

**Early Years Policy**

**December 2022 – To be reviewed Dec 2024**

**This policy has been agreed by the Headteacher and the Chair of Governors.**

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| **Review date** | **By whom** | **Summary of changes made** | **Date implemented** | **Date ratified** |
| **Nov 19** | **CS/TD** | **Whole policy** | **Nov 2019** |  |
| **Nov 21** | CS | Introduction changed and references made to the Sept EYFS Framework  ‘Aims’ change to ‘Intent’  Early Learning Goals changed  ‘Implementation’ added as a heading  Prime and Specific areas – format changed  Information about the importance of play added  Information about the Knowledge and Skills Progression document added to the implementation section  Assessment changed to ‘IMPACT’  Reference made to the Statutory Baseline  Reference made to the Alvaston Attitudes  Deputy SENCO added  Eazmag added as an assessment tracker | **Dec 2021** |  |
| **September 2022** | LD | Page 3 – added – ‘Person in Play’.  Page 3 – removed Development Matters  C:\Users\LDOherty\AppData\Local\Temp\Temp1_FW__School_Logos_and_Signage_... (1).zip\AIN Logo SQUARE 2022.pngPage 5 – added working with other settings  Page 6 – added when learning journeys will be shared with parents  Page 6 – changed heading ‘Additional Needs’ to ‘Inclusion’.  Page 7 – added – visit nursery children in their own homes  Page 7 – added related policy – Outdoor Learning  Page 7 – added sections for ICT, Library Pod, Staffing Ratios and GDPR | **Sept 2022** |  |
| **September 23** |  | Page 3 – changed Birth to Five Matters to Development Matters | **September 23** |  |

**Alvaston Infant and Nursery School**

**Early Years Foundation Stage Policy:**

Early Years education is important for all children. The period from the age of three to the end of the reception year is the Foundation Stage. It is distinct and important in its own right and in the preparation for later schooling. Young children need an environment, which is safe, and secure where they can play, explore, experiment, develop confidence, be independent, be curious and learn.

We follow the DfE ‘Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage’ (Published March 2021, Effective September 2021) which;

* Sets the standards that all early years’ providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well.
* Ensures children are kept healthy and safe.
* Ensures that children have the knowledge and skills they need to start school.

In partnership with parents and carers, we enable children to begin the process of becoming active lifelong learners. We endeavour to ensure that children learn, develop well and are kept healthy and safe so that they can reach their full potential.

“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 early years foundation stage Published: 31 March 2021 Effective: 1 September 2021’

# INTENT

# At Alvaston Infant and Nursery School, we believe that the child’s welfare is paramount and that they develop as young learners in a safe, secure and happy environment.

# We offer a bespoke curriculum that is broad, balanced, and relevant and that is rich in wonder and memorable experiences.

# We draw upon the children’s own everyday experiences and value and build upon children’s existing ideas. We work hard to provide a stimulating indoor and outdoor environment that provides exciting opportunities, promotes challenge, exploration, and adventure, which supports their personal learning and development.

# It is our intent that all children develop physically, verbally, cognitively and emotionally in an environment, which values all cultures, communities, and people and reflects the needs and strengths of our school community.

# We aim for our children to be the best that they can be, to be confident and independent, to believe in themselves and to interact positively with others. We encourage questioning and the exploration of ideas. We understand that play is an integral part of learning and this is at the heart of our Early Years curriculum. Through the Alvaston Attitudes, we aim to instill lifelong principles to prepare the children for the future.

# We believe that the correct mix of adult directed and uninterrupted child-initiated play ensures the best outcomes for pupils. Our experienced staff will support learning through play. Therefore, a ‘Person in Play’ will is a key part of our Early Years provision. Warm and positive relationships between staff and children, consistent routines and strong relationships with parents are key.

# We recognise the crucial role that early year’s education has to play in providing firm foundations upon which the rest of a child’s education is successfully based. We prepare children to reach the Early Learning Goals at the end of the Foundation Stage and ensure that children make good progress from their starting points.

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# IMPLEMENTATION

# We believe children should be given as many opportunities and experiences to develop lifelong skills in a variety of contexts across all areas of learning. In planning and guiding children’s activities, we reflect on the different ways that children learn.

# Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning 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.

# Areas of learning.

# There are seven areas of learning, which together provide a curriculum, which supports the development of children and their skills. Our bespoke Knowledge and Skills Progression document informs our curriculum, it has been created using Development Matters and the EYFS Framework 2021. Our Curriculum also links to the needs of our local community and what our children need to thrive in the world around them.

# We believe that these seven areas must complement each other and work together to provide a cross-curricular approach to form a practical relevant curriculum for each child. The children are actively engaged in working towards the Early Learning Goals. The goals are made up of the three Prime Areas and four Specific Areas of learning, within these areas they are broken down into 17 individual aspects, which eventually lead towards the Early Learning Goals.

# Prime Areas:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Communication and Language | Personal, Social and Emotional Development | Physical Development |
| Listening, Attention and Understanding | Self Regulation | Gross Motor Skills |
| Speaking | Building Relationships | Fine Motor Skills |
|  | Managing Self |  |

# Specific Areas:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Literacy | Mathematics | Understanding the World | Expressive Arts and Design |
| Comprehension | Number | Past and Present | Creating with Materials |
| Word Reading | Numerical Patterns | People, Culture and Communities | Being Imaginative and Expressive |
| Writing |  | The Natural World |  |

# Curriculum Planning

# Four guiding principles shape the EYFS curriculum in our nursery and reception classes. These are:

# Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

# Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.

# Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.

# Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

# Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Play is essential for children’s development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play, which is guided by adults. There is an ongoing judgement to be made by practitioners about the balance between activities led by children, and activities led or guided by adults.

# Practitioners respond to each child’s emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Key Stage One.

# Staff develop professional relationships with other settings to plan, assess and moderate outcomes for children.

# We prioritise creating a ‘language rich’ environment using songs, nursery rhymes, and stories and providing time for quality interactions between adults and between peers. Our teachers and teaching assistants ensure that interactions are positive and progressive, allowing children to flourish and gather words at pace in order to become confident communicators. The children learn nursery rhymes and develop their mathematical thinking through direct teaching and exploration.

# Throughout the Early Years, there is an emphasis on learning through play, with children encouraged to talk about their experiences and activities with other children and adults. At Alvaston Infant and Nursery School, learning through play provides the children with child initiated opportunities where they have the chance to be independent learners, a ‘Person in Play’ will model, scaffold and join in with the children’s play to develop, observe and assess the children’s learning and development.

# We also provide the children with adult led activities when we are introducing and teaching new skills and knowledge.

# At Alvaston Infant and Nursery School children are encouraged to become early readers through enjoyment of books and the systematic teaching of phonics. We recognise that phonics knowledge is key to reading and writing. In Reception, teachers carry out daily phonics sessions. The children then apply their phonics skills each day in and around the environment. We practice speaking and listening throughout the day through circle times, role-play, story time and class discussions.

# Outdoor Classroom

# We feel that the development and use of the outdoors as a learning environment is important for the development of all children.

# We feel that:

# Children’s health and fitness will benefit from exercise outside and using outdoor equipment

# Children will have firsthand experience of nature

# Problem solving will relate to experiences

# Children will have first-hand experience of conservation and sustainability

# Children will develop a love of nature and take part in outdoor activities.

# IMPACT

# Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children’s progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support. Ongoing assessment (also known as formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process. It involves practitioners observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations.

# When children start at Alvaston Infant and Nursery School we carry out Baseline Assessments of each individual child within the first six weeks. From these assessments, we are able to find the children’s starting points and adjust our EYFS curriculum accordingly, so that learning is focused on what the children need. The Reception teachers also carry out the Statutory Baseline. Throughout the nursery and reception years children will be regularly assessed (in accordance with the assessment policy) to ensure that the next steps in learning are appropriately planned and that children make good progress from their starting points. The EYFS teachers continue to use formative assessment in their day-to-day teaching. In Nursery, all EYFS practitioners (teachers and teaching assistants) complete regular observations, which create individual learning journeys for each child. These are shared with parents at Stay & Play sessions throughout the year and at Parent’s Evening. We currently use Eazmag as an assessment tracker from which all data can be collated at the end of each assessment point. We upload our assessments into Eazmag three/four times a year (Baseline, Autumn, Spring and Summer).

# In the final term of the year in which a child reaches age five, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. Each child’s level of development is assessed against the Early Learning Goals and teachers indicate whether children are:

# Meeting expected levels of development (expected)

# Not yet reaching expected levels (emerging)

# The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers using the end of year school report.

# The Profile provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child’s knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Key Stage One.

# Inclusion

# At Alvaston Infant and Nursery School, we consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all of the areas of learning and development. The youngest children in nursery are expected to focus strongly on the three prime areas, which are the basis for successful learning in the other four specific areas. The three prime areas reflect the key skills and capacities all children need to develop and learn effectively, and become ready for school. It is expected that the balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

# If a child’s progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, the class teachers will discuss this with the child’s parents and/or carers and agree how to support the child. If a teacher considers a child may have a special educational need or disability which requires specialist support, they link with, and help families to access, relevant services/agencies as appropriate.

# Alvaston Infant and Nursery School follows the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice to support children with additional needs and have a designated member of staff to act as Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO). We also have a Deputy Special Educational Needs Coordinator.

# Transition

# During the summer term, prior to a child’s entry into the Nursery or Reception year, the following procedures have been put into place to ensure a successful transition

* Parents are invited to an information session to ensure they know about school procedures, allocation of classes and are given an opportunity to speak about their child.
* During the spring / summer term parents are encouraged to complete an ‘All About Me’ form. This is then used during the Autumn term to support transition and to inform planning.
* Children are invited to visit a Nursery or Reception class as well as a session after school to visit the class and their teacher.
* School staff make visits to feeder nurseries and other settings.
* Children attending Alvaston Infant and Nursery School are already very familiar with the school setting as the children regularly visit the school e.g. library, playground and dining room.
* Children requiring extra support will have additional visits regardless of their setting.
* School staff will visit new nursery children in their own homes, prior to offering a place.

**ICT**

Children in the Early Years will be taught ICT in accordance with the Statutory Framework and have the opportunity to learn in the Computing suite.

The Online Safety Policy will be adhered to at all times. This includes installing internet filters and antivirus software on all devices and ensuring children are supervised appropriately when using the internet. In the event of children accessing inappropriate content online, safeguarding procedures will be followed in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

**Reading Pod**

All children in the Early Years Foundation Stage will have the opportunity to regularly visit the Reading Pod. Children will have the opportunity to borrow books, upon completion of the home school agreement.

**Staffing**

A robust Safer Recruitment Policy is in place, which aims to ensure that members of staff employed in the EYFS are suitable. Upon employment, all EYFS staff receive induction training to ensure that they understand their roles and responsibilities, including information about emergency evacuation procedures, safeguarding, child protection and health and safety. Staff will be supported to undertake the appropriate training and professional development to ensure children receive the best quality learning experience.

The school adopts the following staffing ratios:

• For children aged three and over: - Where a staff member with qualified teacher status (QTS), early years professional status, or another suitable level 6 qualification is working directly with the children, there is one member of staff for every 13 children, and at least one other member of staff holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification.

Where a staff member with qualified teacher status (QTS), early years professional status, or another suitable level 6 qualification is not working directly with the children, there is one member of staff for every 8 children, and at least one other member of staff holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification. • For children in Reception classes: - Class sizes will be limited to 30 children per school teacher.

Only under exceptional circumstances, and where the quality of care and safety of children is maintained, will changes be made to the ratios.

**GDPR**

Information is stored in line with the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018, and with regard to the school’s Data Protection Policy.

**Related Policies**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Nursery Admissions policy, Intimate Care Policy, Keeping Children Safe in Education, SEND Policy, Safeguarding policy and the Outdoor Learning Policy

**Monitoring Arrangements**

This policy is to be reviewed Dec 2024 or sooner if required.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing body.