

Early Years Policy



Acresfield Primary School

Last updated: October 2016

Date of Governing Body approval: November 24th 2016

Committee Responsible for Review: Teaching and Learning

Signed: [Chair of Governors]

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Signed: [Headteacher]

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'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances.'
EYFS, 2008

1. Our Purpose

The early years at Acresfield; Where every child's talents, abilities and personalities are nurtured and celebrated in an exciting and challenging learning environment.

This is achieved through:

- Listening to our children
- Creating a close partnership with our families
- Providing stimulating learning opportunities
- Encouraging children to explore, think about and question the world around them

At Acresfield Primary we recognise that the skills and concepts formed in the early years help children make sense of, and apply, their knowledge and understanding. These are the foundations upon which the quality of later learning depends. Children are made to feel safe and secure in a happy and stimulating environment. Each child is encouraged to reach their full potential through learning and development that is planned around the individual needs and interests of the child, and informed by the use of ongoing observational assessment.

2. Aims

By then end of the early years, we want to have achieved the following:

- Developed the children's confidence and self-esteem
- Developed the children's positive attitude to learning and secured the foundations for future learning
- Ensured the children have made good progress in all areas of learning
- Created a framework for the partnership between parents and professionals
- Ensured there is equality of opportunities for everyone

3. Teaching and Learning

2.1 Planning the Curriculum

Our curriculum is based on the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework 2012 (EYFS). The EYFS principles which guide our work are grouped into four distinct but complementary themes:

- A Unique Child

- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

The four principles enable teaching and learning to reflect the children's rich and personalised experiences. The curriculum is planned based upon continual assessments of the children's differing needs and experiences. Short term plans are devised by the class teacher using the EYFS framework. Areas of focus are determined by the children's current interests and needs. The short term planning is recorded using daily plans and continuous provision planners. These key documents identify the resources to be used, the class organisation and the differentiated tasks and activities through which the objectives and skills will be taught. Planning encompasses a range of child-initiated, adult-initiated and adult-led tasks both indoors and outdoors. Ongoing observational assessments are used to inform planning for each child's continuing development through play-based activities.

The EYFS is split into 2 areas of Learning and Development. These include the Prime Areas of learning and the Specific Areas of learning.

The Prime Areas of learning include:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development
- Communication and Language

The Specific Areas of learning include:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

These areas of learning are subdivided into 17 aspects of learning.

The Prime areas are subdivided into:

PSE - Making Relationships; Self-confidence and self-awareness; and Managing feelings and behaviour

Physical Development - Moving and handling; Health and self-care

Communication and Language – Understanding; Listening and attention; and Speaking

The Specific areas are subdivided into:

Literacy – Reading; Writing

Mathematics – Numbers; Shape, Space and Measures

Understanding the World – People and Communities; The World; Technology

Expressive Arts and Design – Exploring and using media and materials; and Being Imaginative

Prime areas are fundamental, work together, and move through to support development in all other areas. The specific areas include essential skills and knowledge. They grow out of the prime areas, and provide important contexts for learning.

The ways in which the children engage with other people and their environment – playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically – underpin learning and development across all areas and support the children to become effective and motivated learners. Characteristics of Effective Learning move through all areas of learning and are:

- playing and exploring

- active learning
- creating and thinking critically

The Prime and Specific areas, together with the Characteristics of Effective Learning are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

2.2 Assessment and Recording

On entry into Reception class, the EYFS staff assess each child's skills and knowledge, which is referred to as their baseline assessment.

During the year, the children are continually assessed through planned and spontaneous observations, photographs, videos and information drawn from parental discussions. These are recorded using a '2Simple' assessment tool on iPads. The assessment tool is used to create an electronic 'Learning Journey' for each child. Each week the information collected via the '2Simple' assessment tool is used by the class teachers to assess children's attainment against the EYFS Development Matters statements. This information is recorded formally each term. The class teachers track each pupils' progress within the 30-50 months and 40-60 months age bands and highlights their termly progress. All of these assessments are used for passing on information to the next class teacher.

At the end of the summer term the class teachers assess whether the children have reached an emerging, expected or exceeding level of attainment against the early learning goals. Children are also assessed against the characteristics of effective learning.

2.3 Special Educational Needs and Inclusion

Children with Special Educational Needs have equal access to the EYFS. All children matter and are given every opportunity to achieve their best. We achieve this by planning a curriculum that will meet the needs of children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, and different ethnic groups.

We meet the needs of all children by:

- providing resources that reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping
- using a range of teaching strategies based on their individual needs
- ensuring access to every activity is safe
- using Teaching Assistants to provide 1:1 or small group support to targeted individuals

2.4 Health and Safety

Class teachers ensure that all materials are appropriate for the age group. Risk assessments are in place for the indoor and outdoor learning environments.

2.5 Resources

All resources for the teaching of the EYFS are held by class teachers in their class stock cupboards outdoor shed and library area. These include a wide variety of resources such as puppets, books and natural resources.

Resources used to support and promote the learning of pupils with special educational needs are managed by our inclusion manager with some stored centrally and some distributed into the classroom.

2.6 Transition

Starting Reception

Children who will be joining the reception class in September, have opportunities to meet their new class teacher and become familiar with the classroom and outdoor area. This takes place over a number of transition visits in the summer term. The reception teacher invites all the parents to a welcome meeting during the summer term too, which includes an opportunity for the parents to speak to the staff and ask questions. Children will then start reception in September on a part time basis, to support their transition to a new school. During this transition, the staff visit the children's home to see them in their own setting to further their understanding of their likes and interests.

Starting Year 1

Children in reception have transition opportunities in Year 1 during the summer term. The Year 1 teacher invites all the reception parents to meet them and discuss the Year 1 curriculum and any questions or concerns they may have. The reception and Year 1 teacher meet to discuss children moving to Year 1. They consider the results of the EYFS Profile and identify children who require additional support or challenge. Special needs information and children's individual needs are also discussed to ensure the needs of all children are met at the start of year 1.

3 Achievement and Standards

3.1 Monitoring and Evaluation

The Foundation stage leader is responsible for monitoring the standard of provision in the Foundation Stage. They feedback directly to the senior leadership team.

3.2 Reporting to Parents

Parents are informed each term regarding their child's progress and attainment in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The 'Learning Journeys', created via the '2simple' assessment tool, are shared with parents at each Parents Evening. A short spring term report is written to inform parents of their child's progress in learning. An end of year report is also written informing parents of progress and attainment in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This documents whether children have reached an emerging, expected or exceeding level of attainment against the early learning goals. Children are also assessed against the characteristics of effective learning.

3.3 Parents as Partners

All families are important and are welcomed and valued. We recognise that there should be a two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise between parents and practitioners

and every effort is made to achieve this. Parental involvement is crucial in establishing a picture of what their child enjoys and can do. Parents are asked to make short observations of their child's learning and interests at home. This information is invaluable and becomes part of their child's Learning Journey. It is also used by the practitioners to inform planning. Parents and carers are invited into school to review their child's progress regularly.

'Parents are children's first and most enduring educators. When parents and practitioners work together in early years settings, the results have a positive impact on children's development and learning.'

EYFS, 2008

4 Leadership and Management

4.1 Role of the Subject Leader

The role of the Foundation Stage Leader is undertaken in line with school policy.

4.2 Role of the Governing Body

The governors receive an evaluation of the strengths and areas for development in the early years by the Subject Leader in the Autumn Term, as part of the school self-evaluation.

4.3 Continuous Professional Development

All staff are given the opportunity to attend training specifically related to developing their role as practitioners and leaders. Whole school and individual INSET is also planned in line with the priorities in the SSDP.