



# **Asterdale Primary School**

## **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

Review: 2015

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil 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 the EYFS, 2012, p2

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of their Reception year.

At Asterdale Primary School children are eligible for a part time nursery place, subject to availability, from the beginning of the term after their third birthday. Places are allocated according to our nursery admissions policy.

All children start full time school in the September of the year in which they are five. Many of our nursery children transfer to the reception class at Asterdale Primary School. School admissions are decided by the Local Authority.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

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

### **A Unique Child**

At Asterdale Primary School we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. All children develop in individual ways and 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 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 Asterdale Primary 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 children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of the children’s range of abilities and 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,

- planning opportunities that develop children's 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 about the 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.

## **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."

## **Statutory Framework for the EYFS, 2012, p13**

At Asterdale Primary School we understand that we are legally required to comply with the welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for 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 of these requirements.

## **Positive Relationships**

At Asterdale Primary School we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent 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:

- welcoming families to visit our school prior to putting their child's name down
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting. This is held during the term before their child starts in Nursery and in Reception
- initial visits where we talk to parents about their child prior to them child starting in our nursery
- assigning each child a key person
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's key person if there are any concerns

Parent interviews in Nursery and Reception are arranged in the Autumn and Spring terms. During these meetings the child's key person and the parent discuss the child's progress with the teacher. Parents are informed of their child's key person at the initial visit.

In Nursery the parents receive termly summaries of their child's learning. They also receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of Nursery and at the end of the Reception Year. At the end of nursery and reception parents are also invited in to school to look at their child's Learning Journey. 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.

Where children attend other settings in a day, we aim to ensure continuity and coherence by sharing information about the children. When children transfer from our school to another school the child's learning journey and report is passed on.

## **Enabling Environments**

At Asterdale Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Through observation we assess the children's interests, stages of development and learning needs, before planning challenging, achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

## **Observation, Assessment and Planning**

The planning within Early Years is broadly based around story themes. These plans are used by the staff as a guide for weekly planning; however these may be altered in response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children.

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 all staff as appropriate. These observations are recorded in a variety of ways and used to inform ongoing assessments and future planning. Reception children are assessed in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile.

## **The Learning Environment**

The Nursery and Reception area is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely.

There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. Each room is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The Early Years Unit has its own enclosed outdoor area. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers the children further opportunities to explore, use their senses, develop their language skills and be physically active. We plan activities and resources both inside and outside, enabling the children to develop in all the areas of learning.

## **Learning and Development**

At Asterdale Primary School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and have their own learning styles. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are often linked.

Key features of teaching and learning 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 the 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;
- 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;
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school
- the good relationships between our school and the schools that our children move on to after leaving our nursery.

## **Play**

“Children’s play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children’s development.”

Commitment 4.1, 2007

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They have the opportunity to practise skills, develop ideas and think creatively alongside other children as well as individually. The children communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They have the opportunity to express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

## **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.”

Commitment 4.2, 2007

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.”

Commitment 4.3, 2007

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 area to extend their learning.

### **Areas of Learning and Development**

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in early years settings. 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:

- communication and language;
- physical development;
- personal, social and emotional development.

In addition there are four **specific** areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

- literacy
- mathematics
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design.

**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.

**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.

**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.

**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.

**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.

**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.

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

### **Monitoring and review**

It is the responsibility of the Early Years staff to follow the principles stated in this policy. There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. This governor has the opportunity to discuss EYFS practice with the Early Years staff and provide feedback to the governing body, raising any issues that require discussion.

The Headteacher and subject coordinators carry out monitoring of the EYFS through observation and discussion as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.