

# Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Ashton West End Primary Academy



**Approved by the Curriculum Committee: 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021**

**Review Date: September 2022**

## Introduction

“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 EYFS aims to provide:

- Quality and consistency in all early years settings so that all children make good progress.
- A secure foundation through learning opportunities that are planned around the needs and interests of each individual child.
- Partnerships between different practitioners and parents/ carers.
- Equality of opportunity for all children, ensuring that all children are included and supported.

*(DfE, July 2020)*

This Early Years Foundation Stage framework applies to children from Birth until Age Five. This policy refers to the provision of Education for children from starting Nursery until the end of the Reception year at Ashton West End Primary Academy. Children are expected to start Nursery in the September after their third birthday and start Reception in the September after the fourth birthday. At Ashton West End Primary Academy, the EYFS consists of three terms in Nursery and three terms in Reception.

At Ashton West End Primary Academy, we understand the importance of a high-quality Early Years Environment and the impact this can have on a child’s future development. We aim to ensure that all children receive a challenging and stimulating Education that helps to develop a love of learning and risk taking which will continue throughout life.

At Ashton West End Primary Academy, we ensure we follow specific principles which include:

- Ensuring that children understand they are **unique**. All staff are aware that every child is unique and can be resilient, capable, confident and self- assured.
- Ensuring that children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**.
- Ensuring that children learn and develop well in an **enabling environment**. in which they have access to a range of resources and experiences.
- An understanding that all children are different and **learn and develop** in different ways and at different rates. This principle covers all children, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

*(Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage, 2020)*

## Aims of the EYFS

1. To ensure that all children are happy, healthy and safe both in school and at home.
2. To develop children’s cultural capital, ensuring that they have a wide understanding of the world around them to prepare them for the future.
3. To ensure that all children achieve their full potential and make good progress throughout the EYFS.
4. To ensure that children have a positive attitude to learning.

5. To develop children who are respectful and understanding of one another.
6. To encourage children to be explorative, imaginative, and curious individuals.
7. To develop children who have the necessary skills to become independent lifelong learners.
8. To support children's confidence and independence.
9. To ensure that children have access to a stimulating learning environment coupled with first-hand experiences and opportunities for exploration and investigation.

## Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the Early Adopter Statutory Framework for the early years foundation stage. Since September 2020, we have been following the curriculum reforms which become Statutory for all schools in September 2021.

## Structure of the EYFS

At Ashton West End Academy the Early Years Foundation Stage consists of a Nursery and one Reception Unit containing 2 Reception classes.

The Nursery is part-time only and children can start in our Nursery in the September after their third birthday. Children will be offered either a morning or afternoon place. The morning sessions run from 8:45am until 11:45am and the afternoon sessions run from 12:30pm until 3:15pm Monday to Friday. The Nursery Class is taught by a qualified teacher and a teaching assistant.

Children can join Reception in the September after they turn four. Children do not need to have attended our Nursery to apply to join our Reception Classes. Each Reception Class is taught by a qualified teacher and a teaching assistant. Children in Reception are entitled to free school meals, or they can bring a packed lunch to school.

## Curriculum

Our curriculum for the Foundation Stage reflects the areas of learning identified in the EYFS framework, with expectations that children reach the Early Learning Goals by the end of Reception. During the 2020-2021 academic year we have followed the EYFS Early Adopter framework, with changes to the EYFS curriculum becoming Statutory in September 2021.

At Ashton West End Primary Academy we plan an exciting, stimulating and meaningful curriculum that builds on what children already know. We also understand that children learn in different ways and at different rates and plan appropriately for this. We follow a text and question-based curriculum. Each half term, children will complete learning around a curriculum question such as 'What happens when it snows?' and 'What lives in the garden?'.

The EYFS framework is built around 7 key areas of learning, which is split into 17 Early Learning goals, which include both prime and specific areas of learning. All of the 7 areas are equally important and interconnected and none of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. All areas of learning are developed through a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities.

Practitioners working with the youngest children in Nursery will 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. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as the children move through the Early Years and grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas. The prime areas are particularly

important for building children's curiosity, confidence, independence, and love for learning. The specific areas then help to develop and strengthen learning and development.

### **Prime Areas**

#### **Communication and language**

At Ashton West End, we provide a language rich environment that helps all children, including those with English as an Additional Language to develop their language skills and ability to express themselves. We understand that the development of spoken language underpins all areas of learning. We provide children with opportunities to build language effectively, such as reading frequently, circle times and engaging in songs and poems. We also provide extensive opportunities for children to use and embed new language such as through storytelling and role play. We also ensure that children develop their listening skills and use language to build relationships and talk about experiences. Children with English as an Additional Language are given specific bilingual support alongside support to develop their English skills.

#### **Physical development**

Physical activity is vital in children's development and we ensure we give children lots of opportunities to develop their physical skills. We ensure that all children are given opportunities to develop both fine and gross motor skills to develop their coordination and movement. Children have access to an outdoor area daily in which they have opportunities for physically active play. Children are taught skills to develop both physical and self-care skills in both Nursery and Reception. We understand that the personal needs of all children are met and ensure that children develop their skills to manage their own personal needs. All staff understand that we have a Duty of Care to ensure children's personal needs are met. We also play lots of games both indoors and outdoors and talk about ways to keep our bodies healthy.

#### **Personal, Social and Emotional development**

This includes developing children's self-confidence and independence, managing emotions, developing persistence and resilience, and developing a positive sense of self. We encourage children to develop positive relationships with others and be respectful of other's needs and differences. Staff support children in provision to develop social skills and understand their own behaviour and feelings. Through supported interaction, children learn how to make good friendships, co-operate, and resolve conflicts with others. Clear boundaries are set from the beginning of Nursery that are consistent throughout the EYFS.

### **Specific Areas**

#### **Literacy**

At Ashton West End Primary Academy, we understand the importance of reading and writing and ensure that there is progression between Nursery and Reception. We understand that developing a lifelong love of Reading is vital. Reading consists of two parts: language comprehension and word reading. Writing involves spelling, handwriting and articulating ideas. Children take part in reading and writing adult focused activities weekly with an adult and have access to a stimulating reading and writing area. Our topics are based around key texts, and we ensure that children have exposure to a range of stories, poems, rhymes, and songs.

#### **Mathematics**

We ensure that children in EYFS have a strong grounding in number. Maths is taught exclusively in both Nursery and Reception. Children take part in carpet sessions alongside adult focus activities in

small groups. Provision ensures that children have opportunities to develop their understanding of number and work independently to develop Mathematical understanding. We provide children with opportunities to develop, to build on and apply their understanding. We plan for learning around deepening an understanding of number and to also develop spatial reasoning skills.

### **Understanding the world**

We spend time with children supporting them to make sense of the world around them and their community. We ensure children have appropriate opportunities for exploration and observation of the world. Children are encouraged to talk about their own community and experiences both during circle time and independently and we encourage children to make connections and links about their knowledge. This ensures that children ask questions to develop their own understanding.

### **Expressive arts and design**

Children have regular opportunities to engage with arts and media. We ensure that we teach children skills to explore and create with a range of media and materials and give children opportunities to share their ideas and receive feedback from others. It is important that children can think of their own ideas and create freely without fear of judgement. We also ensure that children have access to a topic-based role play area, which may also change based on children's interests and ideas. Children are given lots of opportunities to express themselves in a range of ways including media, dance and music throughout EYFS.

## **Assessment**

Assessment of children is ongoing and is completed both formatively and summatively. Ongoing (formative) assessment is integral throughout both Nursery and Reception. Online observations, writing evidence, samples of independent work and photographs are recorded for each child. Data is entered electronically onto the data - tracking programme 'Target Tracker' at the end of each half term. Data meetings are carried out termly in which discussions can be had on how to accelerate progress for specific children. Targets are then set for children who are not making expected progress and discussions with parents/ carers are had. An agreement is made on how they can also support the child at home. They may suggest a referral to the Academy's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO). They will discuss this with you first. If a parent has concerns about the progress their child is making, they should discuss this with the EYFS staff initially. (Related document: Academy's Special Educational Needs Policy).

We ensure that we have ongoing discussions with parents and act on any concern's parents may have about their child's development. Ongoing assessment is also used as a tool to highlight any children that need more challenge and opportunities are then planned for these children.

Children at the end of Reception are assessed against the Early Learning Goals and are assessed to be emerging or expected in each of the learning areas. This will be shared with the Year 1 Teacher in preparation of them moving up to KS1.

For our children, whose home language is not English we take steps to provide opportunities for these pupils to develop and use their home language in their play and learning to accelerate progress. Children have support from bilingual Teaching Assistants who support children in provision alongside specific interventions such as colourful semantics and talk time. We also use the Wellcomm Intervention to assess and support children with their language development.

**Reporting:** The class teacher will report to parents whether children are emerging or meeting the expected levels of development in each of the 17 areas of learning at the end of Reception Summer term. Teachers will share this report with parents and parents will have time to discuss this report with the class teacher.

Teachers will report to parents at the end of every term throughout Nursery and Reception to discuss children's progress and achievement. An end of year report will be given to Parent's at the end of both Nursery and Reception years.

## Training

Teachers in both Nursery and Reception have recently taken part in training for EYFS observation and Assessment, Phonics training, EYFS Writing progression and Nursery Progression courses. Teachers take part in weekly staff meetings which aid ongoing professional development.

In house moderation and external moderation is also carried out throughout the year to ensure that judgements and assessments are accurate. Internal moderation was completed in 2020-2021 academic year due to COVID 19.

Staff have up to date safeguarding training and there are numerous first aiders within EYFS. Professional Development reviews are carried out yearly.

## Teaching and Learning

Practitioners in EYFS consider the needs, interests and development of all children in order to plan challenging and enjoyable experiences. Nursery Teachers provide a strong foundation in the prime areas of learning, before focusing on specific areas that strengthen prime areas. Play is essential for children's development and allows them to explore and problem solve.

Staff in EYFS reflect on three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

- **Playing and Exploring-** Ensuring children investigate and 'have a go'.
- **Active learning-** Developing children's concentration skills and encourage them to keep on trying when encountering difficulties.
- **Creating and thinking critically-** Staff support children to develop and have their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

*(Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage, 2020)*

All teachers are expected to implement engaging and stimulating lessons alongside challenging provision areas. Teachers follow the Teaching and Learning Policy closely to ensure that children make good progress. At Ashton West End staff recognise that all children have different learning styles and develop at different rates. Planning is differentiated and adapted if or when necessary to meet children's individual needs.

All staff ensure that planning and teaching:

- Is progressive and ambitious.
- Is coherently planned and built on what children already know.
- Is practical and first-hand.
- Is meaningful and based on children's interests.

- Is differentiated appropriately based on children’s individual needs and learning styles.
- Promotes appropriate discussion and gives opportunities for children to develop their English skills and understanding.
- Has a strong emphasis on communication development.
- Promotes cultural capital and encourages children to develop curiosity about the world around them.
- Uses engaging high-quality texts (both fiction and non-fiction).

Staff have a responsibility to:

- Identify misconceptions and provide clear explanations.
- Introduce new ideas and concepts.
- Respond and adapt planning and teaching where necessary.
- Have an in-depth knowledge and understanding of children’s next steps.
- Develop a wide range of skills that will enable children to become life-long learners.
- Have a good understanding of early childhood development and special educational needs and how this relates to teaching and learning in the Early Years.
- Set appropriate interventions to accelerate progress.
- Ensure that all children feel safe and nurtured.
- Have ongoing communication with parents/ carers.
- Provide a high-quality provision based around children’s interests and topic-based learning.
- Respond sensitively to children’s feelings, ideas, and behaviour.

## Planning

Planning provides the framework for mapping out the experiences, activities and learning intentions that the children will encounter. It provides a record of children’s previous experiences, achievements, progress and is informed by the outcomes of the previous week’s reflections. Staff also consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of all children, and use this information to plan challenging and enjoyable experiences. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate. Provision maps alongside specific targets are created for children who have additional needs.

To ensure that children have access to a broad and balanced curriculum long term plans are created. We plan themes and topics around a key question and key texts. This is called our curriculum overview.

The curriculum overview outlines topics and ensures progression of skills between Nursery/ Reception. Medium term planning is then created half termly which covers objectives from all areas of learning. Medium term planning outlines the experiences and activities, alongside provision enhancements. Medium term planning is adapted and changed where necessary based on children’s understanding and interests.

Teachers also plan weekly and reflect on previous learning and understanding to adapt planning where appropriate. In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

## Parental Involvement

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents/ carers. We also recognise that parents/ carers are the first teachers of their child and have a fantastic amount of knowledge about them.

We recognise the important role parents play in educating the children. We do this by:

- Inviting parents/ carers to an induction meeting the term before their child starts school (when possible due to COVID 19).
- Engage in discussions with parents before their child starts school.
- Ensuring parents receive an Information pack containing photos and information about our EYFS.
- Ensuring parents/ Carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development both formally and informally (through parents' meetings and ongoing discussions).
- Ensuring parents can talk to teachers both at the beginning and end of the day and, if applicable, arranging meetings for more in-depth discussions.
- Providing parents/ carers with 'curriculum news' termly which outlines learning and topics.
- Ensuring parents/ carers are aware of their access to the Academy website, which has a range of examples and photographs of children's learning.
- Inviting parents/ carers to a 'VIP meeting' termly in which they are invited to talk to teachers and look at children's learning and development (when possible due to COVID 19).
- Inviting parents/ carers to workshops where applicable, such as Phonics workshops and E Safety workshops.
- Inviting parents/ carers to parents evening termly in which a discussion is had on their child's progress.
- Ensuring parents/ carers are given an in-depth report at the end of the year which highlights children's progress and development.
- Staff supporting parents/ carers to engage with specialist support if/ where appropriate.
- Ensuring that children have a 'home school' diary which is taken home weekly, to encourage parents to feedback on their child's learning at home.
- Each parent has access to Class dojo, our online learning platform. All children have a log in code and parents are updated through this platform. Home learning may be given on dojo and dojo is also used in the event of school or bubble closures to provide daily learning for children.

## Child Protection & Safeguarding

At Ashton West End Primary Academy, we understand that Safeguarding is the responsibility of all staff. All staff follow the Child Protection & Safeguarding policy. It is of high importance that all staff understand that they have a duty of care to protect children and promote the welfare of all children.



All staff are aware of Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL's) and have a responsibility to report any concerns to DSL's immediately. Staff now use 'Child Protection Online Monitoring and Safeguarding' (CPOMS) which is an online safeguarding tool that helps to ensure that all children are fully supported. Any concerns about the welfare and safety of children will be sent to the DSL's and action must be taken and recorded.

To ensure the safety of children in the EYFS unit the following procedures are observed:

- At 8.55am the school gates are locked. Security systems operate throughout the day and adults must enter the main gate and report to the office.
- Any visitors can only gain access into school via the school office, alongside a member of staff. Staff must sign in and wear a Visitor label.
- During transition periods between AM/ PM Nursery the gate will be opened for a short period. No other children have access to this area during this time.
- At the end of the day the gate will be opened at 3.00pm to enable collection of children. The gate into the EYFS area will only be opened at 3.15pm after the school bell.
- No child will be handed over to the care of any unfamiliar adult or any family member under 16.
- The EYFS learning environment (both indoor and outdoor) is checked regularly and any repairs or maintenance is undertaken by the caretaker/ external companies where applicable.
- Staff are aware of specific medical needs and appropriate medication is available out of reach of children.
- Fire registers are available to all staff which highlight who is absent in case of a fire drill/ emergency.
- All staff members have access to a Walkie Talkie which can be used to contact other staff members.

## **The importance of reading**

Enjoying books and reading stories from a very early age is crucial in the children's development. It helps with their ability to understand words, use their imagination, and develop speech. All staff understand the importance of children learning to read, regardless of their background, needs and abilities. The importance of early reading is paramount and is something that all staff strive towards. It is our responsibility to ensure that all children make good progress in reading throughout the EYFS.

Throughout EYFS, children have access to a range of stories, poems, rhymes, and non-fiction texts which are chosen to develop a child's love of reading, vocabulary, word reading and comprehension skills. Topic based texts are covered over multiple weeks to ensure that children have a full understanding of key events, characters and story structure. Texts are covered alongside relevant fiction and non-fiction texts. This may change dependent on children's interests. Children also have opportunities to act out stories and role play. All staff model reading and writing regularly. A range of books are also available in Provision areas such as Investigation, Small world, and Construction Areas.

All children take a library book home each week, and each child in Reception has an individual reading book. Teachers give children sufficient practice in reading books that match the grapheme-phoneme correspondences they have learned. Children also have access to a range of high-quality texts in provision areas.

Reading attainment is assessed and gaps are addressed as applicable. Interventions for extra reading are planned appropriately. Reception take part in short, guided reading sessions and Nursery take part in small group focused reading sessions during Spring and Summer term. Activities are differentiated based on children’s assessment, understanding and Phonics stage.

Reading is initially taught through listening to and talking about stories developing language comprehension which is continued throughout the Foundation Stage and through school. Word Reading is taught initially through listening to sounds and later taught to identify letters through the sounds they make and blending sounds together to read words. Currently we do this through Letters and Sounds. From September we will be using Read, Write, Ink. Training will take place in July 2021 to ensure the start in September.

## Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed and approved by The EYFS Lead and the EYFS Staff every 12 months.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
<b>Safeguarding policy and procedures</b>	See child protection and safeguarding policy
<b>Procedure for responding to illness</b>	See health and safety policy
<b>Administering medicines policy</b>	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
<b>Emergency evacuation procedure</b>	See health and safety policy
<b>Procedure for checking the identity of visitors</b>	See child protection and safeguarding policy
<b>Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children</b>	See child protection and safeguarding policy
<b>Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints</b>	See complaints policy