

Allithwaite C of E Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the yearly 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. God parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities as they grow up.” EYFS introduction

The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. In our school, children can start in our Nursery from the term after they turn three. They can choose which hours they would like to attend in Nursery, and we offer the fifteen free statutory hours and then have extra paid hours. Children join the Reception class at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. Parents can choose whether their child attends full time from the start or has a staggered entry. At Allithwaite the Nursery and Reception children work together in one unit.

The EYFS is based upon four guiding principles:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

A Unique Child

At Allithwaite School 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, at varying rates. Children’s attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration/ sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of ‘differences’. All children at Allithwaite School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

In our school 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 planning for their learning.

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

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children’s knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children’s learning needs;
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from 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 taking action to provide support as necessary.

It is important to us that all children in the school are ‘safe’. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children 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 children. (See Safeguarding Policy)

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.” EYFS 3.1

At Allithwaite School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2012. 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 children are ill.
- manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children’s stage of development and individual needs.
- ensure all adults who look after the children 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 child 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 children.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

It is important to note that members of staff do not use their mobile phones or personal handset devices in the classroom and are prohibited from taking photographs with their personal handsets. Members of staff do, however, use school cameras and tablets to take photographs as evidence to support the regular observation assessment cycle in the EYFS. These photographs are used in children’s learning journeys, in class displays and on the school website. All parents are asked to state if they give permission for their child’s image to be used on the school website through the paperwork in their initial starter packs.

All children are provided with a healthy snack each day as well as being given the choice of milk. They have access to water at all times.

Intimate Care - “Intimate” care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. However, depending on a child’s age and stage of development, they may need some support, for example dressing, wiping their bottom after using the toilet and changing underwear following an accident. In most cases, intimate care is to do with personal hygiene. Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child. No intimate care is to be given without the express written permission of the parent or guardian of that child and all parents and guardians will be asked to provide that permission when their child joins Nursery or Reception at Allithwaite School.

Positive Relationships

At Allithwaite School we recognise that children learn to be confident and independent learners from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

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

- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the summer term before their child starts school in the autumn term. The parents receive an induction pack with permission and medical forms and information about the school.
- providing an individual induction into Nursery for each child. This can include home visits, settling in sessions with parents etc, it will vary from child to child depending upon their individual needs.
- allowing the children to have the opportunity to spend time in the reception class with their parents and new teacher before starting school during stay and play sessions in the summer term. The children are also invited to stay and have a school lunch with their parent as part of the induction process.

- offering an open door policy every morning so that parents have regular opportunities to talk to the class teacher about their child.
- allowing free access to the children's Learning Journeys, these go home at regular intervals for parents to look at with their child.
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns.
- providing formal meetings for parents in the autumn and spring term, at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher.
- offering a reading evening at the start of the autumn term, where the class teacher outlines the phonics and reading schemes. Parents are given a home school reading diary, where progress at home and school can be recorded.
- providing parents a detailed report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of the school year.
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: Open days, Class assemblies, Sports Day etc.
- encouraging parents to contribute to their child's Learning Journey by filling in Wow slips and just to let you know slips.

Staff

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At our school the EYFS leader Sarah Pearse and EYFS teacher Lucy Stanway act as the 'Key Person' to all children in EYFS, supported by several teaching assistants.

We always have two members of staff working in the Early Years unit to ensure we are meeting the correct early years' ratios. We always have a member of staff with a paediatric first aid certificate on the premises.

Transition from Nursery to Reception

When a child comes to Allithwaite from a different Nursery, the EYFS teacher meets with staff at the local nurseries to discuss the children, and visits the Nursery to meet the children in their setting. Children that are in Allithwaite Nursery are already working alongside the Reception children in our Early Years Unit and so the transition is when they start Nursery. We offer individualised transition for each child, they are welcome to come for settling in visits on their own or with parents, and we will offer a home visit too.

Transition from Reception to Year 1

The Reception and Year 1 team work together to make the transition from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 as smooth as possible.

- Children are encouraged to develop independence when dressing and undressing and when organising their personal belongings throughout the Reception year.
- Children in the Early Years Unit work alongside the Year 1 and 2 children in different school activities throughout the year eg forest activities, Christmas show etc.
- Reception teachers plan for more structured activities to be undertaken during the summer terms, encouraging less dependence on adult support.
- Individual EYFS Profile scores are discussed and passed on to Year 1 teachers.
- Reception and Year 1 teachers meet to discuss individual needs of children.
- Reception children visit their Year 1 teacher for sessions in the Summer term.
- There is an overlap in approach and routines, e.g. Fruit time, behaviour systems, etc.

Enabling Environments

At Allithwaite School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

The planning within the EYFS is based on the children's interests as advised in the EYFS. The class teacher takes into account the needs and interests of the children on a weekly basis and produces detailed weekly planning. We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. These observations are

recorded in children's individual Learning Journeys. They also contain information provided by parents from home.

At Allithwaite School, we use the development matters statements in the EYFS to assess whether children are working at age appropriate levels. At the end of Reception we use the EYFS Profile to assess each child's level of development. This is reported to parents at the end of the summer term. Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress in the 3 prime areas and the 4 specific areas of learning.

From September 2015 we are using the Early Excellence baseline when children enter Reception. This is completed in the first six weeks of the Autumn term and the results are submitted nationally to the Department of Education.

The Learning Environment

The EYFS classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. The classroom is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and located equipment and resources independently. The EYFS class has access to an outdoor area. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all 7 areas of learning.

Learning and Development

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

Teaching and Learning Style

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in the EYFS just as much as they do to the teaching in Key Stage 2. Features that relate to the EYFS are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that teachers 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 that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout 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 indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents;
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school;

Play

"Play is essential to 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." EYFS 1.9

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. 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.

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 satisfactions as they take ownership of their learning.

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 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. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of 3 prime areas of learning and 4 specific areas of learning.

The prime areas of learning and development are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

1. Personal, Social and Emotional Development
2. Communication and Language
3. Physical Development

The four specific areas support and strengthen the prime areas.

4. Mathematics
5. Understanding of the World
6. Expressive arts and design
7. Literacy

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

Characteristics of Effective Learning

There are three characteristics of effective learning, and these allow us to observe how each child is learning.

1. Playing and exploring – engagement
2. Active learning – motivation
3. Creating and thinking critically - thinking

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teacher to follow the principles stated in this policy.

There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. This governor will discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners regularly and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion. The Head teacher and subject coordinator will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

All quotations included in this document are taken from the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage – September 2012