

# **Alverton Primary School**

## **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) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. (Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2023)

This policy operates in conjunction with all other relevant school policies.

### **Introduction**

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Alverton School, our Foundation Stage is for children from 2 to 5 years. We follow and adhere to The Statutory Framework for the EYFS Stage (September 2023)

Children can join Alverton Woodland Nursery from the age of 2. Little Foxes Room is for children aged 2-3 years and is staffed by qualified nursery practitioners who are responsible for planning and assessment and provide a rich and stimulating environment for the children in their care. Children who turn 3 years old in the Autumn term transition into the Pre-School room in January. Children who turn 3 years old in the Spring and Summer term move into the preschool room in the following September. Little Owls Room is for children aged 3 and 4. By January there are often two cohorts of children operating in the same space. The Nursery teacher is responsible for the day-to-day running of the Pre-School room and is supported by the Nursery Lead and a team of qualified nursery practitioners.

Children in the Reception class are expected to be full time from September and will turn five years old within the academic year.

## **Aims**

Through the implementation of this policy, we aim for every child's first experience of Nursery, Pre-School and school at Alverton Woodland Nursery and Alverton School to be positive and memorable. In partnership with parents and carers, we enable the children to begin the process of becoming active learners for life and we ensure that children learn and develop well. We aim for our EYFS setting to be a place where children are excited to learn, show curiosity and look forward to coming to Alverton where, in a stimulating environment, they feel safe and valued and, by the time they leave the EYFS, are ready for their future learning.

The Early Years education we offer is underpinned by four guiding principles, as laid out in the 2023 'Statutory framework guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage':

- A unique child – developing resilient, capable, confident and self-assured individuals.
- Positive relationships – supporting the children in becoming strong and independent, developing a strong partnership between practitioners, parents/carers and the child.
- Enabling environments – opportunities and experiences for learning both indoors and outdoors
- Learning and developing – An acknowledgement that children learn in different ways and at different rates and no child is excluded or disadvantaged

## **Learning and Development**

Our curriculum centres itself around our core values, the Characteristics of Effective Learning and Development Matters, which underpin how children learn and the progression of skills needed to support children achieve the Early Learning Goals at the end of Reception.

We provide a careful balance of child-initiated, adult-initiated and adult-led learning so that children can engage in a balanced curriculum, which includes focused planned teaching sessions as well as spontaneous learning opportunities. In addition to our teacher-led sessions, continuous provision and enhancements offer the children enriching learning opportunities throughout their day.

There are seven areas of learning and development of which three are "prime areas," and four "specific areas."

The 'prime' areas of learning and development are:

Communication and language

- Listening, attention and understanding
- Speaking

Physical development

- Gross motor skills
- Fine motor skills

Personal, social and emotional development

- Self-regulation
- Managing self
- Building relationships

The 'specific' areas of learning and development are:

Literacy

- Comprehension
- Word reading
- Writing

Mathematics

- Numbers
- Numerical patterns

Understanding the world

- Past and present
- People, culture and communities
- The natural world

Expressive arts and design

- Creating with materials
- Being imaginative and expressive

## **Teaching and Learning**

Features of teaching and learning that are fundamental to the EYFS are:

- The partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement.
- The understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching.
- The range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions to extend and develop play, and talk or utilise other means of communication.
- The carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS.
- The provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities.
- The encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management.
- The support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment.
- The sharing of children's learning and progress with parents during parent evening consultations. In reception, these are held three times a year. In nursery, regular

observations are posted to parents via the FAMILY app and we hold two parent consultation evenings each year.

- The good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school.

**Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. Practitioners need to decide what they want children in their setting to learn, and the most effective ways to teach it. Practitioners must stimulate children's interests, responding to each child's emerging needs and guiding their development through warm, positive interactions coupled with secure routines for play and learning. As children grow older and move into the reception year, there should be a greater focus on teaching the essential skills and knowledge in the specific areas of learning. This will help children to prepare for year 1.**

**(EYFS Statutory Framework 2023)**

We support children by using the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning.

These are:

**Playing and exploring – children investigate and experience things.**

Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences which enable them make sense of the world. They practice and build up ideas, learning how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. Our children have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own, whilst being given the space to communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

**Active learning – children concentrate, keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy their achievements.**

Opportunities to play and explore freely, indoors and outside, are fun. They also help babies, toddlers and young children to develop their self-regulation as they enjoy hands-on learning and sometimes talk about what they are doing. Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning, and room to develop their confidence in order that they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

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

When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions. We offer children many different experiences and opportunities to play freely and to explore and investigate and make time and space for children to

become deeply involved in imaginative play, indoors and outside whilst supporting and scaffolding them through skilled questioning and a genuine shared interest.

## **Assessment**

Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support. Ongoing assessment (formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process. It involves practitioners knowing children's level of achievement and interests through interactions and observations and then shaping teaching and learning experiences for each child reflecting that knowledge.

Our EYFS summative assessment allows us to formally record the level of each child's development.

- Progress Check at age 2 – this is a formal short assessment of the children's development in the prime areas.
- Reception Baseline Assessment – this takes place within the first six weeks of a child starting in reception and is a short formal assessment.
- EYFS Profile – this is a formal assessment that takes place during the final term. It indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development against the early learning goals (ELGs) or if they are (emerging) not yet reaching expected levels. The Profile reflects ongoing observations and their knowledge, understanding and abilities, and their readiness for year 1.

Adjustments are made to support children with SEND and children with English as an additional language.

Parents/carers are made aware if there are any concerns relating to their child not making expected levels of progress and relevant support is sought. The EYFSP forms part of transition of information that is shared with Year 1 teachers.

## **Inclusion and SEND**

We value the diversity of individuals within our school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All our children are treated fairly, regardless of race, religion or abilities. We value our children's families and believe that all of our children matter, taking pride in giving them 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. In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of 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. For children whom English is an additional language, we make links with

parents to build up information about their culture and language so we can continue to encourage children to develop their English and their home language. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage and the school SENCO is called upon for further information and advice. Appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the school's SEND policy.

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.

### **Enabling Environments**

At Alverton Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

The EYFS classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The classroom is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. In addition, each EYFS class has its own enclosed outdoor area which have been developed as versatile and creative spaces to enhance the learning opportunities in school. The outdoor environment is important to Alverton school with its impact on health and wellbeing being a significant factor, especially for young children. Being outdoors offers opportunities for children to explore, use their senses and be physically active. We plan activities and enhancements for our children to access both inside and outside, drawing on their current interests and helping them develop in all seven areas of their learning.

### **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.

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits, and to help them understand why they exist. We provide

children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children.

We understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2023.

We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare of children.
- promote good health, preventing the spread of infection 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 all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for 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.

The EYFS follows the whole-school procedures for safeguarding, paediatric first aid training and welfare arrangements. The Head of Early Years, Reception teachers, Nursery and Deputy Nursery Lead and Nursery SENDCO are qualified Level 3 in safeguarding. All other staff who work in the setting are trained Level 2 in safeguarding. All EYFS staff have access to the 'My Concern' safeguard online recording system. The EYFS have protocols for drop offs and pick-ups ensuring all children are safely delivered to their parent/carer at the end of sessions or the day. Please see our Late Collection and Non-Collection of Children procedure, Missing Child procedure, Mobile Phone policy and Visitor policy and procedure.

The DSL is responsible for safeguarding children and liaising with local children's services as appropriate. The deputy DSL will undertake the duties of the DSL in their absence. All staff undergo safeguarding training as part of their induction and are required to read and understand the safeguarding policy and procedures and participate in any whole school ongoing safeguard training. All members of staff, students and volunteers are subject to enhanced DBS checks and signing a self-declaration form.

## **Ratios**

The school adopts the following EYFS staffing ratios:

For children aged two:

- There is one member of staff for every four children.
- At least one staff member holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification.
- At least half of the other staff members hold full and relevant level 2 qualifications.

For children aged three and over:

- Where a staff member with qualified teacher status (QTS), or another suitable level 6 qualification is working directly with the children, there is one member of staff for every 13 children, and at least one other member of staff holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification.
- Where a staff member with qualified teacher status (QTS), early years professional status, or another suitable level 6 qualification is not working directly with the children, there is one member of staff for every 8 children, and at least one other member of staff holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification.

For children in Reception

- Two classes will total 45 children with two qualified teachers and two teacher assistants. These classes have two whole class teaching areas and a shared indoor and outdoor setting.

In the school's Breakfast Club, which Reception children attend, there is a designated member of staff for Reception children. The designated person for Reception children has a 1:8 ratio. Our after-school provision has a maximum ratio of 1:8.

The Nursery offer wrap around care for nursery children. Breakfast Club starts at 8am where breakfast is offered to the children attending. Late tea meals are offered and provided for children who book them and stay from 4pm. Parents have the flexibility to book their child in to stay in the Nursery provision until 6pm each day. The nursery offers holiday club to school aged children where the ratio is 1:8 and the provision of activities are suitable to the age and interests of the children who attend this provision.

## **Health and Safety**

At Alverton Primary School, there are clear procedures for assessing risk (see whole school risk assessment policy and risk assessments in place) which includes procedures for keeping children safe during off site trips and for any aspects of the environment or provision that may require a further risk assessment.

### **Medicines**

A whole school medicines policy (see administration of medication procedures policy) is in place to ensure that medicines and the systems for obtaining information about a child's needs for medication are kept up to date. In the Nursery, medicines will not be administered unless they have been prescribed and labelled by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist. Training is provided for staff where the administration of medicine requires medical or technical knowledge. Medicines (both prescription and non-prescription) are only administered to a child where written permission for that particular medicine has been obtained from the child's parent and/or carer. At Alverton School a written record is kept each time a medicine is administered to a child and informs the child's parents and/or carers on the same day.

We promote healthy eating and good oral health. Fresh drinking water is available at all times and children's dietary needs are recorded and acted upon when required. Each classroom has a snack and sink area that can provide healthy snacks and drinks.



We provide a menu of food that is nutritious, balanced and healthy.

All EYFS staff have complete Safesmart Food Hygiene training annually. The Nursery cook is qualified at Level 2 Food Hygiene and Safety for catering. Reception children eat with the main school where the food is cooked by the qualified school catering team.

The Headteacher will notify Ofsted of any food poisoning affecting two or more children cared for on the premises within 14 days of the incident.

Sleeping children are frequently checked to ensure that they are safe. This includes ensuring that beds/bedding are in good condition and suited to the age of the child, and that infants are placed down to sleep safely in line with latest government safety guidance. We have an adequate number of toilets and hand basins available. There are suitable hygienic changing facilities for changing any children who are in nappies with an adequate supply of clean bedding, towels, spare clothes and any other necessary items is always available.

A first aid box is accessible at all times and a record of accidents and injuries is kept in line with whole school procedures. Any accident or injury involving a child is reported to their parents/carers on the day it occurs with details of the first aid treatment administered. The headteacher will report any serious accident, illness, injury, or death of a child whilst in the school's care to Ofsted as soon as is reasonably practicable, but within 14 days of the incident occurring. Local child protection agencies will also be notified.

Our Nursery were awarded the Millie's Mark award in December 2022.

We have the following policies in place to ensure the safety of our children.

- Administration of medication procedures
- Emergency evacuation procedure
- Late collection and non-collection of children procedure
- Missing child procedure
- Mobile phone policy
- Visitor policy and procedure
- Intimate care policy
- Safe touch policy

Staff, students and visitors are fully aware that they must not be under the influence of alcohol or any other substances. We do not permit smoking on the school premises. Any member of staff taking medication will only be allowed to work directly with the children if it is confirmed that the medication is unlikely to impair their ability to look after children properly. Staff know that any medication must be securely stored and out of reach of children.

### **Information and Records**

In line with the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation 2018, the school keeps the following information

The following information is recorded for each child:

- full name; date of birth; name and address of every parent and/or carer who is known to the provider (and information about any other person who has parental responsibility for the child); which parent(s) and/or carer(s) the child normally lives with; and emergency contact details for parents and/or carers.

The following information is shared with parents/carers:

- how the EYFS is being delivered in the setting, and how parents and/or carers can access more information
- the range and type of activities and experiences provided for children, the daily routines of the setting, and how parents and carers can share learning at home
- how the setting supports children with special educational needs and disabilities
- intimate care given and first aid administered
- food and drinks provided for children
- details of our school policies and procedures
- names of staff; the name of their child's key person and their role; and a telephone number for parents and/or carers to contact in an emergency

The school hold the following documentation:

- name, address and telephone number of the school
- school certificate of registration
- name, home address and telephone number of anyone else who will regularly be in unsupervised contact with the children attending the early years provision
- a daily record of the names of the children being cared for on the premises, their hours of attendance and the names of each child's key person

Ofsted will be notified if there are any changes to the address of the school, the school's contact details, the hours during which care is provided and of any significant event which is likely to affect the suitability of the school or any person who cares for, or is in regular contact with, children to look after children.

All staff have signed a Confidentiality Agreement and have completed GDPR for Education training on Safesmart.

### **Complaints**

The school follows the TPAT Complaints policy for dealing with concerns and complaints from parents and/or carers, and a written record of any complaints, and their outcome are recorded by the headteacher. The Headteacher will investigate any written complaints relating to their fulfilment of the EYFS requirements and notify complainants of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of having received the complaint. The record of complaint will be made available to Ofsted on request.

### **Staffing and Positive Relationships**

All staff participate in an induction process before starting their employment as an EYFS practitioner. A robust Safer Recruitment procedure is in place to ensure that members of staff employed in the EYFS are suitable. The induction process requires new staff to have read all of the required policies in addition to carrying out their safeguarding and induction training. All staff are required to read the staff handbook and the EYFS policy. Appropriate clothing and footwear that staff are expected to wear to support them playing and engaging with children at floor level and in both our indoor and outdoor setting are outlined to staff. A staff uniform is ordered for staff working in the Nursery.

Every member of staff within the EYFS team takes part in the whole-school Performance Management cycle. The targets link with the whole-school development plan and the Nursery/EYFS action plans. A reflective and proactive approach to improving teaching and learning is fostered through regular communication, promoting equal opportunities, teamwork, staff meetings and the EYFS staff attending three training sessions per year based around the EYFS curriculum, SEND and our own school priorities. Our effective supervision fosters a culture of mutual support, encourages the confidential discussion of sensitive issues and allows for an opportunity to discuss children's development and well-being concerns throughout the year. The discussion identifies coaching and further CPD training opportunities to support individual staff development.

At Alverton School we recognise that children need to learn to form strong, independent and secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families. Our staff provide exemplary role models for the children. All our staff aim to develop good relationships with all our children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. Our EYFS teachers act as a 'Key Person' to all the children in their class, supported by the Teaching Assistants and Nursery practitioners. Nursery staff in the preschool and toddler rooms are also responsible for Key children. As we run our Foundation Stage 2 classes together, children build up good relationships with all staff and we ensure that there is continuity and coherence by sharing information about all of the children.

### **Parents as Partners**

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

- Having regular child meetings with Parents and carers throughout their time in nursery and reception.
- Staff engage and communicate with parents/carers during face-to-face handovers in the morning and afternoon.
- Weekly newsletters written every Friday by the class teacher/room lead, sharing the week's learning, photographs and links to support learning at home.
- Using the Famly app throughout Nursery to keep in contact with parents and carers.
- Using the FAMILY app in the reception classes to keep parents informed about their child's learning through weekly newsletters.
- Encouraging nursery parents to contribute to the child's FAMILY profile by including WOW moments from home and sharing special events in family life.

- Parents receive a report on their child's attainment at the end of each school year in both preschool and reception classes.
- Parents are encouraged to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between children, school and parents through open afternoons, parent phonics workshops, Christmas Nativity, Sports Day, charity events and other school events.
- A transition programme where parents are involved in supporting their children transition within the nursery classes, from preschool to reception and from reception into year 1.

## **Transition**

### **From Toddler Room to Preschool Room**

Children are transitioned into the preschool room the term of their third birthday. In some cases, it is not appropriate for the child to transition at this point and a more staggered approach is needed in order for the child to confidently settle in their new classroom. Each child is considered on an individual basis.

### **From Pre-School /Feeder Settings**

During the summer term, prior to a child's entry into the Reception year, parents are invited to meet the Reception teaching team, view the classroom indoor and outdoor environment, find out about the Alverton School ethos, vision and aims and find out about the allocation of classes and any concerns they may want to express.

- A welcome pack is sent home with photographs of the new classroom environment and an 'all about me' activity to complete at home and bring back when they start school.
- Parents are invited to a "new reception parents information evening" where there is a short talk all about the reception EYFS year at Alverton School. There are also opportunities for parents to visit the classroom and speak with EYFS staff.
- The children are invited to "Stay and Play" sessions in their reception class.
- Members of staff make visits to feeder settings. The number of visits will depend on the child's needs and how much information gathering is required in order to support the child's transition.
- Children requiring extra support will have additional visits regardless of their setting.
- Children already at Alverton Nursery will have visits into school with familiar members of staff, where they have the opportunity to join in with child-initiated sessions.
- Parents are invited to an individual parents meeting to talk specifically about their child in the first few days of the term before their child starts school.

### **From Reception Class to Key Stage 1**

Children in Key Stage 1 need the chance to build on best practice experienced in the Foundation Stage. We want our children to experience a smooth and effective transition so that pace and quality of learning is maintained to ensure that excellent progress is made by all children. Where certain sessions are taught discretely in reception, such as phonics, maths, reading, RE, PSED, PE etc, we mention the Year 1 subject names and how their current learning will extend into the next year.

During transition into Year 1 in the autumn term, lessons will be flexible to ease the children into the new more formal curriculum of Year 1. Children in Year 1 will still have the opportunity to develop personal independence, independent learning, the ability to choose activities and resources that support their decision-making skills. There are opportunities for children to meet their new teacher and visit their new class in the summer term so that the beginning of the autumn term is both exciting and familiar.

During the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile includes on-going observations, all relevant records held by the setting, discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution. Each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals. The profile indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development ('expected'), or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This informs the dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs, assisting with the planning of activities in Year 1.

### **Monitoring and Review**

It is the responsibility of the Head of Early Years to monitor the development of this policy. The Head of Early Years will meet regularly with the named EYFS governor to review the implementation of actions on the EYFS action plan, carry out learning walks and reflect on the EYFS setting. The Head teacher and subject leaders will also carry out monitoring learning walks in the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule. Governors will be advised of any changes to this policy. This policy will be reviewed every two years by the Head of Early Years, Headteacher and EYFS Governor.

Policy written by Laura Simpson Head of Early Years

Reviewed April 2023

Next Review April 2025

Approved by Governors April 2023