



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

September 2026



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

1. Aims

This policy contains four aims:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that builds the fundamental skills children need to thrive at school and beyond.
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress, and no child gets left behind.
- Close partnership between parents/carers and school staff.
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

Commented [FA1]: should we add something about building fundamental skills?

Commented [DH2R1]: Yes please

Commented [FA3R1]: how does this sound?

2. Introduction

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

In our school, we have nursery children 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 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 a 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.

The EYFS sets the standards that all 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'.

- **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:

- The areas of learning and development which must shape activities and experiences (educational programmes) for children in all early years 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.)
- Assessment arrangements for measuring progress and requirements for reporting to parents and/or carers.

The safeguarding and welfare requirements:

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

4. 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, to enable them to develop their full potential.

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

- 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 different 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 to encourage and develop their natural desire, interest, excitement and motivation to learn.
- Providing experiences which build on children’s existing knowledge and understanding to challenge, stimulate and extend their learning and development.
- Providing effective learning opportunities in a range of environments, inside and outside.
- Ensure children are taught and develop the fundamental skills of reading, letter formation and number sense that support them to be successful as they move through the school.

Commented [FA4]: Again I think we should add something about a focus on fundamental skills such as letter formation, reading and number sense

Commented [DH5R4]: Agreed

5. 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.

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 subitise 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. However, we also try to 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 by guidance on Class Dojo 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 ended questions.

6. 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. Medium term planning is created with all Early Years practitioners' involvement and considers the individual children'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 afield are also planned to support children's learning within the classroom.

7. Teaching and Learning

In the EYFS at Aldermoor Farm Primary School, we recognise the importance of a rich learning environment both inside and outside. The environment is set up in learning areas, so children can find and locate equipment and resources independently. There is an outdoor area, which has a positive impact on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales compared to indoors. It offers the children the opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We provide opportunities for the children to develop in all areas of learning both indoors and outdoors. We observe the children during 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 observe the children's interactions, interests, skills, and development of concepts daily. 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. There are three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

- **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.
- **Creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

8. 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

Commented [FA6]: not the same opportunities but cover all areas of learning

Commented [DH7R6]: Agreed

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. It can provide multiple ways for children to learn a variety of different skills and concepts.

Commented [FA8]: change learning style to - the ways each child likes to learn>

Commented [DH9R8]: I would take that out completely.

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.

9. Staffing

Our EYFS practitioners, work closely as a team, they 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.

10. 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.

We meet the needs of all our children in a range of ways:

- 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 challenge activities that allow the children to practice and secure the knowledge and skills they have been taught.

Commented [FA10]: added to reflect missions

- 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.

Commented [DH11R10]: Great

11. Assessment

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, our own progression documents and the Early Learning Goals that form part of the statutory guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage. These assessments are made based on our accumulating observations and knowledge of the whole child.

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

Assessments reflect 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.

12. Parents/Carers as Partners

We recognise the importance of establishing positive relationships with parents/carers, 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. 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. 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/carers are kept informed of what is happening in the setting through the weekly newsletter, reading planners and informal conversations at the beginning and end of the day. Enabling an open dialogue to give parents/carers suggestions on how they can support their children's learning at home, consolidating and building on what has been covered in the setting.

Parents/carers are invited to attend parents' meetings during the academic year. The first of these takes place during the Autumn term to allow practitioners and parents/carers to discuss how children have settled into the setting.

Other opportunities for practitioners to share children's learning, development and well-being with parents/carers include Class Dojo and end of year reports.

Parents/carers may be invited into the setting on other occasions such as open afternoons where children show them their work and special event days. The setting has a friendly, open-doors ethos. Parents/carers are always welcomed into school and encouraged to discuss any concerns they might have.

Each child is assigned a key person who helps to ensure that their 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.

13. Behaviour

The Early Years Foundation Stage follows the school behaviour plan, adapting slightly to meet the developmental needs of our children.

In line with our behaviour policy, we look for and celebrate children's positive behaviour. Celebrations include Hot Chocolate Friday, stickers, positive notes and positive conversations with parents/carers.

The vast majority of the principles outlined in the behaviour policy remain the same for the EYFS. The use of Ready, Respectful and Safe. The golden thread throughout this system is to **educate** on the correct behaviour, treat all learners with **kindness** and apply the behaviour policy with **consistency**.

14. 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.

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 to 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 to make the transition period to Aldermoor Farm Primary School as smooth as possible.

In the Summer term parents/carers 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. School information packs are distributed 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. Established routines, a calm atmosphere and encouraging talk are some of the strategies practitioners use to maintain children's positive feelings about school.

Commented [FA12]: By the second week of term in September

Commented [DH13R12]: Keep this as it is.

15. Appendix

PHOTOGRAPHS/VIDEOS

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

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/carer 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.

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. 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 school activities take place and before we embark on school outings. A full Health and Safety Policy is available in school and on the website.

SNACK TIMES

We have whole class snack in the EYFS. Paediatric First Aiders are always present to observe the children closely and are alert to the risks and signs of silent choking. We see snack time as a social event, a time where the children enjoy a drink of milk and a piece of fruit 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.

Commented [FA14]: Does this sound ok?

LUNCH TIMES

All children in Reception are entitled a Free School meal and encouraged to take up this offer. Children are encouraged to feed themselves and supported to use a knife and fork to cut up food with increasing independence. Parents are advised about the safest way to prepare packed lunches by preparing food to minimise risk of choking (such as cutting food into quarters or sticks rather than disks). A member of staff checks packed lunches daily to ensure food has been prepared in the safest way. Paediatric First Aiders are always present at lunch times to observe the children closely and are alert to the risks and signs of silent choking.

Commented [FA15]: Thought we should include this - does it read ok?

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.

INTIMATE CARE POLICY

An intimate Care Policy is available in school if parents wish to read it. If your child has any needs regarding toileting and are still in nappies or pull ups, then we will ask parents/carers to read and sign the policy and agreement to allow us to change your child when necessary. However, if your child is in nappies for reasons that are not medical, we will work in partnership with you as parents/carers to ensure that your child is dry in the day.