



# Early Years Foundation Stage policy

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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.

## **Aims**

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- Quality and care so that every child makes 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

## **Legislation**

This policy is based on requirements set out in the document:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1170108/EYFS\\_framework\\_from\\_September\\_2023.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1170108/EYFS_framework_from_September_2023.pdf)

## **Structure of the EYFS at Ashwood Park**

At Ashwood Park Primary School our EYFS setting includes provision for 4-5 year old Reception aged children and 3-4 year old pre-school provision.

Our setting provides up to 30 hours free pre-school hours per week. All children can claim the universal offer up to 15 hours. They can attend for a morning session or afternoon session. Children from working families can apply to attend up to 30 hours attending both sessions.

In Reception, we receive children from our pre-school and from other settings.

## **Organisation of Classes**

In Nursery we have 2 classes, each having a maximum of 26 children. We offer Nursery education funded (free) places where children can attend for 15 hours per week either mornings or afternoons. There are a limited number of full-time places made available, and these will be allocated to working parents in the first instance on a first come, first serve basis. After that they will be allocated by age. Full time children will stay for lunch and will be expected to bring a packed lunch.

Children can attend each morning from 8.30 – 11.30 or each afternoon 12.30pm-3.30pm for 3 hours per session. Given that the rest of the school start the day at 8.45, the morning session has a 'soft start' to it and parents are welcome to drop off children any time between 8.30 and 8.45. Similarly, school finishes at 3.15 so parents are welcome to pick up anytime between 3.15 and 3.30.

In Reception we have 45 places available spread over two classes. Reception is physically divided into two classrooms with a shared area and outdoor space.

School begins at 8.45 and ends at 3.15. By law all children of compulsory school age must receive a suitable full-time education and we enforce necessary attendance regulations. Please see our Attendance Policy.

All Early Years classes have a class teacher and teaching assistants to support as needed. Staff ratios follow the EYFS framework guidance listed above in legislation, to ensure the needs and safety of the children are met.

All children must be accompanied to and from school by a known adult and staff must be informed if a different adult is to pick up your child.

### **The Induction Process – Nursery**

- Parents/carers are welcome to arrange a tour around Nursery/School.
- Parents/carers will need to complete an Ashwood Park Admissions form from the school office.
- Nursery children are entitled to start the term after their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday. There are three intakes throughout the academic year – September, after Christmas and after Easter.
- Before starting Nursery, parents/carers will receive a phone call to confirm the place.
- A home visit will be offered to visit you and your child in their home environment.
- An invitation to attend our toddler group - 'Tree Tots' if not attending already.
- All start dates and forms will be communicated to parents/carers before starting.
- In the weeks leading up to beginning nursery, during Tree Tots, the children who are due to start will be able to visit and spend some time in the Nursery.
- Children who don't attend are invited to come to visit at other times.
- All children are then offered a play session a few days before they start. Parents and children attend for a play session in Nursery.
- Children sometimes start Nursery over staggered dates.

### **The Induction Process - Reception**

- Parents to apply for a primary school place in Oct – January before the September children are due to begin school.  
<https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-primary-school-place>  
  
<https://www.dudley.gov.uk/residents/learning-and-school/school-information/school-admissions/primary-reception-intake/>
- Parents and school will be notified in the April before the next academic year.
- Families will receive a welcome card to confirm the place.
- Phone calls and letters to communicate the admission arrangements which involve:
  - Visits to new class/teacher in order to familiarise themselves with both the staff and the Early Years environment
  - Visits to Pre School setting from School
  - Parents meeting in summer term to provide them with essential information for starting school.
  - A parent meeting in the first week to discuss the teaching of Phonics and supporting your child at home.

When children join the school in September the following procedures will apply in order that they can gradually adjust to their new surroundings:

- Children will attend the first week with gradually longer session times. For example, the first day will be half a day, building up to staying for lunch and a full day by the end of the week and then on.
- When settling your child into Ashwood Park you will be invited to work closely with your child's teacher and all other staff to ensure your child feels safe and secure.
- The needs of individuals will be taken into consideration within this period, the staff in Early Years are happy to offer advice and support during this period.

### **Curriculum**

Our Early Years setting follows the requirements for learning and development which cover:

- the needs of the children
- 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 to be year 1 ready (the knowledge, skills and understanding children should have at the end of the academic year in which they turn five)
- Ashwood Park Progression
- assessment arrangements for measuring progress (and requirements for reporting to parents and/or carers)

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and interconnected. Three areas known as 'The Prime and Specific Areas.'

The prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development
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The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

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

## **Planning**

Children are encouraged to develop as independent learners, accessing their learning through a purposefully planned environment with a mix of child-initiated activities and adult led tasks. Our Early Years staff plan purposeful play activities as well as continuous provision and adult led tasks within the learning environment, to meet individual needs and enable all children to develop and practise skills and learn effectively.

All practitioners identify the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to support and facilitate learning enabling a challenging and enjoyable experience, differentiated where needed. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff will consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

The curriculum intent involves topics and activities based on all of the above and ensuring progression throughout school. Early Years is the foundation of learning and we ensure our planning is the prequel to the National Curriculum, to ensure the skills and foundations for Key stage 1 are embedded.

Practitioners working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the three prime areas.

In planning and guiding children's activities and what children learn, practitioners also reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice. These are known as the 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

## **Teaching**

Children are taught using a variety of methods and each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful activities, through a mix of adult-led inputs and tasks and child-initiated play activities.

Practitioners respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

Children have access to learning opportunities indoors and outdoors.

Practitioners are aware of children's next steps and target these needs through facilitated learning experiences.

For our Reception aged children, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1.

### **The Learning Environment**

The Early Years classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, quiet, creative, etc. Each classroom has defined learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The Foundation Stage has enclosed outdoor areas, and children are able to free-flow between the indoor and outdoor spaces. Being outdoors offers the children opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors.

We plan activities and resources both inside and outside enabling the children to develop in all the areas of learning. Sometimes, when it is suitable, practitioners may take children to use the school halls, the school field and the school grounds for learning experiences.

### **The Outdoor Environment**

Both Nursery and Reception have outdoor learning areas. Outdoor play offers rich opportunities to have contact with the natural world and offers them experiences that are unique to outdoors.

Learning outside provides different opportunities and skill development and supports the development of physical activity and promoting a sense of well-being.

We also have access to our Forest School area where the children can play and learn in a woodland environment.

Families are asked to provide their children with appropriate all-purpose clothing (Wellington boots /rainproof macs/puddle suits with hoods) so we can learn outside whatever the weather!

### **Assessment**

At Ashwood Park Primary School ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Practitioners use different methods of assessment to continually identify children's achievements, interests and learning experiences. Observation, formative and summative methods are used.

In classrooms we have 'Wow Walls' where each child has a space to record key learning and achievement.

Information is shared with staff and parents/carers when appropriate are used to identify children's next steps and shape future planning.

There are parent's evenings throughout the year that parents are expected to attend. Practitioners also celebrate and take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers through the communication in person and through emails.

In Reception, children complete the *Early Years Baseline* within six weeks of starting school.

Internal data is kept to record if a child is working at age appropriate levels throughout Early Years.

At the end of the EYFS (when the child reaches the end of Reception), the EYFS Teacher completes the National EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development (2)
- Not yet reaching expected levels (1)

The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers.

### **Working with Parents**

At Ashwood Park Primary School we recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.

In Nursery and Reception parents and/or carers and the child meet the staff when a child starts attending the setting and before then if they accept a home visit and/or come to a play session.

Parents and/or carers are involved in discussions about children's development and progress from early on before attending the setting and throughout their Early Years education.

Early Years staff ensure that every child's learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs.

### **Home and School Links**

- Emails and texts and phone calls are used as an effective communication method and to share home learning.
- We have an open-door policy, where parents and/or carers can approach staff daily as they arrive or leave school. If staff are unable to talk to the parent and/or carers or more time is needed another more suitable meeting can be arranged.
- We will conduct workshops for parents and/or carers to enable them to be familiar with the teaching methods used in school to support them at home.
- We provide a Reading Record for you to communicate about reading at home and ask any questions.

- We provide home activities as necessary to support children's learning at home.
- We will provide parent and/or carers evenings twice yearly to inform parents and/or carers of a child's progress and attainment and next steps.
- There will be opportunities for parents and/or carers to support school through Home and School (HSA) opportunities and parent governor positions.
- Parents and/or carers are invited to Praise Award assemblies to see their child receive their Praise Award.
- Parents and/or carers receive a written report noting achievements at the end of their Nursery and Reception year.

### **Inclusion and Equal Opportunities**

Children with special educational needs will be supported as appropriate to enable them to access the curriculum fully. This includes children that are more able and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities.

For those children who require additional support there would be a meeting held with parents and/or carers and staff and the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO).

The school's SENCO is responsible for providing additional information and advice to staff and parents and for arranging external intervention and support as necessary.

In line with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy, we will provide all children, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability with equal access to all aspects of school life to ensure that every child is valued as an individual.

If your child is entitled to Pupil Premium, parents and/or carers will be asked to indicate this on Nursery admission form and Nursery will be able to claim extra funding.

### **Behaviour Management**

Early Years follows the same positive behaviour management policy and systems as the rest of the school adapted for Early Years aged children as necessary. Please refer to our *Behaviour Policy* for more information.

### **Safeguarding and Welfare Procedures**

Safeguarding is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our *Safeguarding Policy*.

We promote welfare in the Early Years by supporting and talking to children about:

- Washing hands correctly at correct times
- Hygiene
- Using the toilet independently
- The importance of brushing your teeth
- Healthy eating



- Bringing water in water bottles
- Exercise and movement daily
- Mental health
- NSPCC 'Pants' content

### **Toilet and Intimate Care**

We encourage and support children being toilet trained when they begin Early Years. However, depending on a child's age and stage of development, they may need some support using the toilet and changing following an accident.

Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child.

If needed, we have some spare clothes that must be washed and returned to school if borrowed or children can bring their own set.

Please see our *Intimate Care and Toilet Policy* for further information.

### **Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed and approved by Early Years staff and Lead every year.

At every review, where there are changes, the policy will be shared with SLT and the governing board.