



Arden Forest Infant School

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Approved by: R Gunn

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Last reviewed on: September 2023

Next review due by: September 2024

Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed in their Reception Year, throughout school and for lifelong learning.
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
- Close partnership working between practitioners and with parents and carers
- An inclusive environment where children are supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), September 2023.

Structure of the EYFS

The EYFS applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception Year. At Arden Forest, children are admitted into Reception in the September following their fourth birthday. We have two classes which are organised as a Reception Unit. We greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations in order to maximise future learning and development in their next stage of education and for life. In Reception, we:

- Provide a happy, safe, stimulating and challenging learning environment and opportunities and for the children to experience as they begin their journey in our school.
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond.
- Enable children to be positive, independent and collaborative learners with a joy for learning.
- Value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress.
- 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 needs of the individual child.

Overarching Principles

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based on four themes of which underpin our provision at Arden Forest.

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. We support children to have a positive growth mindset, use meaningful praise, encouragement and celebration to enable children to develop a positive attitude and love of learning.

We value the diversity of individuals within our school. All children and families are treated fairly regardless of race, gender, religion or abilities. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities.

Positive Relationships

We recognise that children learn to be strong, confident and independent from being in secure relationships. We develop warm, caring and respectful relationships with and between the children, their families, the staff team and visitors to school.

We understand that attachments are the emotional bonds that are made between young children, their parents and carers and their Key Person in school. Children's well-being and sense of belonging is essential for them to thrive socially and emotionally and to maximise learning.

Through positive relationships children are also supported with their communication skills.

Enabling Environments

We recognise that the environment and the adults within in, plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development, where the children feel confident, secure and challenged. Our safe and challenging learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, encourages a positive attitude to learning and reflects the individual's interests, passions and abilities. Our indoor and outdoor environment are set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision and enhancements in response to children's needs and interests.

We provide a calm, neutral environment that allows children to regulate their feelings, emotions and have a sense of learning more readily. Daily reflection on feelings, 'meet and greet', mindfulness activities and access to calm spaces within the environment to support wellbeing.

Our Curriculum

Intent

The curriculum at Arden Forest and within the EYFS, is designed to provide a broad and balanced education that meets the needs of all children. We have a clear understanding of children's strengths and areas for development which we build on. It recognises children's prior learning and provides first hand learning experiences for children to develop as independent, confident and successful learners, with high aspirations. We follow the EYFS statutory guidance and have developed a bespoke curriculum with key skills and knowledge which children will encounter across all areas of learning and development. We use termly broad themes and enrichment opportunities that are based on children's interests and add cultural capital. We recognise the changing needs and interests of our pupils and we are responsive to this, regularly developing existing themes.

Our three Key Curriculum drivers shape our curriculum and helps bring about the aims of our school as well as responding to the particular needs of the school community: Spirituality, Respect and Diversity. These are underpinned by our school values of respect of self and others, responsibility, kindness, positivity, resilience and tolerance. This includes British values and the development of SMSC.

Parental and community partnerships are an essential part of our curriculum as we celebrate local traditions and enable the pupils to take an active role in key events throughout the year. Collectively, this contributes to enabling children to develop into citizens who are well prepared for life in modern Britain and who can contribute positively to their own unique home community, our village and beyond.

The curriculum ensures that appropriate experiences, creativity, problem solving and academic success, as well as physical development, well-being and mental health are the key elements which support the development of the whole child. With the incorporation of our Growth Mindset Learning Powers, we encourage a positive attitude to learning that will result in the pupils being able to persevere, make connections and become lifelong learners with a sense of belonging.

Curriculum Implementation

Throughout Reception, we follow the Statutory Framework and Guidance or the Early Years Foundation Stage which specifies the requirement for learning and development in the Early Years. The EYFS Curriculum has 17 areas of learning with Characteristics of Effective Learning which shape our educational provision in Reception. There is a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities which support children to reach the levels required at the end of EYFS and have a good level of development. (GLD).

The three Prime Areas of Learning are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

Communication and Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Listening, Attention and Understanding ▪ Speaking
Physical Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gross Motor Skills ▪ Fine Motor Skills
Personal, Social and Emotional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Self-Regulation ▪ Managing Self ▪ Building Relationships

The prime areas of learning are strengthened and applied through the EYFS specific areas of learning.

Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Comprehension ▪ Word Reading ▪ Writing
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Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number ▪ Numerical Patterns
Understanding the World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Past and Present ▪ People, Culture and Communities ▪ The Natural World
Expressive Arts and Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Creating with Materials. ▪ Being Imaginative and Expressive

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. We respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. As children's development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for their next stage of learning whilst maintaining continued opportunities for learning through play. Effective Communication and vocabulary acquisition is the heart of what we do.

We plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. We have a flexible approach to curriculum delivery based on the needs and interests of our children whilst maintaining high expectations and coverage and progression within areas of learning. This flexible planning, enables a child's unique interests to be supported. Our children learn new skills, acquire new knowledge and demonstrate understanding across all areas of the EYFS curriculum. We encourage active learning to ensure the children are motivated and interested. We take time to get to know children's interests and their likes to support learning. We consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience.

We provide high quality teaching sessions, adult guided tasks and support within the environment. Each week, children work with an adult to complete guided reading, writing and maths tasks. They are able to explore a range of child-initiated experiences and are expected to complete a series of challenge tasks through both the indoor and outdoor provision. We provide access to a Nature Club and make use of the wider school grounds to support Understanding of the World and Physical Development.

Children access learning opportunities that ignite curiosity and a desire to find out more where children can direct their own learning and extend and apply skills from teaching sessions. We encourage children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this facilitates independent learning and encourages children to set their own challenges and perseverance. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world.

A vital aspect in the development of essential knowledge and skills is the use of our high quality continuous provision. This means that children are using and developing taught skills throughout the year on a daily basis. The principles of continuous provision in Reception, support children to develop key life skills such as independence, innovation, creativity, enquiry, analysis and problem solving. During the school day, children will have an opportunity to work independently, work collaboratively with their friends and with members of staff. Our outdoor areas are used all year round and in most weather conditions.

In planning and guiding children's activities we reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practise. We make regular ongoing observations of the children's learning to ensure their next steps are met. Significant observations are recorded in each child's Tapestry online learning journey. We routinely assess where the children are, using our Key Milestones document and then ensure our planning, adult Interaction and learning environment; including continuous provision, support children to reach their next steps. We use evidence based interventions for groups or individuals if and when necessary.

We ensure activities and interactions support Characteristics of Effective Learning which are:

- Playing and Exploring where children investigate and experience things, and have a go;
- Active Learning where children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements;
- Creating and Thinking Critically where children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

We have a daily dedicated time focusing on health and self-care where we explore mindfulness and relaxation techniques. We share a range of healthy snacks and learn about the importance of a healthy balanced lifestyle to maintain our own wellbeing. We understand how our kindness responsibility impacts on the health and emotional wellbeing of ourselves and others and we support charity events in school.

To support our wider curriculum, all of our children perform in a Nativity and participate in trips to the theatre, farm and the local area. We routinely invite visitors into school as a starting point for learning or to support understanding of a particular theme. All children in Reception have the opportunity to be voted onto the School Council and take on class responsibilities.

Early Reading

We teach letter sound acquisition through a synthetic phonics approach using the Little Wandle scheme to develop key skills for children to apply in their reading and writing. Children have guided reading and writing sessions planned around their needs to enable next steps in their learning. In guided reading sessions, children are supported to decode words using their phonics and learn basic common words that are read on sight. Children are also taught book skills and comprehension skills.

We use the systematic 'Collins Big Cat Little Wandle' reading scheme to enable children to apply, practice and consolidate their phonic skills. All books are matched perfectly to the Little Wandle progression and support all of the revised Letters and Sounds phases. Children will start with books that have no words and then have books that they are able to confidently decode matched to their phonic ability. Books are sent home on a weekly basis. Children also have letter sounds and common sight words to practice at home.

A love of reading is fostered through:

- The provision of a high-quality reading area in the Reception Unit
- Opportunities to read outside.
- The provision of related texts across areas of learning.
- The use of key texts as a basis to extend literacy skills through our 'Book of the Week'.
- A weekly library visit where children visit to change books and share a story.
- Daily story sessions.

- Opportunities to retell and create stories through role play and small world.
- The use of puppets and visual resources.
- Singing Nursery Rhymes.
- Learning poems
- Playing reading games.
- Retelling stories through role play
- Reading with their peers, Reception staff, and volunteers.
- Sharing stories from home.
- Learning about the works of a specific author as part of a whole school approach.

Early Maths

We have a Mastery Approach to our maths curriculum which is taught through dedicated sessions. These sessions are carefully planned using concrete resources and build on prior learning and real-life experiences across the theme and year. We want our children to become confident mathematicians who can apply what they have learnt to real life experiences. We are part of the Origin Maths Hub and follow the NCTEM Mastering Number Programme to guide our planning and provision. Children encounter real life everyday objects and specific maths resources such as 'Numicon', Rekonreks, 10 frames and part, part, whole cards. Children routinely have a maths pack of resources to support their learning at home.

Advice and inspiration for planning of experiences and the learning environment is routinely sought from subject leads in school, EYFS colleagues within our Consortium and Early Years Aspiration Networks, visits to other settings and on the internet. All staff have a strong drive to improve the environment and learning opportunities for children. The Early Years Lead is currently joint 'Aspiration Network Lead for the Bedworth Consortium.

Impact

The impact of our curriculum and provision is that children are motivated and engaged in their learning and eager to find out more. We strive to ensure that our children's progress across the EYFS curriculum is at least good from their varied starting points. We monitor children closely and have high expectations to enable our learners to have a Good Level of Development at the end of their Reception Year. Evidence is gained through observations, staff knowledge of the children. We measure the percentage of pupils achieving age related expectations throughout the academic year and put supportive interventions in place if and when needed. We use observations to make formative assessments which inform future planning and ensure that all children build on their current knowledge and skills at a good pace.

We input data onto 'O' Track and analyse data to ensure rates of progress are at least good for all children, including vulnerable groups such as those with SEND, disadvantaged or summer born children. We monitor children who are not on track against age related expectations in order to provide additional support and intervention.

The impact of our curriculum is also be measured by how effectively it helps our pupils develop into well rounded individuals who embody our values and carry with them the knowledge, skills and attitudes which will make them lifelong learners and valuable future citizens. We endeavour for pupils to be Key Stage 1 ready and have our school values embedded by the time they leave Reception.

Assessment

It is important to recognise that not all of our assessments are recorded and we value staff professional knowledge of the children. Assessment incorporates:

- Statutory Baseline Assessment alongside working with the children to gather evidence across all aspects of Learning.
- Ongoing observations as the basis for planning. Observations of children identify their achievements, interests and next steps for learning. These observations then lead the direction of the planning, provision or an immediate response to challenge misconceptions or support learning and development.
- Formal and informal observations, photographic evidence and through planned activities. Assessment is completed regularly and involves all adults in Reception.
- Recording of relevant and significant within an online Tapestry Learning Journey for each child. Learning journals are recorded collaboratively between home and school.
- Setting challenging expectations for pupil progress across all areas of learning and development and strive for children to achieve a Good Level of Development by the end of the Reception Year. End of Year targets are set for all children between class teachers and senior leaders.
- Use of 'O Track' as a tool for recording and monitoring progress and attainment of individuals and groups. Termly Pupil Progress meetings are embedded in our practice to celebrate success and identify where additional support or challenge is needed for a child or where changes in provision may need to be adapted.
- Termly data analysis is carried out by the Early Years Lead and Headteacher. This is used to monitor the quality of provision and plan any adjustments.
- Use of targeted provision and interventions in response to need and barriers to learning with clear entry and exit points. Referrals to specialist support may also be made.
- End of year assessments against the Early Learning Goals to identify children who have reached a Good Level of Development (GLD). Children will have a Good Level of Development, GLD if they have reached expected levels in all aspects of the Prime Areas and in reading, writing and number. These judgements are reported to parents and are used to inform provision in Year One.

Working with parents

We recognise that parents and carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value being partners with them in their child's education. We have positive relationships with parents and carers and know that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.

We do this through:

- A positive welcoming ethos for all through friendly yet professional relationships.
- A key person approach where each child is assigned a key person who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. At Arden Forest, the key person role for each child is shared between a Teacher and a designated Teaching Assistant for each class.
- Outlining the school's expectations in the Home-School agreement.
- Enabling additional support for individual children and families at points of transition.
- Collaborative development of a child's learning journal through Tapestry to celebrate significant learning moments at school and at home.
- Operating an open door policy for parents and carers with any queries or concerns.
- Written contact through Reception newsletters.
- Publishing a half termly Knowledge Organiser detailing how parents and carers can support their child at home.

- Developing SEN Support Plans, Behaviour Plans and One Page Profiles with families.
- Inviting parents to attend informal sessions about areas of the curriculum, such as phonics, reading and maths.
- Offering three parent teacher consultation meetings per year where their child's progress and achievement against age related expectations is discussed.
- Sending a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of their time in Reception.
- Inviting parents to a range of activities throughout the school year such as assemblies, workshops, Christmas productions and sports day etc.
- Welcoming parents and carers to children's learning on a volunteer basis within Reception. Offering a range of activities, throughout the year. For example, a learning showcase.
- Providing individual support and signposting to Family Support agencies.
- Enabling 'Early Help'.

Parental voice is gained through both annual Reception and whole school questionnaires. Feedback is used to review and develop provision.

Transition

Experiences when joining our school are planned carefully to support effective transition for children and families. Our transition arrangements include:

- Open days for families prior to applying for a school place.
- Welcome meetings for parents.
- Stay and Play 'Getting to Know You' sessions
- Stay and Play induction day for children and families.
- Visits to pre-school settings from Reception staff.
- Photo books about Reception for all children
- Home Visits
- 'My Special Box' where children bring in photographs and items from home to provide a sense of security and stimulate talk.
- Transition meetings between parents, pre-school settings and SEN agencies where necessary.

Moving to Year 1

- Throughout the Reception year, each child's involvement in whole school life will have been built upon and many of the wider school staff will already be familiar people to them. They will have taken part in whole school assemblies and special events.
- During the summer term, Year One Staff will work within Reception and children will spent time in their new class.
- We teach about and explore what is the same about Year One and what will be different. Photograph books are given to all children to support this understanding.
- Families are invited to a 'Meet the New Teacher' session.
- Year One teachers build on what children's needs and interests as children move into Year One. They have a Statutory Duty to continue with the EYFS curriculum where children did not meet the Early Learning Goals. This enables secure foundations for children to develop further learning as they progress through Year One.

Safeguarding and welfare procedures

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in the school Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. Our Early Years Lead is a Designated Safeguarding Lead in school.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of the whole Reception Team to follow the principles stated in this policy.

The Headteacher, EYFS lead and specific subject leads will carry out EYFS monitoring as part of the whole school monitoring

This policy will be reviewed in Autumn 2024.

Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

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