



# Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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## **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

### **1 Introduction**

At Ash Trees Academy, we believe that every child deserves the best possible start in life and appropriate support to fulfil their potential. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.

This policy outlines the purpose and nature of Early Years Education in this school.

### **2 Rationale**

Children develop rapidly during the Early Years- socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually – and each child is entitled to provision that supports and extends knowledge, skills, understanding and confidence.

- The Early Years Foundation Stage is a valid stage of learning in itself, not simply a preparation for the next stage of education.
- Personal, social and emotional well-being is the basis for successful learning and development.
- The whole child is important; social, emotional, physical and intellectual developments are inter-related.
- Young children do not learn in subjects. Learning is holistic.
- Children develop individually and at their own rates and need to be given time to move through the developmental stages at their own pace.
- Observation and monitoring of children's progress is vital. It informs the planning of the next steps forward for each child.
- Children learn best when they are in control and therefore need to be given the opportunity to be responsible for their own learning.
- Children need a stimulating and challenging environment, both indoors and outdoors, in which to develop. In particular, it promotes personal and social skills and supports the acquisition and development of communication and language skills.
- Children find abstract learning difficult. They need experience of doing things, handling objects and exploring the physical and social world before they are ready to understand abstract concepts.
- Children learn best when they are actively involved. Therefore, children have the opportunity to learn through first-hand experience. Planning is based on individual children's interests and their needs
- Adults display positive attitudes to all of the children and to each other to promote high self-esteem and make children feel valued.
- Parent/carers are recognised as a child's first educator ,and are actively encouraged to work in partnership with school.

### **3 A Principled approach**

EYFS principles which guide the work of all practitioners are grouped into four distinctive but complementary themes;

#### **The Unique Child**

Every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable and self-assured.

#### **Positive Relationships**

Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents/carers.

#### **Enabling Environments**

The environment plays a key role in supporting a child's development.

#### **Learning and Development**

Children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. All areas of learning are equally important and interconnected.

Our aims reflect these principles.

### **4 Our Aims section**

To develop the child personally, socially and emotionally by:

- Planning for the needs and interests of each individual child.
- Offering a safe and secure environment.
- Making each child feel valued.
- Helping the child form stable relationships.
- Encouraging a sense of responsibility and consideration for others.
- Developing a positive self- image increasing confidence, independence and control.
- Developing an awareness that there are similarities and differences among all groups of people but that all groups are equally important.
- Providing resources and materials that reflect the many different types of backgrounds, challenging multicultural and gender issues.
- Developing a curriculum that includes discussion and activities on different religions, cultures and languages.
- Ensuring that their well-being and Involvement is monitored.

### **5 Characteristics of Effective Learning**

There are 3 identified Characteristics of Effective Learning which reflect the fact that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. These are:

#### Playing and exploring – engagement

Finding out and exploring

Playing with what they know

Being willing to 'have a go'

### Active learning – motivation

Being involved and concentrating

Keep trying

Enjoy achieving what they set out to do

### Creating and thinking critically – thinking

Having their own ideas

Making links

Choosing ways to do things

We organise our EYFS class to ensure that we offer all children opportunities to explore these characteristics and in addition we will:

- ❖ develop the child intellectually by;
  - Providing a safe and stimulating environment in which each child can learn through first-hand experience.
  - Promoting the use of language and or the use of symbols/signs.
  - Stimulating the child's curiosity.
  - Giving opportunities for children to make their own decisions.
  - Encouraging active learning.
  - Providing opportunities to revisit learning in a range of different contexts
  - Encouraging self-evaluation.
- ❖ develop the child physically, improving skills of co-ordination, control, manipulation and movement by;
  - Providing opportunities for children to use their bodies effectively by providing space for learning experiences both indoor and outdoor.
  - Work in partnership with outside agencies e.g. physiotherapy, occupational therapy to support individual needs
  - Ensure activities and experiences are adapted appropriately
  - Develop fine motor skills through activities such as modelling, painting and construction.
  - To develop an awareness of their physical ability.
- ❖ develop independence with regard to self-care by;
  - Working in partnership with parents to support toilet training where appropriate
  - Encouraging children to develop independence with regard to eating and drinking
- ❖ develop the child aesthetically and creatively by;
  - Providing a stimulating environment in which creativity, imagination, originality and expressiveness are valued.
  - Providing opportunities to experiment with a variety of materials.
  - Providing opportunities for children to use and explore their senses
  - Encouraging children to be creative and express themselves through a variety of media, music, dance, role-play art activities.

- Establish a smooth transition from home to school and develop a positive parent partnership model by;
- Starting from the child, taking into account previous pre-school experience.
- By adopting an admissions procedure that eases the transition from home to school, e.g. home visits, play visits to the school

## 6 Learning and Development

A broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum is rooted in our child centred philosophy, in which the focus is the development of the individual as a whole person.

Active learning is at the heart of the developmental process, children learn best from hands on experience. We offer a well-planned indoor and outdoor curriculum.

Each child comes to our setting from a different starting point and planning the curriculum must take account of this.

Activities must be appropriate to meet the needs of the individual child. They must be flexible enough to take account of individual diversity as well as be relevant to the individual child.

*“There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in early year’s settings. All areas of learning and development are important and interconnected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children’s curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These 3 areas are the ‘Prime Areas’*

*Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2017*

### 3 ‘Prime’ Areas:

1. Personal, Social and Emotional Development
2. Communication and Language
3. Physical Development

Practitioners must also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

1. Literacy
2. Mathematics
3. Understanding of the World
4. Expressive Arts and Design

Practitioners working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the three prime areas, which are the basis for successful learning in the other four specific areas. The three prime areas reflect the key skills and capacities all children need to develop and learn effectively. It is expected that the balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

## **Play**

“Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Play is essential for children’s development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others.”

*Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2017*

## **The Role of the Adults**

The professional team comprise of, the teaching staff and teaching assistants. Others involved in the partnership are the Head Teacher, parents/carers, and trustees.

The role of the professional team is to;

- Plan the curriculum
- Organise the learning environment
- Interact with the children to extend their learning opportunities
- Monitor and assess children’s learning
- Record observations and assessments
- Communicate with all involved
- Meetings with the Foundation Stage team are held on a regular basis to establish agreed frameworks and common approaches.
- Adults in the Foundation Stage setting work together as a team. The teachers and the teaching assistants work in partnership and are an invaluable part of the professional team. Voluntary support from parents/cares and other members of the community are welcomed.

## **7 Assessment**

The planning within the EYFS is based around termly themes and half termly planning. These plans are used by the EYFS teachers as a guide for weekly planning and to support each child’s individual learning intention. We make regular assessments of children’s learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, and this involves the whole EYFS team and multi-disciplinary team as appropriate.

## **8 Parent/Carer Involvement**

The role that parents/ carers have played in the early education of their child needs to be valued and recognised. Their involvement is crucial to the development of children’s future learning. Parents/carers need to be involved in a positive partnership.

This partnership is developed by;

- Home visits where appropriate
- Keeping parents informed - prior to admission into EYFS, a meeting is held to explain procedures and routines and our philosophy on Early Education.
- Making parents/carers feel welcome in school.
- Ensuring good communication between parents and school

- Involving parents/carers in discussions on their child's progress during formal and informal meetings.

## **9 Safeguarding and Health and Safety**

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. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance (2017) and there is a section in our school Safeguarding Policy that directly refers to practice in the EYFS.

It is important to note that members of staff do not use their mobile phones or personal handset devices in the classroom and are prohibited from taking photographs with their personal handsets.

This is in line with Ash Trees Academy Safeguarding Policy. Members of staff do, however, use school iPads to take photographs as evidence to support the regular observation assessment cycle in the EYFS. These photographs are used in children's portfolios, in class displays and on the school website. All parents are asked to state if they give permission for their child's image to be used on the school website through the paperwork in their initial starter packs. We are a healthy school and our children receive free fruit and milk from a Government scheme.

We take all accidents seriously and they are always logged onto a CPOMs system and a phone call home is always made immediately if a child bangs their head. We have cold compresses if needed.

We encourage all children to start school without nappies but will assist and care for any children who require support with this. We acknowledge that young children often have 'accidents' (i.e. wet themselves) and encourage parents to provide spare clothes. Children are changed in the toileting area.

All large climbing equipment is checked by our site officer and fire alarm tests are held regularly in line with whole school policy.

## **10 Inclusion**

As part of the larger school community we adopt the whole school policy for Inclusion, Equal Opportunities and Race Equality.

The core values of our school emphasise the need to value and respect everyone in our community.

Our school policy states our intent to promote Equal Opportunities, Inclusion and Race Equality.

### **Aims:**

- To be an inclusive school making equality of opportunity a reality for all of our children in their everyday lives.

- To develop the children's awareness of the diverse society in which we live. We will help them to learn positive attitudes and equip them to take their place within this society.
- To educate our children so that they have a good understanding of what equal opportunities means.
- To provide children with differing and appropriate levels of support for them to succeed.
- To eliminate any actions, words or practices that contribute to inequality whether they intend to or not.
- To develop children's appreciation of the positive and enriching experiences that can be gained from living and working in a multi-faith, multi-race and multi-cultural society.

In order to be inclusive we will have due regard to the needs of different groups within our school:

- Girls and boys.
- Minority ethnic and faith groups.
- Children who need support to learn English as an additional language.
- Gifted and talented children.
- Any child who is at risk of disaffection or exclusion

For further information see our whole school policy for Inclusion, Equal Opportunities and Race Equality.