changes, developments in technology or changes to the physical environment of the school.