



Only our best will do!

ALBRIGHTON PRIMARY SCHOOL EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

Introduction

Early Years education is the foundation upon which young children build the rest of their schooling. It is an holistic education that encompasses all learning and development.

"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." (DFE, 2012)

Aims

- To give each child a happy, positive and fun start to their school life in which they can establish solid foundations on which to expand and foster a deep love of learning;
- To offer each child a wide range of new and exciting experiences and give them the opportunity to consolidate, explore and test them out along with their own, individual experiences; and enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence.
- To enable each child, through encouragement and high expectations, to develop, to the full, socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally.
- To offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited opportunity for development;
- To encourage children to develop independence within a loving, secure and friendly atmosphere;
- To support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing;
- To help each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and developing the confidence to work towards personal goals.
- Develop excellent relationships with parents and carers to build a strong partnership in supporting their children.
- Provide a caring and inclusive learning environment which is sensitive to the requirements of the individual child

The Curriculum

Reception follow the curriculum as outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) document. This clearly defines what we teach. The following policy details the specifics of our setting.

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are seen as important and interconnected but three areas are seen as particularly important for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, for building their capacity to learn and form relationships and thrive (DfE 2014), they support children's learning in all other areas, they are known as the prime areas.

The prime areas are;

- **Communication and Language** - Listening and Attention, Understanding and Speaking
- **Physical Development** - Moving and Handling and Self care
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development** - Making relationships, Managing feelings and behaviour and Self-confidence and Self-awareness

The specific areas of learning develop essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society.

The specific areas are;

- **Literacy** - Reading and Writing
- **Mathematics** - Numbers and Space, Shape and Measures
- **Understanding the World** - People and communities, The world and Technology
- **Expressive Arts** - Exploring and using media and materials and Being Imaginative

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning. Reception teachers plan activities within the classrooms with these in mind. They highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them.

The three characteristics are;

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 strategies

We ensure there is a balance of adult led/directed and child initiated/directed activities across the day. The interaction between the adult and child is essential as the adult's response to children builds understanding and therefore guides new learning. The adult's role is to continually model, demonstrate and question what the child is doing.

This can include the adult asking a child to come and complete a task or game with them; at other times they will participate in a child's game, extending it where possible.

By the Summer term in Reception the children will experience many more adult directed tasks as they prepare for their transition to year 1.

Play

Learning through play is an important part of our Early Years classrooms. We believe children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them. Using children's interests as a starting point, we provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning to help them make sense of the world. They have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own.

They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experience at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests and inspire those around them. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. We believe it is important that adults take an active role in child initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating and extending their play.

At Albrighton Primary School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and have their own learning styles. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are often linked.

Teaching and Learning

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school.

- 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 and extend and develop play and talk or 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;
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations;
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school;

Play and Exploration

"Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development."

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They have the opportunity to practise skills, develop ideas and think creatively alongside other children as well as individually. The children communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They have the opportunity to express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Active Learning

"Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods."

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions, which provides children with a sense of satisfactions as they take ownership of their learning.

Creativity and Critical Thinking

"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."

Children should be given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

Teaching

We include direct, carefully planned, adult led experiences for children in the form of structured adult led teaching and adult led group activities. These are particularly important in helping children to learn specific skills and knowledge and it is often through children's play that we see how much of this learning children have understood and taken on. Each day we follow a timetable with set routines in place. We set aside times each day when the children come together to be taught in the more traditional sense, gathered together on the carpet as a class. In these slots we focus on our topic work, maths, literacy, phonics, and stories. These sessions help to develop vital habits of learning: learning as a group, listening to the teacher, taking turns to answer, sitting still etc... Reading and story play an important part of the day. We want to make sure our children have a love of books and will leave the EYFS with a bank of stories they know well, both traditional and

modern classics. We make sure there is always time for whole class story at the end of the day but also that there are many opportunities to enjoy books at other times. Every child is given their own book bag and they will have one-to-one time sharing books with an adult, reading activities and group reading sessions during reading time.

The Learning Environment

The Reception classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. Our Early Years classroom has defined areas with clearly labelled resources to ensure children can access them easily. The classroom is set up in a way to provide children with experiences and activities in all of the seven areas of learning. The classroom have a writing area, maths area, creative area, book corner, role play area, construction/small world area, outdoor area and carpeted teaching area.

The outdoor area is an important part of the classroom. We try to ensure that the range of activities outside reflects the different curriculum areas, for example setting up quiet spaces for a maths game, reading and for construction.

Assessment, Observations and Planning

Assessment is an essential part of the learning and development of children in the EYFS. It involves teachers observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for children reflecting those observations.

To ensure we have evidence of a child's progress in the EYFS we use a range of strategies including children's work, photos and observations which create a detailed picture of the child. We include individual next steps for children's learning. These next steps inform planning for the next day and week ahead. Parents are encouraged to contribute through the use of our WOW cards. WOW cards are where significant events that happen at home can be recorded and shared in school.

On entry to Reception the children complete a 'My first book' which helps the teacher to get to know what that child can do to help inform planning. Throughout the Reception Year the Class Teacher submits end of term assessment data to the Head Teacher showing each child's development. We use a whole school tracking system called 'Itrack' to track progress and attainment of individual children against the Development Bands. This is updated termly and reports on children's development across the 7 areas of learning. Gaps in learning can be identified and targets shared with children and parents. At the end of Reception the class teacher assesses each child against the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG) and comments on whether their development within each ELG is either 'emerging', 'expected' or 'exceeding'. This information is also communicated to parents and carers in the Reception child's end of year report alongside an assessment of the child's characteristics of learning and can be discussed in the final Parents' Evening in Reception.

Partnership with parents and carers

We believe that parents and carers are a child's first educator and therefore work very closely to ensure they are involved in what we do with their child at school. We want parents to feel they can speak to us about their child at any time and feel comfortable in our setting. As well as Reception visit days we offer Meet the Teacher sessions at the beginning of the school year and offer parent workshops and involve parents in assemblies and school events.

When a child gains a place at Albrighton Primary we give each family an 'All About Me' booklet to complete with their child. Over the first few days at the school we encourage parents and carers to stay in the morning until they are happy to leave them in the classroom to ensure the transition to the school goes smoothly.

For new children arriving throughout the year (due to the mobility of forces families) we sit down with parents within the first few days to go through their booklet and learn more about the child and their family.

Home/School Links

When parents/guardians and practitioners work together in early years settings, the results have a positive impact on the child's development. A successful partnership needs to be a two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise.

We aim to develop this by:

- Out-lining the school's expectations to parents/guardians during the new parents' workshops in July.
- Holding further curriculum workshops to guide parents in supporting their child's learning at home.

- Operating an "open door" policy, whereby parents/guardians can come and discuss concerns and developments with either the TA before school or the Teacher after school
- Encouraging parents/guardians to listen to their child read each night and to comment on reading progress in a home/school reading diary.
- Discussing children's individual targets with parents/guardians parents' evenings three times a year.

Induction to Reception

Starting school can be a difficult time for young children; we therefore plan this time carefully to support children with the transition and to ensure it is as smooth as possible for each child and that they settle in to their new class quickly and happily.

Starting Reception - Parents of all children starting in the next academic year will be invited to an Induction Meeting in the Summer term to meet their child's new teachers and other key staff and learn more about the Reception curriculum. This is an opportunity for staff to

- To go through the school prospectus. Parents/guardians are given a pack which outlines the reception curriculum and school routines, along with other necessary documentation.
- Explain about uniform, PE kit and school dinners/ free school meals
- Explain about holidays and absences
- Purchase uniform and book bag if requested
- Explain the arrangements for the gradual induction in to reception
- Early in the first term parents are also invited to a parents' meeting so the settling in can be reviewed.

New class sessions - The children are given two opportunities to come in to school to meet their new class teacher and other children in their class. They will spend an afternoon and a morning in their new class. Parents can leave their child during this session.

This means that before they join their new class the Reception environment is already a familiar place to them. Arrangements are also made for the children's new class teacher to visit them in their current nursery setting. Transfer records from pre-school settings inform reception practitioners about the new intake.

Reception to Year 1 Transition

Reception and year 1 teachers have worked together to make the transition from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 as smooth as possible.

At Albrighton Primary School:

- Children are encouraged to develop independence when dressing and undressing and when organising their personal belongings throughout the reception year.
- Reception practitioners plan longer more structured activities to be undertaken during the summer term; encouraging less dependence on adult support.
- Reception children meet year 1 teachers during assemblies and other whole school activities during the reception year.
- End of Year assessments against the Early Learning Goals and the characteristics of effective learning are shared and discussed.
- Reception and year 1 teachers meet to discuss individual needs of children in July.
- Reception children visit their new year 1 class and teacher for a morning in July as well as the year 1 teachers visiting the reception classrooms.

Throughout the Reception year, each child's involvement in whole school life will have been built upon; many of the teaching and support staff will already be familiar people to them. They will have taken part in Key Stage and whole school assemblies as well as sharing playtimes with the Key Stage 1 children.

Safeguarding & Welfare

'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.'

(Statutory Framework for EYFS 2014)

At Albrighton Primary School, we understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2014.

- To provide a setting that is welcoming, safe and stimulating where children can grow in confidence;
- Promote good health
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs
- To ensure that all adults who look after the children, or who have unsupervised access to them, are suitable to do so
- Ensure that the setting, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for the purpose it was intended for
- Maintain records and procedures required for the safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

Keeping Safe - 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. We encourage children to take risks and highlight the importance of keeping themselves safe by teaching them how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See the Albrighton Primary School Safeguarding Policy). **Good Health** - All children are provided with a healthy snack each day as well as being given the choice of milk. They have access to water at all times.

Intimate Care - "Intimate" care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. However, depending on a child's age and stage of development, they may need some support, for example dressing, wiping their bottom after using the toilet and changing underwear following an accident. In most cases, intimate care is to do with personal hygiene and it is good practise for the school to inform the school nurse of all children requiring intimate care. 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. No intimate care is to be given without the express written permission of the parent or guardian of that child and all parents and guardians will be asked to provide that permission when their child joins reception at Albrighton Primary.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of those working in Reception to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Headteacher will carry out monitoring on EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule. The Curriculum Committee of The Governing Body will also be part of this process.

Policy written by - Karen Matthews
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This EYFS Policy was updated and approved at the Full Governors' Meeting on Monday 21st March 2016.

Signed Cath Ratcliffe - Chair of Governors

Signed Julie Bratt - Headteacher

Due to be reviewed in March 2018