



The
**Avenue
Primary
School**
& Children's Centre



Acorn
Education Trust

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy

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1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [2021 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#).

3. Structure of the EYFS

Our EYFS unit consists of a 40 place per session, school-based nursery and our Reception Class. Children can enter the Nursery Class the term following their third birthday. We have intakes in September, January and April. We refer to our nursery children as either Nursery 1 or Nursery 2 depending on the academic year they will begin school (Reception). Our nursery sessions are split into mornings and afternoons with the following timings:

- Morning session 08:45-11:45
- Afternoon session 12:15-15:15

Parents have a choice to send their child(ren) either for a morning session, an afternoon session or all day. We work closely with The Avenue Children's Centre who provide breakfast and afterschool clubs for our Nursery Children. The children in the Nursery Class also return to the Children's Centre for lunchtimes.

Children start formal schooling the September following their fourth birthday where they enter the Reception Class.

4. Curriculum

We see the EYFS as a unique and highly important phase in children's education. Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2021 EYFS statutory framework. We use a blend of non-statutory guidance to support our curriculum planning, including the revised [Development Matters](#) framework and the [Birth to Five Matters](#) framework.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. The prime areas are our main focus for our nursery aged children and we place great emphasis on ensuring we provide a language rich environment. Many of the children who

enter our nursery are from military backgrounds and many come to us with English as an additional language.

The prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

The prime areas continue to be carefully planned for as children move into our Reception Class and are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The specific areas are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Alongside the prime and specific areas, three characteristics of effective teaching and learning provide the foundations of our curriculum:

- Playing and exploring – children investigating and experience things
- Active learning – children concentrate, keep trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy achievements.
- Creative and thinking critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

4.1 Planning

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staff working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding children's activities, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

4.2 Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff are carefully trained to

respond to each child's emerging needs and interests 'in the moment' in order to move their learning forwards through skilled interactions. Each member of staff within the unit is carefully planned for so that they can model the skills and language that we want to develop in our children.

We offer a continuous provision environment where children are able to choose to learn indoors or outdoors. This is available to the children throughout the year and regardless of the weather. We offer a rolling snack during the day so that children are able to have the choice of when they would like to eat something. This flexibility means that the children play without interruption giving them the opportunity to become deeply involved in their learning and having the time to use critical thinking skills.

Carpet times are carefully planned into the day so as not to interfere with the flow of play. In Nursery, the children have two circle times per day with their keyworker. These develop skills in maths, language, and early phonics and is very much tailored to the developmental ages of the children. As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1. In Reception we use objective-led planning to support staff in knowing each child's next steps. We focus on the skills rather than the activity and aim to further their learning in contextually meaningful ways. Children in Reception follow the Little Wandle phonics scheme and are taught as a whole class. We use the White Rose maths scheme to support our teaching of mathematics.

4.3 Outdoor play

Outdoor play is an essential part of our Early Year's curriculum. We believe that all children should have the right to play outdoors and to discover an environment that is rich in learning opportunities. We believe the outdoor environment offers the chance for children to have unique learning experiences that allow them to be naturally inquisitive and to take risks.

Aims:

- The outdoors has a positive impact on children's well-being and helps support all areas of their development.
- Playing and learning outdoors allows children to take risks, consider the safety of themselves and others, and engage in contextually rich experiences.
- Outdoor play offers many problem solving opportunities where adults and children can engage together in sustained shared thinking.
- Children can learn new skills outdoors and try things that are not possible in the indoor learning environment.
- Outdoor play allows children to develop a love of nature and a respect for the natural world.
- Children are able to move outdoors without the restrictions of indoors. They are able to build up strength in their core muscles that will support their fine motor skills.
- Children have daily opportunities to freely explore media such as water, sand and mud.
- The seasons are used to support unique learning opportunities.

- Children experience the outdoors alongside enthusiastic adults who share a passion for outdoor learning and who can scaffold learning opportunities.
- All children have the right to daily outdoor learning.

Procedures:

- Children are asked to wear a puddle suit and wellies when playing outdoors. Staff support them by teaching the children how to put on their puddle suits and to select their wellies from the welly rack. We ask that parents and carers provide their child with their own outdoor clothing that is clearly labelled. We also have our own school waterproof clothing that children can use.
- Staff are equally equipped to learn outdoors and are asked to wear clothing that enables them to learn alongside the children and to really get 'stuck in'!
- Children do get wet and dirty when playing outside and we ask parents and carers to provide spare clothes (including socks) so that children can change when needed.
- We encourage handwashing when children come back inside.
- In very cold temperatures the children wear coats over their waterproof clothing and we encourage children to bring in hats and mittens to stay warm. We also invite children to take part in activities where they can move around a lot to keep warm.
- On very warm days, parents and carers are asked to apply suncream and to bring in a hat so that children can safely play outdoors. Suncream can be kept in school and clearly labelled so that staff can top up suncream throughout the day.

Health and safety:

Children are encouraged to take risks with their learning whilst also learning how to keep themselves and others safe. Adults are vital in modelling safety procedures, for example, when using loose parts to build an obstacle course. Adults will support children in taking risks by teaching them important skills, such as holding their arms out to the side to balance. Staff are vigilant to ensure equipment is safe to use and to dispose of any materials that may have become unsafe over time. Children are taught the properties of materials and supported to respect them accordingly.

5. Assessment

At The Avenue Primary School and Children's Centre, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. The majority of our children come to us from the Children's Centre and regular settling in sessions support children's transitions into the Nursery Class. A transition meeting takes place between the EYFS lead and staff in the children's centre before the children start in the Nursery Class. This supports staff in understanding each child's current learning and development and ensures early interventions are put into place for children requiring additional support. Where children come from outside our Children's Centre, the EYFS lead visits the children in their setting and meets with their key person to discuss their learning and development. We understand that parents hold the most accurate assessment information for their child and we invite parents into the setting early on in order to build up a holistic picture of each child.

Through observations and their interactions with the children, staff are able to identify each child's level of achievement, interests and learning styles. We place great value on staff playing with children and see every interaction as an intervention. We are able to move each child's learning on 'in the moment' through sustained, shared interactions. Our observations of the children also support staff in adjusting our provision to ensure that every child's needs are met.

In the EYFS we use a Focus Child framework ensuring regular dialogue about each child's progress and development. This enables staff to look at the child holistically and to intervene quickly to support them to make progress with their development. Daily interventions for speech and language, such as BLAST, begin from Nursery and continue into Reception to support children's communication and language development. Children who have specific speech and language targets have regular sessions throughout the week. Those children in Reception who require additional support with phonics have daily keep up sessions to prevent them from falling behind.

Children's progress is tracked at regular assessment points throughout the year in line with the rest of the school. We use an assessment tracker to understand if children are 'on track' or 'not on track' with their development. This gives staff regular opportunities to review pupil progress by highlighting the areas in which a child is progressing well and the areas in which additional support is needed. Through the Focus Child framework, parents are kept up to date with their child's development and support staff in knowing how they are progressing at home.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

At the **end of the EYFS**, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters [guidance](#)) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

5.1 Children with English as an Additional Language

We celebrate the diversity of children we have in our Foundation Stage unit. During the first term, children help to prepare a world map class display board where children begin to learn what makes them unique. This is added to throughout the year as new children join us. Different Languages are celebrated as the adults and children learn greetings in one another's home languages. Parents are also encouraged to bring in books in their child's mother tongue language to share with the class. We recognise that speaking multiple languages is something to be celebrated and encourage children to use their home language in school as much as they feel comfortable with. We work with parents to build up a picture

of what their child is achieving at home. We use an assessment framework called the NASSEA steps to track the progress of children with English as an additional language.

6. Working with parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.

Parents and/or carers are invited to attend an information evening about their child(ren) joining either the Nursery or Reception Class. Where children are brand new to our setting, we also carry out home visits. The purpose of these is to meet with the child and the family in their own environment and to build those relationships early on. Throughout the year, parents are invited into the setting as part of our Focus Child framework. Parents are invited to share photographs and recent news and activities that their child has been enjoying at home. These are used during our circle times.

As well as coming into the setting for informal meetings, parents will also receive a formal report on their child's progress and attainment during the summer term. In Nursery, this report is provided only for those children starting school in September.

We also offer parents workshops each term that focus on specific areas of our curriculum such as communication and language, phonics and maths development. With the support of our Pupil and Parent Support Worker, we also offer workshops in parental behaviour support and toilet training.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development through regular meeting with their child's teacher or key person.

Each child is assigned a key person (in Reception, this will always be the teacher) who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

The EYFS comes under the school's safeguarding policy. This can be found in the policies tab on the school website.

Our school Intimate Care Policy and Food Policy outline procedures across the school, including EYFS, and are available on request.

7.1 Staffing ratios:

In Nursery, our staffing ratios are always within the legal requirement as set out in the EYFS Framework 2021.

For children aged three and over:

Where a staff member with qualified teacher status (QTS), early years professional status, or another suitable level 6 qualification is working directly with the children, there is one member of staff for every 13 children, and at least one other member of staff who holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification.

Or

Where a member of staff does not hold a QTS status, early years professional status, or another suitable level 6 qualification, there is one member of staff for every 8 children, at least one member of staff must hold an approved level 3 qualification and at least half of all other staff must hold an approved level 2 qualification.

Only under exceptional circumstances, and where the quality of care and safety of children is maintained, will changes be made to the ratios.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by Alex Blake (EYFS Lead) and approved by Caroline Thomas (Headteacher) annually.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.