

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy 2022

At Alderman's Green we follow the EYFS framework (2021). Within this framework there are four guiding principles which shape our practice. These are:

1. **Every child is a unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured.
2. Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**.
3. Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments** with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
4. Children **develop and learn at different rates**. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

At Alderman's Green our **vision** for Early Years is to support children to become lifelong resilient learners with a positive attitude and the ability to work with others.

Our **aims** are to provide exciting and meaningful learning opportunities for children that support the development of the early skills needed to be a successful learner throughout school. Learning is practical and play based, taking place both indoors and outdoors. Children have choice and independence in resourcing and initiating their own learning, taking responsibility for their own resources and actions within a safe and supportive environment. Open ended opportunities encourage children to investigate and explore, asking questions and developing possibilities. Adults play and learn alongside the children, skilfully moving children's learning on through questioning and sustained shared thinking strategies.

In the Early Years we form the foundations to develop the school's **core values**. These are:



We use the school's core values as well as the Thrive programme to help achieve our vision for our Early Years children at Alderman's Green.

Across the foundation stage we provide a broad, balanced, differentiated curriculum which addresses the children's social, emotional, physical, intellectual, moral and cultural development within a safe, secure, stimulating environment. Our curriculum and provision has a strong focus on **high quality books** and providing a **language rich environment** to help children make the best progress.

A Good level of Development at the end of the foundation stage is a child achieving the early learning goals in Personal Social Emotional Development, Communication Attention and Language, Physical Development, Mathematics and Literacy.

The Curriculum

Our curriculum encompasses seven areas of learning and development. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

Three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships, and thriving.

These are called the prime areas:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social, and emotional development.

Four areas help children to strengthen and apply the prime areas.

These are called the specific areas:

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

Throughout their time in the Reception Year our children partake in an ambitious curriculum which is designed in a sequential way to ensure progress towards the end of reception goals. These goals are defined as Early Learning Goals (ELGs).

As previously outlined our curriculum incorporates learning through play, learning by adults modelling, by observing each other and through guided learning and direct teaching. It is also important to highlight that our plans are flexible to allow us to respond quickly to children's new interests and/or needs.

Weaving throughout the EYFS curriculum at Alderman's Green are three **Characteristics of Effective 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

These elements underpin how we reflect on each child's development and adjust our practice accordingly. Supporting children in their individual learning behaviour and observing the context of children's play is essential.

The curriculum is planned around exciting books and themes to capture children's interests whilst developing key skills. Progression in knowledge, skills and learning behaviours is mapped out which will enable the children to achieve the key outcomes and the Early Learning goals. This is found in the **Progression document for Early Years**. We aim for the highest quality of teaching and learning and achieve this through CPD and continuous monitoring. A balanced cycle of observations, assessments and planning leads us to provide high quality provision in Early Years; where we ensure the needs of the children are met and promote parental engagement to support learning.

Impact

Leaders consider the outcomes children achieve as a result of the curriculum they have designed and implemented. When we are evaluating the impact of the curriculum we have provided, the focus will be primarily on what children have learnt and the progress made.

A focussed systematic approach of observations, monitoring, data analysis and Pupil Progress Meetings take place to ensure effective impact of teaching and learning.

Observation, Assessment and planning in the Foundation Stage

Assessment

We capture a child's learning journey through the use of **floor books, photo observations on Dojo** and physical evidence collected in a learning **journal folder**. Baseline assessments are collected in each year group to show children's starting points and will consist of a PSED observation, language sample, observations of physical skills and mark making,

Floor books

Floor books are used to capture the rich language experiences provided for children such as celebrating a festival, observing something changing or growing or exploring a season. Floor books work best when they demonstrate the learning experience, skills and language developed from a key event or opportunity provided. The pages are well thought out and planned for what they will show.

Each page must:

- Be dated
- Demonstrate how the experience has promoted language by capturing language samples
- Use a range of photographs to celebrate the different groups of children and individuals to create a sense of belonging
- Set a context for the experience
- Have a sample of work such as writing, painting, material, a character from the story to trigger an emotional reaction, memory to aid retrieval.

Observations

Photo observations are uploaded to children's Dojo account and capture a WOW moment for that individual child or showing success at mastering a key milestone. The observations are collected for all areas of learning and demonstrate progress in that area of learning, **remarking on the remarkable** and not being repetitive. Staff should aim to be showing progress through photographs and what is captured every half term.

Samples of work

The learning journals, similar to observations, should only show key pieces of work that demonstrate key milestones for that child and to show progression in their skills and learning.

All work must:

- Be dated
- Have a clear learning focus such as a title or a context
- Each piece of work will clearly show a skill being mastered or a progression from previous work (such as giving meaning to marks and then distinguishing between a picture and writing)
- Level of support to be used consistently - labelled with I for independent or T/LSA for supported
- All writing frames need a place for name writing (a box for Nursery and a line for Reception)
- Once children start to write letters and numbers, feedback and marking will support children to make improvements to correct letter formation and reversals
- Children will respond to feedback by writing the correct formation 3 times from an adult model
- Development matters will be on each piece of work as a sticker to highlight the skill or milestone that the child is showing in each piece of work
- Work to be annotated using the child's voice

Examples of evidence to be collected in journals

- Assessment pieces: Drawing of themselves and name writing and a language sample captured from a stimulus
- Mark making: drawing, attempts at name writing or purposes of writing such as a shopping list, tracing of name, copying their name. These pieces should demonstrate progression in fine motor skills and writing progression.
- Reading: drawing favourite characters or picture from a story to show recall and talk, sequencing, initial sounds.
- Maths: Early representation of number such as tally marks, representing number by counting and labelling pictures, matching numeral and quantity.
- Fine motor: tracing, drawings becoming more detailed and cutting activities.

Expectations

- When children are developmentally ready and able to; writing will be on lines
- Children are encouraged to take pride in their work and the standard of this will be consistent in their work samples in their learning journals

Monitoring

- Focus children to be discussed weekly as a staff team and their learning journey monitored. Successes and next steps to be shared.
- A sample of journals to be monitored in PPA each week to check consistency and that best practise is being followed.
- SLT will monitor a sample of journals each fortnight focussing on progress.

Each term staff use the observations and knowledge of their children to summarise children's achievements and record them on Tiny Tracker. Staff are asked to use the **key milestones** children are expected to have achieved by a certain point in the year and then make a judgment as to whether a child is working on track (expected) or not on track (below or well below) age related expectations in each area of learning. These milestones have been identified and an **assessment grid** produced to ensure consistency across Early Years. A moderation session each term in school and across the network ensures consistent judgements across the setting and network.

Staff complete detailed **data analysis** to look at the trends of the cohort and different groups to ensure future planning meets the needs of all groups. Termly data is shared across the whole team so that all staff are aware of the levels of development the children are working at to target support appropriately.

Children in Reception are assessed against the Read, Write Inc. assessment criteria throughout the year and are grouped according to ability. Children's progress is tracked as they move through the Read, Write Inc. scheme.

If assessments show children are not making progress in a particular area or are working significantly below their expected age they will be discussed with the SENCO and may have an individual action plan written for them which will identify additional support or be referred to outside agencies.

Children's assessments and achievements are shared at termly parents meetings and all children receive an end of year report.

Planning

Planning is produced from the observations and assessments of the children and supports the next steps in their learning and development.

The Read, Write Inc. programme is started at the beginning of Reception and planning is based on the stage the children are working at. Children are grouped according to their individual assessments. In Nursery, staff familiarise the children with the speed sound picture poster and ensure they have the vocabulary to access the pictures. Nursery children play lots of games encouraging listening skills, sound discrimination and sound talking and blending to prepare children for formal phonics teaching in Reception.

Long term planning ensures that all the commitments and principles of the EYFS are addressed and met through the provision and organisation.

Each area of provision has **continuous provision** plans written that identify resources, development matters and possible learning in child initiated activity and include sustained shared thinking prompts and questions to support staff interactions.

Medium term planning is completed in line with the curriculum map for the foundation stage. Medium term plans are written as skills grids by the year teams and are based on the knowledge and assessments of the children; they provide possible activities to cover across the areas of learning ensuring all identified key skills are addressed through a balance of adult led and child initiated learning.

Short term planning is a weekly plan of activities and resources to support the children's development. The planning identifies specific development matters statements that will be focussed on through adult led, adult supported and child initiated activities. The weekly planning includes the identified next steps activities from the previous week's observations. All planning is adapted and evaluated from the observations of the children.

Meeting the needs of all children

Each child in the foundation stage is observed, assessed and planned for as individuals. Through pupil progress meetings and ongoing staff discussions all members of the team are aware of children's needs and levels of ability. Activities are planned for children to choose independently but particular children may be identified to take part in activities that are going to support or extend them in an area of their learning such as maths challenges for our more able mathematicians, turn taking games for children who need support with their personal, social and emotional skills or language based activities that will support our EAL learners. At times specific intervention programmes will be run to support particular needs that have been identified.

Reviewed – November 2022