



Inspiring All to Excellence



Anker Valley Primary Academy

EYFS Policy

Document Control

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Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage within school extends from the age of four to five years, the end of the reception year. Entry into our primary school is at the beginning of the school year in which the children are five (although compulsory schooling does not begin until the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday). The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is important in its own right, and also in preparing children for later schooling.

Children joining our school have already learnt a great deal. Many have been learning in one of the various educational settings that exist in our community. The early-years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- 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; and
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

Aims and objectives

The curriculum of the EYFS underpins all future learning by promoting and developing:

- personal, social, and emotional well-being.
- positive attitudes and dispositions towards learning.
- social skills.
- attention skills and persistence.
- language and communication.
- reading and writing.
- problems solving, reasoning and numeracy.
- knowledge and understanding of the world.
- physical development.
- creative development.

Teaching and learning style

The features of effective teaching and learning in our school are defined in our policy on teaching and learning. They apply to teaching and learning in the EYFS just as much as they do to the teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 or 2.

The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the EYFS are:

The partnership between Reception staff and parents that helps our children to feel secure at school, and to develop a sense of well-being and achievement:

- the understanding that Reception staff have of how children develop and learn, and how this must be reflected in their teaching.
- the range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions, and extend and develop the children's play, talk or other means of communication.
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve their potential by the end of the 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 support for learning, with appropriate and accessible space, facilities, and equipment, both indoors and outdoors.
- the identification, through observations, of children's progress and future learning needs, which are regularly shared with parents.
- the good relationships between our school and the other educational settings in which the children have been learning before joining our school.
- the clear aims of our work, and the regular monitoring of our work to evaluate and improve it.
- the regular identification of training needs for all adults working within the EYFS.

Play at the Foundation Stage

Through play, our children explore and develop the learning experiences that help them make sense of the world. They practice and build up their ideas, learn how to control themselves, and begin to understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively both alongside other children and 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.

Inclusion at the Foundation Stage

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 we are planning for their learning (see school policy on inclusion).

During Reception, we set realistic and challenging expectations and targets aimed at the needs of our children, so that most achieve a Good Level of Development (GLD) by the end of the EYFS. Some children progress beyond this point. We help them do this by planning to meet the needs of both boys and girls, of children with special educational needs, of children who are more able, of children with disabilities, of children from all social and cultural backgrounds, of children from different ethnic groups, and of those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build on and extend the children's knowledge, experience, and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence.
- using a variety of teaching strategies that are based on children's learning needs.
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children, and to help them to learn effectively.
- offering a safe and supportive learning environment, in which the contribution of all children is valued.
- employing resources that reflect diversity, and that avoid 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 providing support (such as speech therapy), as necessary.

The EYFS Curriculum

The curriculum is planned through a series of themes that reflect and respond to the children's interests, offering experiences in all areas of the curriculum and which carry equal importance to provide a broad and balanced curriculum with opportunities for play and child-initiated activities.

The long-term plan follows the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. This is an overarching framework that informs all other stages of planning. It shows the range of experiences and learning opportunities that are available while children are in the early years.

Learning and Development is categorised into three prime areas of learning:

Communication and Language:

- Listening
- Attention and Understanding
- Speaking

Physical Development:

- Gross Motor Skills
- Fine Motor Skills

Personal, social, and emotional development:

- Self-Regulation
- Managing Self
- Building Relationships

Additionally, there are four specific areas of learning:

Literacy:

- Comprehension
- Word Reading
- Writing

Mathematics:

- Number
- Numerical Patterns

Understanding the world:

- Past and Present
- People, Culture and Communities
- The Natural World

Expressive arts and design:

- Creating with Materials
- Being Imaginative and Expressive

Medium term planning takes the form of a theme based upon the children's interests. It is evaluated weekly to respond to other emerging interests that the children may have. Short term plans select activities and learning objectives from medium term theme plan as deemed appropriate to meet the needs and interests of the children. Plans are extended and differentiated accordingly. Planning is always led by the objectives. Each child's next steps will be planned for.

Planning should provide a clear balance between challenging the most-able children in some cases to exceed Early Learning Goals whilst recognising that an attempt to implement the more formal work before a child is ready could damage a child's disposition to learn.

By the end of the Reception year, more formal Mathematics, Reading and Writing sessions will be in place in preparation for children entering Year 1.

Achievement of the prime and specific areas of learning is underpinned by the Characteristics of Effective Learning:

- Playing and exploring - engagement
- Active learning - motivation
- Creating and thinking critically - thinking

Assessment

Assessment of children's progress is continuous. Baseline assessment is started 2-3 weeks after admission. This is moderated with transfer data received from each child's pre-school placement. Further progress is recorded in the Foundation Stage Profile (a statutory requirement) at the end of each term.

Teaching and learning in early years are based on this assessment. The Learning Journey is an open record of the child's learning and development. The EYFS states that "Parents must be given free access to developmental records about their child (for example, the EYFS Profile)." (EYFS Statutory Framework p23).

On entering Reception, e-Learning Journeys will be set up for each child on Tapestry. This Early Years website enables parents to view their child's achievements and to contribute to their learning journey by posting photographs, videos and comments. The early year's practitioner may then decide to use these as supplementary evidence to support a child's progress and attainment. In order that all parents can access information on their child's progress, records of the Foundation Stage Profile will be discussed at each Parent's Evening.

Each child will have a Learning Journey that:

- is accessible online via personalised, secure login for parents.
- has examples of children's work: photographs, formal observations etc.
- Voices: comments from the child, parents, and other significant adults such as carers, grandparents etc.
- Reflections: key person's voice (comments), reference to Development Matters, next steps in learning.

Continuous assessment is an essential part of monitoring children's progress and is used as an aid for future planning. Parents and children are involved in discussions about general progress. An end of year report stating children's attainment is given to all parents at the end of their first year in school.

The role of parents

We believe that all parents have an important role to play in the education of their child. We therefore 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.
- visits by the teacher to as many children as possible in their Nursery/playgroup/Pre-school setting prior to their starting school.
- opportunities given to the children to spend time in their new classroom before starting school in September.
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the summer term before their child starts school in September.
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our reception class.
- encouraging parents to talk to the teacher/Nursery Nurse if there are any concerns.
- encouraging parents to stay if there are problems with the child's admission.
- offering a range of activities, throughout the year, that encourage collaboration between child, school, and parents.
- providing various activities that involve parents, i.e., regular communication with home through the child's school diary, inviting parents to numerous occasions across the school year such as parent/teacher consultation evenings (termly), performances including Parent Assemblies, Open Days, and Family lunches.
- Home school Reading Diaries issued in which parents are encouraged to make regular contributions.

There is a formal meeting for parents at the end of the Reception year during which the child's progress against the EYFS Profile is discussed in private with the teacher.

The Learning Environment

The classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The room is set up in learning areas where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

The Foundation Stage environment should:

- enable children to feel safe, secure, and confident.
- be stimulating and exciting to our children.
- promote independence.
- be welcoming to children and parents.
- be a place where children's learning is valued and celebrated through displays.
- have interactive displays which support learning.
- be a place where children can learn independently through well planned continuous provision alongside adult lead or supported learning opportunities, in small groups or as a whole class in what may be quiet, noisy, and messy but structured activities.
- have free-flow access to an outdoor area.

The learning areas include:

- A role play area which supports the children's chosen 'theme.' It should reflect a variety of cultures and promote equality of race and gender. There should also be opportunities for reading, writing and enumerate in the context of 'play.'

- A reading area which should be a comfortable and welcoming area. It may include tapes, puppets and a range of texts which reflect today's society.
- A writing or mark making area which has a variety of mark making tools and equipment as well as different surfaces to write on such as different size, shape and type of paper, white boards, chalk boards etc.
- An ICT area where children can access computers, listening stations, Robots, and an Interactive Whiteboard.
- A creative area where children can access a variety of planned activities to express themselves using their chosen materials.
- A construction area with clearly labelled large and small equipment so that the children can access it independently.
- A sand and water area which contains various utensils depending on the learning objectives.
- Tabletop activity areas.
- A malleable materials area. This area may have playdough, plasticine, clay, etc.
- Physical play area/s (indoors and outdoors).
- Outdoor learning spaces.
- There will also be opportunities to explore Maths and Writing across all areas of the setting.

Resources

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. There is a mix between adult-lead and child-initiated activities. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning.

Linked Policy Documents

- Behaviour Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- SEND Policy
- Mobile Phone and Camera Use Policy