EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

Date adopted: September 2022

History of most recent policy reviews

Date (annual review)	Review	Governor Committee with responsibility
September 2022	New Policy	Education Committee
September 2024	Date changes	Education Committee

Agreed Next Review Date: September 2023

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

"Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their full potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth to five has 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." ***Birth to Five DFE 2021***

"Language is the foundation of children's thinking and learning. Early language is at the heart of a board curriculum." **Development Matters 2021**

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Equalities policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Administering Medication Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Fire Safety Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Data Protection Policies
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024
- Appraisal policy

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board is responsible for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring that this policy does not discriminate on any grounds.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy, as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.

The EYFS leader, in conjunction with the headteacher, has responsibility for the day-to-day implementation and management of this policy.

Staff, including teachers, support staff, supply staff and volunteers, are responsible for:

- Familiarising themselves with, and following, this policy.
- Remaining alert to any issues of concern in children.
- Ensuring the policy is implemented within the early years setting.

Aims of teaching in the EYFS

At Air Balloon Primary School, we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning.

We aim to:

- give each child a positive start to their school life to enable them to grow into happy, independent adults with a passion for lifelong learning.
- give each child a wide range of new and exciting experiences and the opportunity to consolidate, explore and test them out along with their own, individual experiences.
- enable each child, through encouragement and high expectations, to develop to their full potential, socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally.
- make each child independent, resilient and able to make choices and be a manager of their own behaviour and learning.
- offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited opportunity for development.
- establish strong, professional and supportive relationships with the families and carers of the children at Air Balloon Primary.
- keep children safe and healthy.

The EYFS Curriculum and Approaches to Teaching and Learning

Reception follow the curriculum as outlined in the 2021 Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework.

The provision in our Reception classes is based on the four principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage:

A unique child

We recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement as well as celebration and rewards to encourage and develop a positive attitude to learning.

Positive relationships

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships and aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families.

Enabling environments with teaching and support from adults

We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Through observations we assess the children's interests, stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging and achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning. We strive to build strong partnerships with parents / carers to benefit the children.

Learning and development

We recognise that children develop and learn at different rates. We make provision for children with special needs and disabilities (SEND).

Principles into practice

At Air Balloon Primary we plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stages of development to enable the children to achieve the early learning goals.

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven areas of learning, using play as the vehicle for learning
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support
- Work in partnership with parents /carers
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observations and assessment
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-initiated and child-initiated, supported by the adult
- Have a key person approach to develop close relationships with individual children
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and out

Curriculum

We plan for learning using the seven areas of the learning and development as outlined in the EYFS statutory framework.

The areas are broken into Prime and Specific areas, these being:

Prime:

Communication and Language

Physical Development

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Specific:

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the World

Expressive Arts and Design

Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning and the reception planning takes account of these. The characteristics 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.

Planning

For children to make progress in learning, appropriate planning is important. When planning the curriculum, the school will ensure that:

- Diversity and inclusion are at the heart of planning, ensuring provision enables every child access to engaging and challenging learning.
- Staff observations and ongoing formative assessments are used to inform planning and create an accurate and informed picture each child.
- When planning teaching, it considers:
    - The stages of children's development.
    - Children's individual needs and interests.
    - The learning environment, inside and outside.
- Staff develop knowledge of children and their families and use this information to inform practice and provision.
- There are sufficient amounts of time and resources available for staff to engage in planning and assessment activities.
- Curriculum plans are flexible working documents which will be adapted and changed to respond to the needs and interests of children

We have six overarching topics throughout the year with flexibility to encourage and engage with children's interests. When planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners at the end of each day to discuss key children, provision and next steps.

Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. The children experience whole group and small group Phonics, Maths and English lessons. These will increase in complexity and length throughout the Reception year, to match the children's age and stage.

Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. This may take the form of narration, questioning, demonstrating skills, providing resources and pondering among others. Throughout any adult initiated activities, the team introduce the children to new vocabulary, knowledge or skills.

Assessment

At Air Balloon, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe children to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents/or carers.

Within the first 6 weeks of a child starting reception, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

Throughout the year we carefully monitor each child's individual progress and use Development Matters and Birth to Five for guidance to ensure that teaching and provision is constantly reflected upon and changed to meet the needs of all children.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents/or carers for their child. The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters and Birth to Five guidance)

EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority and is shared with parents/carers. It is also shared with the Year 1 teacher as part of our transition process.

Working with Parents and Carers

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents/or carers. Parents receive topic overviews each half-term outlining key learning that will be taking place. Parents/or carers are also kept up to date with their child's progress and development. We communicate via Evidence Me weekly, sharing pictures and learning moments. This allows the conversation to continue at home. Parents/Carers can also add observations of wow moments that have taken place outside of school.

Each child is assigned a key person who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. After the first three weeks of the children settling into school life a meeting between the teacher, EYP and parents/carers takes place to further foster the partnership.

A meeting for Maths and Literacy is held in the Autumn Term to demonstrate our approach to Maths, Reading, Writing and Phonics.

Teachers also hold regular parent meetings in line with the rest of the school.

Safeguarding and welfare procedures

All necessary steps are taken to keep the children in our care safe and well. Any safeguarding or welfare issues will be dealt with in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, and all members of staff in the EYFS are required to read this policy as part of their induction training.

Staff will receive safeguarding training that enables them to understand the safeguarding policy and procedures, have up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues, and recognise signs of potential abuse and neglect.

Children's safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in the school safeguarding policy.

Inclusion

Our whole school ethos, as well as that of the Foundation Stage, embraces inclusion. We recognise and respect the abilities and strengths of our children at all levels of development and the wealth of knowledge and experience that they bring from their differing backgrounds and cultures. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We will provide: a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively; a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued; resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping; challenging activities for all children and for those whose ability and understanding are advanced. We will monitor children's progress and take action to provide support as necessary. Where a

specific need is identified we will liaise with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator and seek advice from outside agencies, such as the speech and language service and educational psychologists amongst others. We adhere to the Equal Opportunity and Inclusion policies of the school.

Transitions

Before the children start school, nurseries and other settings are contacted to share information and reports about the children.

A parent/carer welcome meeting also takes place in order to provide key information to help the transition to school to be as smooth as possible. This gives parents/carers time to ask questions and share knowledge or any concerns they have about their children.

Children also have the opportunity to attend a 'stay and play' session in their new environment during the Summer Term.

At the beginning of the school year, new children are given staggered entry times to ensure that they have the time to feel welcomed and to support them in exploring their new environment. In Reception there is a three week 'settling in' period to ensure that children have the time to become secure and familiar with the new routines before starting school full-time. During this time, children attend school either during the morning or afternoon for the first two weeks and then during the third week all children attend in the morning and stay for lunch. During the afternoon the teacher/EYP meetings take place.

At the end of Reception, children have the opportunity to meet with their new teachers in their classrooms prior to starting Year One. At the end of each school year, teachers have the opportunity to share their insight of each child's knowledge, understanding and achievements, including end of year assessment data, with their next class teacher to ensure that all teachers have a well-rounded picture of the children prior to the new school year.

Monitoring and review

The quality of teaching is continuously monitored, and any concerns are raised with the Early Years Leader.

This policy is reviewed by the early years leader, headteacher and governing board on an **annual** basis. The next scheduled review date of this policy is **September 2025**

Any changes to this policy are communicated to parents and staff members, who can request a copy of the policy from **school website**.