



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Last Review: December 2018

Frequency: Annually

Signed _____ (HT)

_____ (Chair of LAAB)

Our Vision

At Alma Primary School, we aim to provide every child with the skills to become a happy, independent and curious lifelong learner. Our priority is that our provision provides a high level of engagement and active learning through a range of skill based activities.

Our Principles

At Alma Primary School, we strive to meet every child's entitlement to develop a love of learning that will enable them to have the best possible future life chances.

Key Requirements

"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 DfE 2017*

The overarching aim of the EYFS is to help young children stay safe, be healthy, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution, and achieve economic well-being by providing:

- Quality and consistency, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind;
- A secure foundation which creates learning and development opportunities that are planned around the interest and needs of the children, informed by regular assessments and reviews;
- Partnership working between practitioners, parents and carers
- Equality of opportunity ensuring that there is no discrimination and every child is included and supported

The guiding principles which shape our practice are grouped into four distinct but complimentary themes:

1. A Unique Child
2. Positive Relationships
3. Enabling Environments
4. Learning and Development

Curriculum

At Alma Primary School we recognise that every child is unique. We understand that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. We want our children to be independent and self-motivated

learners, encouraging the children to adapt their work, think critically and take risks with their learning.

At Alma Primary School our foundation stage classes all follow the curriculum as outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) document, which is available at;

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/596629/EYFS_STATUTORY_FRAMEWORK_2017.pdf

This document defines what we teach and details the specifics of our setting and school.

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are important and included in the curriculum taught. There are three prime areas, which are seen to underpin all of the basics and support the other more specific areas of the curriculum.

The Prime Areas of Learning and Development

1. **Personal, social and Emotional Development** - this area focuses on making relationships, self-confidence and self-awareness, and managing feelings and behaviour. This is critical for very young children in all aspects of their lives and gives them the best opportunity for success in all other areas of learning.
2. **Communication and Language** - This area encourages developing competence in listening and attention, and in understanding and speaking.
3. **Physical Development** - This area focuses on the child's developing physical control, moving and handling, and health and self-care.

The Specific Areas of Learning and Development

4. **Literacy** - This focuses on reading and writing. Children are taught pre-reading skills, pre-writing skills and phonics throughout the EYFS.
5. **Mathematics** - This area focuses on learning through practical activities and on using numbers and understanding shape, space and measure.
6. **Understanding of the World** - This area focuses on children's developing knowledge and understanding of their own environment, through learning about people and communities, the word and technology. It forms the foundation for the later work in Science, Design and Technology, History, RE, Geography and ICT.
7. **Expressive Arts and Design** - This area focuses on the development of the child's imagination and her or his ability to communicate and express ideas and feeling in creative ways. It incorporates exploring and using media and materials. Creativity is fundamental to successful learning.

None of these areas are delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other to support a rounded approach to child development, the development of the whole child is crucial. All of these areas are delivered through planned, purposeful play opportunities, with a balance of adult and child led activities.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

Through regular observations, we will discover children's interests and assess what children know. Also fundamental to our practice is to assess how children learn and it is our duty to report to parents their children's individual dispositions and attitudes to learning. This will be assessed using the Characteristics of Effective Learning which are:

- **Playing and Learning - engagement** - children investigate and experience things and events around them and be willing to 'have a go'
- **Active Learning - motivation** - children concentrate and keep trying if they experience difficulties, as well as enjoying what they achieve.
- **Creating and Thinking Critically - thinking** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between different experiences and develop strategies for doing things.

Planning

Through planning, teachers ensure that there is a balance of adult led and child initiated learning opportunities across the day. During child initiated activities the adult's role is to show an interest in the children's ideas, build conversation, facilitate and share ideas and model different skills. Timely interactions with the children are essential as this helps to build the children's understanding and therefore guides new learning. This then informs planning and ensures that the topics covered reflect the children's fascinations and interests at that time. By being flexible, this allows the learning opportunities to be adapted and changed to take into account unexpected occurrences allowing what is currently happening to become an integral part of learning.

Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult led and child initiated learning opportunities. Practitioners respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. As children move through the EYFS at Alma Primary School the balance of adult led and child initiated learning opportunities changes.

Direct Teaching - At specific times during the day the children will take part in teacher led activities. In our Nurseries these take the form of very brief carpet sessions relevant to the stage of development of the children and include opportunities for singing, rhyming, counting and listening to stories. In our Reception Classes these will take the form of daily phonics and daily maths/counting opportunities. Our teacher led sessions are carefully planned and tailored for the children in the class

using previous assessments of the children's knowledge, skills and ability. These sessions are continuously adapted in order to ensure that they are relevant and challenging for every child. Alma Primary School undertakes the teaching of phonics using the Read Write Inc programme and mathematics using the Maths Mastery programme.

Learning through Play - Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. Children learn best from activities and experiences that they have initiated and play with peers is important for children's development. We carefully plan to provide an enabling environment and offer purposeful play opportunities to reflect the children's interests and to inspire them further, whilst also making sure that the children also have the opportunity to embed, extend and practise the skills they have learned through direct teaching. Constant opportunities are provided for children to be able to make their own decisions and choices in order that they can become independent, confident and happy learners as soon as possible for each individual child.

Through play children explore and develop learning experiences, helping them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand rules. Children see the high expectations we have in every aspect of our day and they delight in trying to meet these. 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. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations. Giving children the opportunity to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, allows them to discover connections and come to new and better understandings of ways to do things. With adult support this enhances children's ability to think critically and ask questions. Adults support them in making connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to choose to work inside or outside during their independent learning time.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting of Progress

Assessment is an essential and important part of the Early Years for children's learning and development. Assessment takes a variety of forms in order to gain in depth knowledge of each child's level of understanding. These can be through narrative observations, photographic evidence, examples of work, parental conversations, information from other professionals, 'in the moment' or 'snap shot' notes, learning stories and play partnering and practitioner knowledge. In our Terrific Twos provision 'Tapestry' is used to store this information and parents are able to access their child's Learning Journey online via computers, mobile phones or tablets. The children are assessed in the prime areas of learning and development only. In our Nursery and Reception classes evidence is stored in the children's Learning Journey Books and later on in 'My Writing' books and the children are assessed in all 17 areas of learning.

Children's progress is tracked on assessment sheets adapted from Development Matters and the Early Years Outcomes and children are assessed as being Emerging, Developing or Secure within each age

band. The assigned levels are then added to the schools data analysis programme Scholarpack. This is in line with the assessment and data requirements of the rest of the school.

A baseline assessment is carried out for each child when they start attending Alma Primary School and regular tracking during the EYFS takes place culminating in the completion of the EYFS Profile in the final term of the year in which the child turns five. Children are consistently monitored to ensure that they are making the progress they should towards the Early Learning Goals. Progress is shared with parents/carers at regular Focus Week meetings, Story Cafés, Parent Meetings, mid-year reports and end of year reports.

We ensure that our assessments of children are reliable through regular moderation within school, across the Trust, through the Local Authority and through a moderation network.

Partnerships with Parents/Carers

Alma Primary School recognises the huge importance of establishing effective relationships with parents/carers in ensuring that children achieve their full potential. We recognise that parents and carers are their children's first and most enduring educators, and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, as well as their future role, in educating their children.

Parents/carers are always welcome at Alma Primary School. We provide a variety of opportunities for working together. Play and Stay sessions, staggered entry to school, Story Cafés, Phonics Workshops, RWI Workshops, Learning Journey Book Looks, Cultural Celebrations Days, Story Times, Focus Week Meetings and staff just being available at the beginning and end of every day.

All staff involved in our EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all of the children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At our school, all adults act as a 'Key Person' to all children in their classes. This enables the children to build up good relationships with all school staff.

Safeguarding and welfare procedures

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our Safeguarding Policy

Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by The Early Years Leader. Areas for development will be incorporated into the School Improvement Plan as necessary.