

# Aldermoor Farm Primary School

## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



Our intent in the Early Year Foundation Stage at Aldermoor Farm School:

- To support children to become confident, creative and resilient life-long learners
- To work in partnership with parents/carers to ensure children feel safe and happy allowing them to reach their full potential
- To understand and follow children's interests and provide opportunities throughout our EYFS curriculum to support learning, consolidate and deepen knowledge and ensure children meet their next steps
- To create an indoor and outdoor environment which stimulates children's imagination and allows them to become independent learners
- To instil a love of reading in all children
- To prepare children to reach the Early Learning Goals at the end of the foundation stage and to ensure all children make accelerated progress from their starting points
- To ensure transition into KS1 is seamless
- To ensure that all members of the EYFS family (children, families and staff) have a growth mindset
- Give children the Cultural Capital they need for future success

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## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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## **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

### **1. Aims**

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- Close partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

### **2. Legislation**

This policy is based on requirements set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Development Matters Framework 2020.

### **3.. Introduction**

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) at Aldermoor Farm Primary School applies to children from three years of age to the end of the reception year.

In our school, we have nursery children who join us either, all day (30 hours per week) or for a morning or afternoon session (15 hours per week). In reception children join us at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. (Compulsory schooling begins at the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday.)

The EYFS is important in its own right, and in preparing children for later schooling. The education a child receives within the early years setting (Nursery and Reception) is vitally important as it forms the foundation upon which they build the rest of their lives. This policy therefore acknowledges the role of parents and carers as the child's first educators and affirms the value of continuing parental involvement in education. The Early Learning Goals set out what is expected of most children by the end of the Early Years 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 EYFS 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. 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.

The EYFS seeks to provide:

- **Quality and consistency** - so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind;
- **A secure foundation** - through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each individual child and are assessed and reviewed 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.

The EYFS specifies requirements for learning and development and for safeguarding children and promoting their welfare.

**The learning and development requirements cover:**

- The areas of learning and development which must shape activities and experiences (educational programmes) for children in all early year's settings;
- The early learning goals that providers must help children work towards (the knowledge, skills and understanding children should have at the end of the academic year in which they turn five); and
- Assessment arrangements for measuring progress (and requirements for reporting to parents and/or carers).

**The safeguarding and welfare requirements cover:**

- The steps that providers must take to keep children safe and promote their welfare. Please refer to our Safeguarding Policy.

## **2. Aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

In our EYFS setting we believe that all children are entitled to the best possible start in their school life, both intellectually and emotionally, in order to enable them to develop their full potential.

We aim to support each child's welfare, learning and developmental needs by:

- Recognising that all children are unique and special.
- Understanding that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates - physically, cognitively, linguistically, socially and emotionally.
- Providing a safe, secure and caring environment where children feel happy and know that they are valued by the practitioners looking after them.
- Fostering and nurturing children's self-confidence and self-esteem through their developing awareness of their own identity and role within the community.
- Teaching them to express and communicate their needs and feelings in appropriate ways.
- Encouraging children's independence and decision-making, supporting them to learn through their mistakes.
- Developing children's understanding of social skills and the values and codes of behaviour required for people to work together harmoniously.
- Supporting children to develop care, respect and appreciation for others, including those with beliefs, cultures and opinions differ to their own.
- Understanding the importance of play in children's learning and development.
- Providing learning experiences in play which reflect children's personal interests and areas of curiosity in order to encourage and develop their natural desire, interest, excitement and motivation to learn.
- Providing experiences which build on children's existing knowledge and understanding in order to challenge, stimulate and extend their learning and development.
- Providing effective learning opportunities in a range of environments, inside and outside.

### 3. The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

There are seven areas of Learning and Development which are interconnected. Three areas (the prime areas) are crucial to develop lifelong learning and to help children form relationships

- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development** - children develop confidence and self-esteem, learn how to manage feelings and respect others

- **Communication and Language** - children have opportunities to speak and listen in a range of situations and experience a rich language environment to articulate themselves successfully.
- **Physical Development** - children have opportunities to be active and develop coordination (both gross motor and fine motor)

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through four specific areas:

- **Literacy** - involves children learning how letters link to the sounds and they begin to read and write.
- **Mathematics** - children have opportunities to develop counting and calculation skills, to substitute numbers and to use numbers in everyday activities. They also begin to recognise and describe shapes and measures.
- **Understanding of the World** - children have opportunities to find out about their own and others' lives, people and communities. They will also have opportunities to learn about the past and present, as well as the natural world and the environment in which they live.
- **Expressive Arts and Design** - involves exploring feelings and ideas through music, dance, role play and design.

We have an overview of topics in EYFS which is designed to provide a broad, balanced curriculum in order to cover them all. However, we also follow the children's interests when planning for each group of children and involve the children in choosing activities and resources. We value all areas of learning and development and understand that they are interconnected. Children and parents are encouraged to be involved in the next steps for learning through the use of SeeSaw and parent meetings.

Child-initiated learning is an important part of our daily routine and whenever possible adult-directed activities are play based, active and related to the children's interests. We aim to help children with their learning through observing, getting involved in their play, supporting their thinking and asking open questions.

#### 4. Planning

The EYFS framework provides a long-term plan to follow by ensuring that all Early Learning Goals are covered throughout the Nursery and Reception years. However, this is a fluid document based on children's needs and interests. Medium term planning is created with all early year's practitioner's involvement and takes into account the individual child's learning and developmental needs. All Areas of Learning and Development are planned for and available to access within the setting. The learning opportunities provided include a range of adult focused and child-initiated activities indoors and outdoors. Educational visits within the local community and further a field are also planned to support children's learning within the classroom.

#### 5. Teaching and Learning

In the EYFS at Aldermoor Farm Primary School we recognise the importance of a rich learning environment both inside and outside. There are areas where the children can be active or be quiet and rest. The environment is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. There is an outdoor area. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children the opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. As far as possible we offer the same opportunities and areas of learning in all of our environments and the children have free flow between different areas. We observe the children during Get Learning Time and offer additional resources and support to enrich their learning.

To ensure that we meet the individual needs of all our children we make regular observations of the children's interactions, interests, skills, and development of concepts. These observations are used to inform our planning for groups of children, for individuals and our provision for resources as appropriate.

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.

## 6. Active Learning through Play

At Aldermoor Farm Primary School we recognise that young children learn best when they are active. We understand that active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods. Therefore, we believe that Early Years education should be as practical as possible and our EYFS setting has an ethos of learning through play. We recognise the importance of children's play. It is an essential and rich part of their learning process, supporting them in all areas of development. Play is a powerful motivator encouraging children to be creative and to develop their ideas, understanding and language. Play is also flexible and able to suit the preferred learning style of the child. It can provide multiple ways for children to learn a variety of different skills and concepts.

In the EYFS practitioners provide both structured and unstructured play opportunities inside and outside. These activities are designed to engage children in practical, first-hand experiences which will support children to discover, explore, investigate, develop their personal interests and areas of curiosity, and help to make sense of the world around them

as they begin to understand specific concepts. Play opportunities are also set up to provide children with opportunities to apply newly acquired knowledge, demonstrating their skills and level of understanding. In providing these active learning opportunities through play we understand the central position of play within the EYFS framework. This is essentially a play-based curriculum and pedagogy as the provision of play opportunities underpins its delivery within settings.

## **7. Staffing**

Our EYFS practitioners, work closely as a team, children from the classes have opportunities to work together during free flow times, accessing shared continuous provision. EYFS staff plan and work together to ensure continuity and progression, providing age and stage related activities to suit all our children. Children are taught within their own class groups, small group work, pairs and individually. We are dedicated to providing excellent pastoral care and education to those children in our care.

Staff are fully qualified, have a wide range of experience and expertise in working with and educating children. The Staff are committed to professional development and attend up to date training courses and have excellent knowledge of the EYFS and child development.

Each child is assigned a key worker which will either be the child's class teacher or teaching assistant. Each will then have one focus week at least every half term where their key worker will work with them to observe where they are at in their learning and development and plan their next steps. Parent's will receive a form before each focus week to fill in information about their child.

## **8. Inclusion in the Early Years Foundation Stage**

In our school we believe that all our children matter. 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 (see our policy on school inclusion).

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage. Some children progress beyond this point. 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.

**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. This involves speech therapy for some of our children.

## **9. Assessment and Record Keeping**

Throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage, as part of the learning and teaching process, we assess each child's development in relation to Development Matters and the Early Learning Goals that form part of the curriculum guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage. These assessments are made on the basis of our accumulating observations and knowledge of the whole child. By the end of the final year of the Early Years Foundation Stage, the Early Years Foundation Stage profile sums up that knowledge.

In reception and nursery, the profile is completed throughout the year to track individual achievements. Recorded assessment takes place in September, December, April and June and these assessments set future targets in the autumn, spring and summer terms.

Assessments against the scales are finalised during the summer term, summarising each child's development.

Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they have met the goals or not met them.

The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers at the end of the academic year.

## **10. Parents as Partners**

We recognise the importance of establishing positive relationships with parents, as highlighted by the EYFS framework. We understand that an effective partnership between school and home will have a positive impact on children's learning and development. So, practitioners endeavour to encourage the regular sharing of information about the children with parents. Through informal chats, open mornings, parent meetings and the use of our online learning journal Seesaw, practitioners encourage parents to share their unique knowledge of their child, providing further insight into the child as an individual (e.g. characteristics, interests, experiences, likes, dislikes). This supports practitioners in

establishing interesting and stimulating learning experiences, responding to children's needs and interests.

Parents are kept informed of what is happening in the setting through regular letters, reading records and informal chatting at the beginning and end of the day. This also gives suggestions of how parents can support their children's learning at home; consolidating and building on what has been covered in the setting.

Whole school newsletters are also sent home on a monthly basis. Parents are invited to attend parents' meetings during the course of the academic year (However, due to Covid 19 a different method of communication including written parent reports is happening) . The first of these takes place during the Autumn term to allow practitioners and parents to discuss how children have settled into the setting. Another parent's evening takes place later in the year where practitioners will feedback on children's learning and development progress.

Other opportunities for practitioners to share children's learning, development and well-being with parents include SeeSaw and end of year reports

Parents may be invited into the setting on other occasions such as open afternoons where children show them their work and special events for Mother's and Father's Days. The setting has a friendly, open-doors ethos and practitioners are available to talk to parents at the beginning and end of the day. Parents are always welcomed into school and encouraged to discuss and concerns they might have. (However due to Covid 19 restrictions this is not happening at present)

Each child is assigned a family group, the key person within this group helps to ensure that your child's learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

## **11. Behaviour**

The Early Years Foundation Stage follows the school behaviour plan. To prepare the children for the 'Good to be Green' behaviour scheme we operate a system whereby children follow the same steps. We try to make it as visual as possible for children by having a plate system displayed clearly in each classroom. Each classroom has four plates; red - time out, yellow - warning, green and a star plate - super stars. Each child has a peg with their name on. Every child starts on the day with their name on the green plate. If the children receive a warning their name is moved down to the yellow plate. If they receive another warning or they make bad choices/unacceptable behaviour (e.g. kicking, hitting etc) the child's name is moved down to the red plate. The child then receives 5 minutes time out to reflect on their actions. An adult will always explain to the child why they have been given time out, talk about their actions and ways to prevent the behaviour from happening again.

Children are rewarded for making good choices and get their names moved up to the super star plate. These children receive a tick on the class reward chart. Once the children accumulate 5 ticks, they receive a small reward. *See also Aldermoor Farm Behaviour Policy*

## **12. Admissions and Induction**

Aldermoor Farm Primary School provides full-time Early Years education for children who are Reception aged. This is for children who enter school from September of the academic year in which they will turn five years old. Our Nursery provides full-time and part-time provision (either mornings or afternoons).

Before the children start in the setting, all children are offered a series of visits during the Summer term. The purpose of these initial visits is for the children to meet their new practitioners and start to become familiar with the setting environment. The Early Years Leader and Family Support Worker will also carry out home visits for children who are new to the school and go to visit the children in their current pre-school settings. The aim of these visits is to support practitioners to develop their knowledge and understanding of each child in order to make the transition period to Aldermoor Farm Primary School as smooth as possible.

In the Summer term parents are invited into school to meet the setting practitioners. At this meeting information regarding the induction process and what goes on in the setting is shared. There is also time for informal chat and parents' questions. School information packs will be distributed to parents at this meeting, detailing school routines and expectations.

From September children attend the setting full-time. Every effort is made to make children feel safe, secure and happy. There is a relaxed and open ethos in the setting. Established routines, a calm atmosphere and encouraging talk are some of the strategies practitioners use to maintain children's positive feelings about school.

The admission limit for Nursery is 30 per session.  
The admission limit for Reception is 90.

## **13. Appendix**

### **PHOTOGRAPHS/VIDEOS**

At the beginning of the year parents/carers are asked to give permission for their child to be photographed/videoed during their time at school. We use these images in the classroom, on displays, in the children's individual record books and on the school website. Each practitioner has an iPad that they use to record the steps children make in their learning. The iPads remain in school at all times.

### **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN**

The school takes its child protection responsibilities very seriously. Any concerns, which the school has, will be noted and, if deemed necessary, will be reported to the relevant

agency. The safety of the child is always of paramount importance. The full Safeguarding Policy is available in school for parents to read if they wish.

### **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

Care is taken to assess the needs of each child from Nursery age onwards. Should a child have any special need the parent will be informed at an early stage. Group and individual help is provided within the school where possible. We have links with various agencies and when necessary their involvement may be required to support certain children. Parents/Carers will always be informed if an outside agency is assisting us to support their child. We have a full Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Gifted and Talented policy available at school.

### **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

We have a Health and Safety policy which all staff and students are familiar with and we have designated people responsible for first aid in school. Foundation Stage staff have had first aid training. Children are taught the safe and appropriate use of equipment and materials. Children are taught to be mindful when moving around the school and are aware of safety issues. Risk assessments are undertaken before after school activities take place and before we embark on school outings. A full Health and Safety Policy is available in School.

### **SNACK TIMES**

We have a self-service area based in the Reception classrooms shared by all children in the Foundation Stage. We see snack time as a social event, a time where the children enjoy a drink of milk, piece of fruit and/or a light snack together. This time of day is the ideal opportunity to develop and enhance the children's social skills and to encourage interaction and conversation with their peers as they sit together. It also develops independence as the children are encouraged to serve themselves.

### **ALLERGIES**

Parents/carers are asked to inform us of any foods their children are allergic to or any foods they do not wish their child to eat. A note of this is kept in the kitchen area and all adults involved are informed.