

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



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REVIEWED BY: Assistant Headteacher

APPROVED BY: Local Governing Body

Introduction

There are four main purposes to this policy:

- To establish equality of opportunity for all children within the EYFS.
- To establish expectations for all staff working with children in the EYFS to ensure quality and consistency.
- To outline the school's approaches to the EYFS curriculum and promote parents' and carers' understanding of it.
- To promote continuity and coherence across the EYFS.

The Importance of the Foundation Stage

Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other stage of their lives. Therefore, their experiences in the early years have a significant impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right, and high-quality early education provides the foundation children need to fulfil their potential.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards 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 support children's school readiness and provides the foundations for future success.

The EYFS focuses on both what children learn and how they learn. Effective practice includes a balance of child-initiated play, adult modelling, observation, and adult-guided learning.

Expectations

For most children, the end of Reception marks the completion of the EYFS. Children are supported to achieve the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELGs) by the end of Reception.

Although the ELGs are intended for children at the end of Reception, younger children will be provided with experiences that support them in progressing towards these goals at an appropriate rate. Priority is given to each child's unique needs, interests and stage of development.

EYFS Principles

The EYFS is built upon four guiding principles:

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

These principles underpin all aspects of learning, development and care within the Early Years Foundation Stage at Alveley Primary School.

A Unique Child

We recognise that every child is a competent learner from birth and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. Children develop in individual ways and at varying rates.

Children's attitudes and dispositions towards learning are influenced by relationships with parents, carers and practitioners. We use appropriate challenge, praise, encouragement and celebration to develop positive attitudes to learning.

Positive Relationships

We recognise that children become strong and independent through secure and positive relationships.

We value caring, respectful and professional relationships with children and their families. Creating a nurturing environment where children feel safe, happy and valued is central to our practice.

Children's achievements are recognised and celebrated. This ethos supports resilience, curiosity, problem-solving and high levels of engagement. All adults seek to develop strong, trusting relationships with every child and understand their individual needs.

Enabling Environments

We recognise that the learning environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development. Resources and learning opportunities are organised to enable children to make independent choices and engage purposefully in their play. Children learn and develop well in environments that respond to their individual needs.

Our indoor and outdoor environments are designed to promote:

- Curiosity
- Independence
- Collaboration
- Communication
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Resources and experiences encourage children to talk, think, imagine, problem-solve and develop increasingly sophisticated vocabulary. Adults carefully model language and use high-quality interactions to extend children's understanding and communication skills.

Learning and Development

We recognise that children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. We provide an inclusive environment that supports all children to succeed.

Curriculum

The EYFS curriculum supports children's development across the seven areas of learning while also promoting the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning.

Prime Areas

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Specific Areas

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Language, Communication and Oracy

At Alveley Primary School, we recognise that communication and language underpin all areas of learning and are fundamental to children's future success.

We are committed to creating a language-rich environment that promotes speaking, listening, understanding and vocabulary development from the earliest stages of learning.

Practitioners:

- Model ambitious vocabulary.
- Engage children in high-quality interactions.
- Promote sustained shared thinking.
- Provide meaningful opportunities for discussion, storytelling, questioning and conversation.

Stories, rhymes, songs, role play and high-quality texts form an integral part of our curriculum. Through our provision, we aim to develop confident speakers, attentive listeners and effective communicators who are well prepared for future learning.

Provision

Learning and development are delivered through planned, purposeful play and a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

Children learn through leading their own play and by being exposed to new experiences through enhanced provision. Enhanced provision is carefully planned around current topics and children's interests. Practitioners respond to children's emerging needs and interests through warm, positive interactions that guide and extend learning.

Play is a child's work; we follow their natural curiosity and personal exploration to maximise learning opportunities. Our aim is to develop independent, enquiring and reflective learners.

The Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning are:

- Playing and Exploring
- Children investigate, experience new things and have a go.
- Active Learning
- Children concentrate, persevere and enjoy achievements.
- Creating and Thinking Critically
- Children develop ideas, make connections and create strategies for solving problems.

Two-Year-Old Provision

We recognise that children enter our setting at different stages of development.

Particular consideration is given to the needs of two-year-old children through:

- Secure attachments and nurturing relationships.
- Consistent routines.
- Sensory exploration.
- Communication-rich interactions.
- Play-based learning opportunities.

The environment is carefully designed to promote independence, language development, self-regulation and personal, social and emotional development.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

Planning within the EYFS is informed by:

- The EYFS Statutory Framework.
- Development Matters.
- Professional knowledge of child development.
- White Rose Maths planning materials.

Practitioners regularly observe children's learning, identifying next steps and responding in the moment through skilful interactions and teaching.

Observations and interactions inform future planning and ensure provision meets children's needs effectively. Children's progress is assessed through ongoing formative assessment and professional judgement. Parents contribute to assessment through Tapestry and regular discussions with staff.

Baseline Assessment

We use baseline assessment to gain an accurate understanding of each child's starting point.

Teacher assessments are completed once children have settled, usually within the first six weeks, and are used to inform planning and identify next steps.

Information is gathered from:

- Nursery assessments where applicable.
- Parents and carers.
- Previous settings.
- Professional observations and assessments.

All Reception children complete the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) within their first six weeks of school. Using information from the RBA, observations and professional judgement, teachers plan learning experiences that meet children's individual needs.

The Reception Baseline Assessment is used nationally as a starting point for measuring school progress. Individual results are not reported to parents. However, information about children's transition into Reception, strengths and areas for development may be shared.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents and carers are children's first and most enduring educators.

We work in partnership with families by:

- Providing induction and information sessions.
- Sharing weekly updates via Tapestry.
- Sharing next steps in learning.
- Holding parents' evenings.
- Providing annual reports.
- Offering workshops and family learning opportunities.
- Sharing regular updates through the school website.
- Encouraging open communication between home and school.

Welfare and Safeguarding

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure.

We comply fully with the statutory welfare requirements of the EYFS Framework and ensure that:

- Children's welfare is promoted.
- Good health and hygiene are maintained.
- Behaviour is managed appropriately.
- Staffing ratios meet statutory requirements.
- Staff are suitably qualified and vetted.
- Learning environments are safe and secure.
- Records and procedures support effective safeguarding.
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Personal care, toileting and changing arrangements are carried out in accordance with the school's Intimate Care Policy, ensuring children's dignity, privacy and wellbeing at all times.

Children who require periods of rest or sleep are supported in accordance with the school's Sleep and Rest Procedures and EYFS welfare requirements.

Child Protection

All staff must be alert to any cause for concern regarding a child's welfare.

All staff are required to read and understand Part One of *Keeping Children Safe in Education* and follow school safeguarding procedures. Designated safeguarding staff undertake additional safeguarding training appropriate to their roles.

Transitions

Transitions are carefully planned and personalised to meet individual needs.

We recognise that transition is not a one-off event but an important process that supports children's emotional wellbeing and successful learning.

Transition arrangements may include:

- Stay-and-play sessions.
- Visits to the setting.
- Meetings with parents and carers.
- Information sharing with previous settings.
- Additional transition support for children with SEND.

Related Policies

- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Safer Sleep Policy

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner in response to legislative changes, national guidance, school priorities or identified areas for development.

The Governing Body will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and ensure the school continues to meet all statutory requirements relating to the Early Years Foundation Stage.