

Abbeyfield Primary Academy



*The Abbeyfield Way: respectful, ambitious, happy and safe.*

# Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Reviewed Jan 2022

Next Review: **Jan 2024**

*“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..”* Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2021

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. In our school, children are able to join Nursery from their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday. More children will come straight into the Reception class in the September following their fourth birthday.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- i. A Unique Child
- ii. Positive Relationships
- iii. Enabling Environments
- iv. Learning and Development

#### **i. A UNIQUE CHILD**

At Abbeyfield Primary Academy we have the philosophy that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, 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/ sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

#### **Inclusion**

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of ‘differences’. All children at Abbeyfield Primary Academy are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

In our school we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children’s range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- ✓ Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children’s knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence.
- ✓ Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children’s learning needs.
- ✓ Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively.
- ✓ Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued.

- ✓ Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping.
- ✓ Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills.
- ✓ Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

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. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

We aim to protect the physical and psychological wellbeing of all children. (See Whole School Safeguarding Children Policy)

## 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 the EYFS 2021 p21*

At Abbeyfield Primary Academy, we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage. We understand that we are required to:

- ✓ Promote the welfare of children.
- ✓ Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- ✓ Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- ✓ Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- ✓ Ensure that appropriate ratios are in place at all times.
- ✓ Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment are safe and suitable for purpose.
- ✓ Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- ✓ Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

## ii. POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

At Abbeyfield Primary Academy we understand that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

### Parents as Partners

We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- ✓ Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school.
- ✓ Observations of individual children shared regularly with parents through the Development Map tool.
- ✓ Parents also being encouraged to share news and home achievements through Development Map or by emailing the class teacher
- ✓ In both year groups parents have the opportunity to use the lending library to take books home to share with their children.

- ✓ Offering parents opportunities to talk about their child's progress and targets through mentoring meetings with the parent, child and teacher at least once a term.
- ✓ Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year. For the F2 children this includes a short report on the characteristics of learning.
- ✓ Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: family learning courses, class assemblies, Sports Day etc...

#### Covid restrictions permitting, this would also include:

- ✓ Staff visiting children in their home setting prior to their starting nursery.
- ✓ The children having the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school through visits to the setting during transition week.
- ✓ Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school.
- ✓ Parents being invited to attend workshops in both FS1 and FS2 in order that they can learn activities that they can do at home with their children.
- ✓ In both FS1 and FS2 parents are invited to attend a Rhyme Time session once a week.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. In both Nursery and FS2 children have a 'key worker'. The key person approach is aimed at enabling and supporting close attachments between children and practitioners. The role of the key person is to meet the needs of each child in their care and respond to their feelings, talking to parents and working in partnership with them.

### iii. ENABLING ENVIRONMENTS

At Abbeyfield Primary Academy, we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

#### Observation, Assessment and Planning

The Planning within the EYFS follows the schools creative curriculum which is based around half termly themes. These plans are used by the EYFS teachers as a guide for weekly planning. However the teacher may alter these plans in response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children. This will be indicated on weekly planning.

On first entry into FS1 or FS2 at Abbeyfield, children are assessed using the Birth to 5 Matters documentation. This assessment is informed by learning stories, and snap shot observations of the children within the provision. Previous assessment from Nursery or other settings are also used to inform this baseline.

During the first few weeks of the Reception year, FS2 staff will also carry out the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment for all FS2 pupils.

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 formal and informal observations. Staff use the Development Map assessment tool to collect evidence for each children, including completing 'snap shot' (short) observations and, at least once every term, a more detailed Learning Story observation. These Learning Stories use photographs and record interactions with other children and also records their dialogue. These observations are shared with the children and also with parents using the Development Map assessment tool.

Teachers also record children's attainment in the different aspects of the curriculum on Development Map. This shows progress of children from Nursery through to the end of FS2, in line with the Birth to 5 Matters documentation. It allows SLT to monitor progress of children and to inform whether provision is meeting the needs of the children.

At the end of the Reception year in school, all children are assessed against the 17 Early Learning Goals and this is recorded onto the Early Years Profile. Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress against the ELG's and a short report on the characteristics of learning.

## The Learning Environment

The EYFS classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, quiet or rest. The classrooms and outdoor spaces are set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The EYFS classes have their own enclosed outdoor area. These have a very positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children the chance to explore, use their senses, develop their language and be physically active. We plan activities and resources for the children to access both indoors and outdoors that help the children to develop in all 7 areas of learning.

## iv. LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

At Abbeyfield Primary Academy, we know that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape the educational provision in Early Years Settings. These are divided into prime and specific areas. The three prime areas are important in developing children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning.

Prime areas;

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

The other four areas are called specific areas. Through these the prime areas are strengthened further.

Specific areas;

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

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

Children's development across these areas is recorded and monitored using the Development Map tool.

## Teaching and Learning Style

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. Features that relate to the EYFS are:

- ✓ 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 and self-management;
- ✓ the emphasis on specific teaching of language and vocabulary needed for this
- ✓ 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, which are shared with parents;
- ✓ the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school;

## Play

**“Play is essential for children’s development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems.”** *Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2021 p16*

### Exploring through play

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

### Active Learning

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. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

### Creativity and Critical Thinking

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.

### Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teachers to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Principal, Deputy Headteacher and Foundation Stage Leader will carry out monitoring of the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.