



## **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

*“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support that enables them to fulfill 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 Early Years Foundation Stage 2021)*

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. In our school, all pupils join us when they are three up and remain in the Foundation Stage until they are five, when they move up to Year 1.

### **Our Aims**

To develop the child personally, socially and emotionally by:

- Offering a safe and secure environment
- Making each child feel valued
- Helping the child form stable relationships
- Encouraging a sense of responsibility and consideration for others
- Developing a positive self-image increasing confidence, independence and control
- Developing an awareness that there are similarities and differences among all groups of people but that all groups are equally important
- Providing resources and materials that reflect the many different types of backgrounds, challenging multicultural and gender issues
- Developing a curriculum that includes discussion and activities on different religions, cultures and languages

To develop the child intellectually by:

- Providing a stimulating environment in which each child can learn through first-hand experience
- Promoting the use of language
- Stimulating the child’s curiosity
- Giving opportunities for children to make their own decisions
- Encouraging active learning

To develop the child physically, improving skills of co-ordination, control, manipulation and movement by:

- Providing opportunities for children to use their bodies effectively by providing space for learning experiences both indoor and outdoor
- Providing opportunities for children to develop fine motor skills through activities such as modelling, painting and construction

- Providing opportunities for children to develop an awareness of their physical ability

To develop the child creatively by:

- Providing a stimulating environment in which imagination, originality and expressiveness are valued
- Providing opportunities to experiment with a variety of materials
- Providing opportunities for children to use and explore their senses
- Encouraging children to be creative and express themselves through a variety of media; music, dance, role-play, art activities

To establish a smooth transition from home to school by:

- Starting from the child, taking into account previous pre-school and home experience
- Adopting an admissions procedure that eases the transition from home or pre-school to school, e.g. play and information session
- Involving parents with their children's learning by using questionnaires, regular communication and parental involvement

At Avon House we use the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework and the Learning and Development document to support our planning. The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A Unique Child - every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Positive Relationships - children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- Enabling Environments - 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 carers.
- Learning and Development - children develop and learn in different ways. The framework covers the education and care of all children in Early Years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

### **Learning and Development**

At Avon House School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development and understand that they are inter-connected.

Each child comes to our setting from a different starting point and planning the curriculum must take account of this. We aim to plan a differentiated, broad and balanced range of activities that are thoughtfully linked to the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child, to provide an enjoyable learning experience for each child in all areas of learning and development.



### **Activities may be:**

Child initiated - where the child makes the choices from within the learning environment to meet his/her own goals for learning. Skilful adult interaction supports, challenges and extends the activities to allow the child to make progress.

Adult initiated - experiences where the practitioner provides the resources to stimulate and consolidate learning.

Adult directed - experiences which are planned and supported by an adult and which aim to meet specific learning objectives.

## **The Curriculum**

The EYFS curriculum is divided into seven areas of learning:

### **The three Prime Areas**

The three prime areas begin to develop quickly in response to relationships and experiences and are crucial in children developing an enthusiasm for learning.

#### **1. Communication and Language**

Involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment, to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves, and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

#### **2. Physical Development**

Involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive, and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

#### **3. Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

Involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others, to form positive relationships and develop respect for others, to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings, to understand appropriate behaviour in groups, and to have confidence in their own abilities.

### **The four Specific Areas**

These four specific areas include essential skills and knowledge through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

#### **4. Literacy**

Involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.

## 5. Mathematics

Involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.

## 6. Understanding the World

Involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

## 7. Expressive Arts and Design

Involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

It is expected that in the early EYFS, children will have a greater focus on the Prime Areas which underpin, run through and support all other areas of learning, with the curriculum and learning experiences being more balanced in the later EYFS.

## 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 staff and parents, so that our pupils feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- The understanding that staff 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 and next steps that help pupils work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS;
- The provision for pupils to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- The encouragement for pupils to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- 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 pupils through observations, which are recorded in the pupil's Celebration Book.



Please see Appendix I for further information on the Teaching and Learning strategy for Numeracy and Literacy in the EYFS.

## **The Learning Environment**

The EYFS learning environment is organised to allow pupils to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the pupils can be active, be quiet and rest. The environment is set up to enable pupils to find and locate equipment and resources independently. Both Foundation year groups have an outdoor area and access the local environment on a weekly basis. This has a positive effect on the pupils' development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways than when indoors. It offers the pupils the opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active. We plan activities and resources for the pupils to access outdoors that help the pupils to develop in all seven areas of learning.

## **Characteristics of Effective Learning**

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. The three characteristics of effective teaching and learning help us to better understand and plan for how children learn. These three characteristics are:

### **Active Learning**

"Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods."

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**

"When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions."

Children should be given the 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. Pupils can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the setting to extend their learning.

All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and pupil initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELGs) that define the expectations for most pupils to reach by the end of the EYFS.

## **Inclusion**

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against pupils because of 'differences'. All pupils at Avon House School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All pupils and their families are valued within our school. In our Foundation Stage we believe that all our pupils matter. We give our pupils every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our pupils' range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

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

We meet the needs of all our pupils through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend pupils' knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
  - Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on pupils' learning needs;
  - Adopting a multisensory approach to teaching enabling us to accommodate the pupils' different learning styles;
  - Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support pupils and to help them to learn effectively;
  - Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all pupils is valued;
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- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
  - Planning challenging activities for pupils whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
  - Monitoring pupils' progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

## **Observation, Assessment and Planning**

The planning within the EYFS follows the schools' Long Term Plan alongside Medium and Short Term (weekly planning), which is based around the individual pupils' needs and interests and linked to the chosen theme for that term. These plans are used and implemented by the class teacher, supported by teaching assistants who have a good understanding of the pupils in their care.



We make regular assessments of pupils' learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs through regular identification of next steps. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation and teacher knowledge, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. These observations are recorded in the pupil's Celebration Book. Parents and/or carers are invited to comment on these and have regular opportunities to discuss their child's progress through formal and informal parent meetings throughout the year.

Progress through the EYFS is constantly monitored and at the end of Foundation Two children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals (ELG) to be either 'Emerging' (working towards the ELG), 'Expected' (met the ELG). The results are communicated to parents through a Summer Report and the Year 1 teacher is also given a copy to support the transition to Key Stage One. (See Transition Policy).

### **Key Person**

(See Settling In and Key Person Policy)

Each pupil in Foundation 1 and 2 is assigned a key person.

### **Supervision of Staff**

(See Supervision of Staff Policy)

Supervision takes the form of an individual meeting with each staff member in order to support their role as key persons working with children and their families. Early Years Coordinator oversees Foundation 1 and Foundation 2 staff and the Head of Pre-Prep supports Years 1 and 2 staff.

### **Special Educational Needs or Disabilities**

(See SEN policy)

Every child's needs are different, but when a child is having difficulty progressing in any aspect of their development in the classroom this is recognised. The class teacher will discuss any concerns with parents and Inclusion Lead. We follow the school policy for special educational needs and disabilities.

### **English as an Additional Language**

(See EAL Policy)

For children whose home language is not English, staff take reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children to use their home language, as well as being supported in opportunities to learn and reach a good standard in English during the EYFS.

### **Keeping Safe**

It is important to us that all pupils in the setting are 'safe'. We aim to educate pupils on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide pupils with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Pupils 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 well-being of all pupils.



Risk assessments are completed for relevant activities (See Health and Safety Policy) and the correct ratios adhered to of a minimum of one adult to five children. A daily risk assessment takes place in each of the Early Years classrooms and for the outdoor areas.

## **Health**

Children are provided with meals, snacks (in Foundation 1) and drinks, which are healthy, balanced and nutritious and are encouraged to make healthy choices. The school employs a contract catering company, Citrea.

Before a child is admitted into the EYFS, the school obtains information about any special dietary requirements, preferences and food allergies that the child has, and any special health requirements. These are passed to the key workers, teachers and Catering Manager. Fresh drinking water is available and accessible at all times from the inside and outside drinking fountains and water machines.

Lunches are prepared in the school kitchens, which are adequately equipped to provide healthy meals, snacks and drinks for children. Lunch is served in the school hall. The school ensures that those responsible for preparing and handling food are competent to do so. All EYFS staff involved in preparing and handling food receive training in food hygiene.

The children are provided with a daily fruit snack in Foundation One and in Foundation Two they bring a fruit snack into school. They are encouraged to participate in regular exercise through physical activities outside including daily exercise, weekly walking and being encouraged to walk to school.

## **Behaviour Management and Reward System**

At the beginning of each term, rules are discussed at the pupils' level of understanding to promote a good standard of behaviour and displayed as a class charter. The pupils are encouraged to think about their own behaviour and the subsequent effects. Verbal praise and encouragement are seen as instrumental in maintaining good behaviour. In both the Foundation Stage classes, the children are rewarded with stamps, stickers and they have smiley charts where they work towards filling their chart to gain a certificate. They also have other rewards including 'Star of the Week' and the weekly awards in the whole school assembly.

Every class has a 'Going for Gold' chart. The class will have a chart made up of gold, silver, green, yellow and red on their wall. Each pupil will start the day on the green panel. If the





pupil's behaviour is positive the pupil's icon will be moved up to silver and then gold where they will receive a correspondingly coloured sticker at the end of the day. However, if the pupil's behaviour is not in line with the class charter they will be given a verbal warning. If the behaviour continues they will be moved to yellow and if it continues further they will be moved to red. Pupils on red will have thinking time.

Where there is misbehaviour pupils are encouraged to think about their behaviour so that they understand why it was unacceptable, and given guidance about making better choices in the future. Pupils are encouraged to say sorry and put things right. Removing a child from an activity or situation gives them the opportunity to reflect and talking to them on an individual basis is helpful. At the end of each day the pupils' names will be reset on green.

## **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."

Our EYFS Designated Safeguarding Officer is the Head of Pre-Prep, Rebecca Telling, as in line with our school Child Protection Policy.

At Avon House School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2021. 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 pupils are ill.
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the pupils' stage of development and individual needs.
- Ensure all adults who look after the pupils or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose.
- Ensure that every pupil 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 pupils.

## **Positive Relationships**

At Avon House School we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional and positive relationships with the pupils and their families.

Adults should display positive attitudes to all of the children and to each other to promote high self-esteem and make children feel valued.

The role of the adults in the Foundation Stage team is to:

- Plan the curriculum (class teachers)
- Organise the learning environment



- Interact with the children to extend their learning opportunities
  - Monitor and assess children's learning
  - Record observations and assessments
  - Identify next steps
  - Communicate with all involved
  - Build relationships with parents and carers and promote strong home/school links
- Meetings with the Foundation Stage team are held on a regular basis to establish agreed frameworks and common approaches, as well as sharing information about the children in the Foundation Stage and sharing good practice. Adults in the EYFS work together as a team.

### **Parents as Partners**

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we highly value the contribution that parents make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- Arranging a new pupil session to welcome parents and explain procedures, routines and provide information about the EYFS
  - Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school and asking the parents to fill in a questionnaire
  - Offering parents opportunities to talk about their child's progress
  - Encouraging parents to talk to their child's teachers about any concerns they may have
  - Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between pupil, school and parents
  - Holding two formal parent meetings per year (autumn and spring terms) at which parents have the opportunity to discuss their child's progress and development
  - Holding informal meetings in the form of 'Open door week' in the summer term and termly EYFS parent information sessions
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- Weekly communication through the Weekly Flight
  - The Foundation Tree which allows us to gain information and to celebrate the children's home achievements
  - Autumn and summer term reports to share the child's achievements and next steps, along with a feedback request
  - Involvement in home reading and communication of targets through the reading diaries



Reviewed September 2018 PT  
Reviewed July 2019 RT  
Reviewed August 2020 PT  
Reviewed August 2021 PT/RT  
Reviewed August 2022 PT/RT  
Reviewed August 2023 PT  
Reviewed August 2024 PT

Appendix I

Early Years Teaching and Learning Strategy for Numeracy and Literacy

Foundation 1	Foundation 2
<p><b>Mid-Autumn Term to Spring Term:</b></p> <p>For Numeracy and Literacy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5-10 minutes of carpet time, followed by some adult directed focus group activities and continuous provision of child led Numeracy/Literacy activities</li> <li>• x 1 focused activity a week (higher ability – x 2 focused activities)</li> </ul> <p><b>Summer Term:</b></p> <p>For Numeracy and Literacy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 15 minutes of carpet time, followed by some adult directed focus group activities and continuous provision of child led Numeracy/Literacy activities</li> <li>• x 2-3 focused activities a week depending on ability</li> </ul>	<p>• <b>Autumn Term:</b></p> <p>For Numeracy and Literacy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 15 minutes of carpet time, followed by adult directed focus group activities and child led/directed Numeracy/Literacy activities</li> <li>• x 1-2 focused activities a week depending on ability</li> </ul> <p>• <b>Spring Term:</b></p> <p>For Numeracy and Literacy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 15 minutes of carpet time, followed by adult directed focus group activities (formal and informal) and child led/directed Numeracy/Literacy activities</li> <li>• x 2-3 focused activities a week, Monday to Thursday (Friday carousel)</li> </ul> <p><b>Summer Term:</b></p> <p>• For Numeracy and Literacy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 15-20 minutes of carpet time, followed by whole class differentiated activities and some child led extension Numeracy/Literacy activities</li> <li>• x 3-4 focused activities a week, Monday to Thursday (Friday carousel - Literacy focus on handwriting)</li> </ul>