

ASHCROFT INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL

Providing the best start in life for all children



Early Years Policy

Headteacher: _____

Chair of Governors: _____

Person Responsible for Policy and Review: Headteacher

Policy Type: Statutory

DOCUMENT AND VERSION CONTROL

Version	Author	Implementation Date	Revision Detail
2.0	Louise Meakin Jayne Fellows	September 2025	Updated for new school year

Ratified by Governors: September

Review Date: September

Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (2025) within school ranges from birth to five years and incorporates Nursery and Reception. Entry into our Nursery is the term after the child turns three, or the following September (this is dependent on spaces available and parental choice). Entry into our Reception classes is at the beginning of the school year in which the child is 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:

- it builds on what our children already know and can do;
- it ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged;
- it offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children, and provides opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
- it provides a rich and stimulating environment.

1. Purpose and Aims

The purpose of Ashcroft Infant and Nursery School's Early Years Foundation Stage policy is to ensure we:

- **Are committed** – to developing the whole child as an individual.
- **Build resilience** – equipping children with the confidence, persistence and resilience to persevere in challenges.
- **Establish a safe environment** – in which children can learn and develop within an ethos of openness, being taught to treat each other with respect and tolerance to enable all children to feel safe, to have a voice and be listened to.
- **Are offering** children a balanced experience covering each aspect of the Early years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum equally.

2. Objectives and approach

The EYFS team seeks to nurture:

- **quality and consistency** throughout nursery and Reception, ensuring every child makes good progress at an individual pace;
- **a secure foundation** through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each individual child and are assessed and reviewed regularly;
- **partnership working** between practitioners and with parents and/or carers;
- **equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

2.1 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.

3 Teaching and learning style

Our approach to teaching and learning in our early years is based upon the fundamentals of learning for young children. We acknowledge that no two children are the same and that our provision must provide all EYFS pupils with the opportunities that they need to further their learning on an individual basis. This is achieved by ensuring that we:

- build an effective partnership between Nursery and Reception staff and parents that helps our children to feel secure at school, and to develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- value the understanding that Nursery and Reception staff have of how children develop and learn, and how this must be reflected in their teaching;
- offer a 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;
- carefully plan opportunities that helps children achieve their potential by the end of the EYFS;
- ensure there is 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.

3.3 Staff at Ashcroft will:

- protect and nurture the wellbeing, health and confidence of each child
- motivate children to learn
- encourage a sense of belonging and form good relationships with children and parents
- value and promote play as providing meaningful learning and ensure the opportunities are fair and equal, irrespective of gender, ethnicity, age or background
- recognise that children learn in different ways and at different rates and that all areas of learning are equally important and inter-connected.

4 Play at the Foundation Stage

4.1 Through play, our children explore and develop the learning experiences that help them make sense of the world. They practise and build upon their ideas, learn how to manage and express their feelings and behaviours safely, begin to follow agreed rules and work as part of a team. They have opportunities to think creatively both alongside other children and independently. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

5 Inclusion at the Foundation Stage

5.1 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 supporting their learning.

5.2 During Nursery and 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.

5.3 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.

6 The EYFS curriculum

6.1 Our curriculum reflects the areas of learning identified in the EYFS document/ Development Matters and Birth to Five. Our children's learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skill across a variety of learning areas.

6.2 The EYFS guidance (Development Matters and Birth to Five) is the curriculum that continues from birth to 60+months (5 years). It encompasses the objectives stated in the new Primary Frameworks for both Literacy and Numeracy. Teachers address these requirements in a flexible way, viewing everyday opportunities as teachable moments. Throughout the year more varied experiences, focused around Literacy and Mathematics, including phonics, reading and maths mastery are introduced. This ensures a smooth transition from the end of the EYFS into Key Stage 1.

6.3 The EYFS provides the basis for planning throughout the Foundation Stage. Our planning takes an in the moment approach which is personalised to each child. The environment is one of the main components in a child's learning experience and we enhance this daily with open ended resources to encourage imaginative and creative thinking. Opportunities to experience events in the wider community and world are incorporated in these enhancements.

EYFS 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**. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

EYFS Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning:

All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

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

These three areas, the **prime areas**, are:

1. **Communication and language** development 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; and **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, make healthy choices in relation to food and develop an understanding of how to keep themselves healthy.
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 three prime areas are strengthened and supported through four specific areas.

These 4 specific areas are:

4. **Literacy** development 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.

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others, they are all dependent on each other. All areas are delivered through an enhanced environment with adults supporting learning through child-initiated activities.

Resources

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors using materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. Adults are an enhancement of the environment and support children's learning using their interests as a starting point. We encourage the children to select their own resources to achieve their personal goals, as we believe that this encourages independent learning and builds children's resilience to challenge.

7 Assessment

7.1 The EYFS Profile is the nationally employed assessment tool that enables teachers to record their observations at the end of Reception, and to summarise their pupils' progress towards the EYFS. We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future learning opportunities reflect identified needs. Assessment within Reception takes into account a range of evidence with the main focus taking the form of observations/ conversations by the Reception staff.

7.2 During the first term in the Reception class, the Reception staff assesses the ability of each child, using the statutory DfE Baseline Assessment and the general observations made around the Development Matters Ages and Stages document. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, enabling adjustments to the teaching programme for groups and individual children. We share the information contained in the EYFS Profile at our parental consultation meetings and on an ongoing basis when children are a focus child.

7.3 At the end of the final term in Reception the children are assessed using the early Final Assessment and the EYFS GLD to ensure that they attain a GLD by the end of Reception. We send a summary of the profile assessments to the LA for analysis. The child's next teacher uses this information to make plans for the year ahead. We share this information too at parental consultation meetings.

7.4 The Reception staff share evidence of learning for all children via the children's profiles on Class Dojo. This evidence and teacher knowledge is used to complete the EYFS Profile at the end of the academic year.

7.5 Parents receive an annual report that highlights their child's progress in each area of learning, generated by the EYFS Profile with added teacher comments. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs and gives details of the child's general progress. We complete these in June and send them to parents in early July each year.

8 The role of parents

8.1 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 through our Dojo communications, focus child sheets in our and their child's busy book;
- encouraging parents to talk to the teacher/TA 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.