

AMBLE FIRST SCHOOL and EDWIN STREET NURSERY

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Introduction

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential.'

(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage DfE September 2012)

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Amble First School, children join us at the start of nursery or Reception, and complete the foundation stage. (Compulsory schooling begins at the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday.) Children joining our school have already learnt a great deal. Many have been to one of a range of settings that exist in our community. Edwin Street Nursery also offers provisions for two year old with three hour sessions available five days a week. These sessions are available to children in receipt of funding for two year old provision and also are offered to parents for a small fee.

Aims

We aim to promote and support the four guiding principles that shape practice in the foundation stage, as described below:

- **A Unique Child**
Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- **Positive Relationships**
Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- **Enabling environments**
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 carers.
- **Learning and Development**
Children develop and learn in different ways. The EYFS framework covers the education and care of ALL children in early years provision.

(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage DfE September 2012)

To achieve this we will:

- Ensure that all children and their families feel safe, valued, included and respected.
- Help children to feel secure and develop relationships with a 'key worker'.
- Promote parents as partners in their child's learning.
- Promote a safe, challenging, rich and varied indoor and outdoor learning environment.
- Provide children with the opportunities to play, to engage in active learning and to think creatively and critically.

- Ensure coverage of the 3 PRIME and 4 SPECIFIC Areas of Learning.
- Foster the Characteristics of Effective Learning
- Ensure that planning is based on observations of children, their interests and their next steps in learning.

Safeguarding and 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 Early Years Foundation Stage DfE September 2012)

At Amble First School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain safeguarding and welfare requirements as stated in the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2012*

We are committed to:

- Promoting the safety and welfare of all children.
- Ensuring that all adults who look after the children are suitable to do so.
- Promoting good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- Managing behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- Ensuring that the premises, furniture and equipment are safe and suitable for purpose.
- Ensuring that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- Informing and including parents and carers as partners in their child's learning.
- Maintaining appropriate records, policies and procedures.

(In line with whole school policies and procedures)

A Unique Child

'Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.'

(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage DfE September 2012)

Inclusion

At Amble First School, every child is valued, respected and challenged regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion, home language, culture, social background, learning difficulties, ability or disability.

We set realistic and challenging expectations that 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 upon 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.

Observation, Assessment and Record Keeping

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 includes observations, photographs, samples of children's work and input from parents/carers/pre-school. We also use an online learning journal (Tapestry September 2016) which records observations of children's learning and assessments linked to these. All assessments are used to inform the **EYFS Profile** that is completed for all children. Reception children also take part in the whole school **Assertive Mentoring** system which includes individual termly interviews with the class teacher.

Assertive Mentoring and EYFS Profile.

Information on progress and targets are shared with parents/carers on a termly basis through parent meetings or in writing. The school takes part in county led moderations each year to ensure our assessments are accurate and in line with their criteria. All children receive an end-of-year report stating:

Progress against the **Early Learning Goals**, indicating whether children are:

EXPECTED	Meeting expected levels of development
EXCEEDING	Exceeding expected levels of development
EMERGING	Not yet reaching expected levels of development

Skills and abilities in relation to the **Characteristics of Effective Learning**:

Engagement	Playing and Exploring
Motivation	Active Learning
Thinking	Creating and Thinking Critically

For our two year old children, nursery staff have the responsibility of carrying out the statutory 2 year old check. This check must be carried out at some point between 27 and 36 months - parents can express a preference as to when, nursery staff should check this. The results of the check are usually shared with the Health Visitor to assist "joined up thinking" regarding children's care, but parents can opt for this not to happen.

Positive Relationships

'Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.'
(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage DfE September 2012)

Key Person

All children are assigned a Key Person, who has special responsibility for the education and welfare of a particular group of children. In Reception the Key Person will be either be the class teacher or the classroom assistant, but the class teacher still has overall responsibility for the learning and development of their whole class. In nursery the key person is a nursery assistant, regular information about the child is shared with the nursery manager regularly through pupil progress meetings and in school moderations.

The role of the Key Person is to:

- Provide a secure figure to help the child become familiar with the school and to feel confident and safe within it.
- Develop a genuine bond with the child, giving them the confidence to explore and try out new things and to become more independent.
- Develop secure, trusting relationships with parents/ carers

Parents/ Carers as Partners

Staff are always on hand to talk to parents/ carers daily before and after school. This provides an informal opportunity to discuss issues and to share information. We recognise parents/carers as the first and most important educators of their child and we work hard to develop positive links with them in a range of ways.

Prior to entering school we:

- Hold 15 hours funded sessions for 2 year olds
- Offer a transition session for new Toucans
- Send home weekly 'home' books to show children's work in class.
- Offer school tours to all incoming parents/ carers and children
- Invite parents/ carers to a 'Welcome to Reception/Nursery' meeting
- Provide a Parents' Information Pack
- Send home weekly learning logs to share children's work in class.

During Reception we:

- Send home Reading Records and Learning Logs
- Provide regular newsletters and additional information
- Host a School Website
- Utilise Parent Mail text messaging/ School Facebook page
- Produce Termly Assertive Mentoring interview reports (Reception)
- Produce termly Learning Journey reports (nursery)
- Hold 2 parent evenings a year (autumn and spring terms)
- Produce an annual report
- Hold Parent Workshops to support children's learning at home
- Encourage parents/ carers to get involved in school e.g. hearing children read, helping on trips, attending special events, joining the 'Puffins'.

In September 2016 staff introduced Tapestry, an online learning journal, as an added approach too record pupil observations. This will be shared with parents from November 2016 to enable parent partnerships to be further developed.

Transition (Pre-school to Reception)

We recognise that children enter our Reception from a number of pre-school settings, with a range of experiences and skills to build upon. We work in a number of ways to support the transition into our school from pre-school settings.

- Pre-Reception visits for children to Reception
- Reception staff visits to pre-school settings
This allows them to interact with children in a familiar setting and to share information with pre-school staff.
- Children complete a 'Reception Booklet' to share with staff when they start.
- Reception children start school part time for the first week
This allows them to get used to their new environment, routines, staff and children.
- Complete the EYFS Profile as a baseline assessment within the first few weeks of entry to Reception. This is based on information from pre-schools/ parents/

carers and initial observations by Reception staff. This will also highlight the needs for any early intervention.

Readiness for school (Reception-Year 1 transition)

Year 1 builds upon and extends the experiences children have had during the EYFS. The learning environment reflects a similarity to Reception, with areas of learning available to children such as role play and reading areas. Teaching and learning opportunities also continue to develop the independent learning skills established in the EYFS.

We work in a number of ways to support the transition from Reception to Year 1 and to ensure that children are 'ready for school' (ready to enter Year 1).

- Teaching and learning is adapted throughout Reception. The balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities will shift as children are prepared for more formal learning in Year 1.
- Reception children take part in all aspects of whole school life throughout the year.
- Reception and Year 1 teaching staff meet to discuss the children.
- Information is passed onto Year 1 staff e.g. skills and abilities in relation to the Characteristics of Effective Learning and progress against the Early Learning Goals.
- Reception class spend a TRANSFER DAY in Year 1 in the summer term.
- Children work in mixed Reception - Year 4 groups on termly CREW DAYS.

Enabling Environments

'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 carers.'

(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage DfE September 2012)

We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident, secure and challenged. At Amble First School the EYFS learning environment includes a classroom, with its own dedicated entrance and cloakroom area and a dedicated outdoor area. There are areas where the children can be active and can be quiet. The classroom and outdoors are split into learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. Our outdoor area has shelters to enable children to have the opportunity to be outdoors during inclement weather.

The layout of the EYFS Learning Environment complements the 7 areas of learning in the EYFS and includes:

- Role Play
- Construction
- Reading
- ICT
- Creative
- Practical
- Literacy /Mathematical

Learning and Development

We recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and have their own learning styles. 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. We cover 7 areas of learning and development in Reception through **planned, purposeful play, child-initiated activities and adult-led activities.**

The 3 PRIME areas are fundamental throughout the EYFS. They run through and support learning in all other areas.

3 PRIME AREAS

Communication and language

Listening and attention, understanding, speaking

Physical development

Moving and handling, health and self-care

Personal, social and emotional development

Making relationships, self-confidence and self-awareness,
managing feelings and behaviour

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

(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage DfE September 2012)

The 4 SPECIFIC areas include essential skills and knowledge that will support children's development.

4 SPECIFIC AREAS

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, being imaginative

Characteristics of Effective Learning

We aim to foster the characteristics of effective learning in our school. This is the way in which children learn and engage with other people and their environment. These characteristics underpin all 7 areas of learning in Reception. They also support children to remain effective and motivated learners. These characteristics are:

Engagement	Playing and Exploring
Motivation	Active Learning
Thinking	Creating and Thinking Critically

Within the EYFS we provide a broad and balanced curriculum that establishes firm foundations for future learning. We use a range of teaching and learning strategies that **provide challenge, encourage critical and creative thinking and build confidence and independence**, for example:

- Language for learning

Giving children the opportunity, vocabulary and skills to talk about their learning

- Philosophy for Children

Developing children's questioning, reasoning and critical thinking skills through dialogue based on familiar stories, pictures and music.

- Thinking Skills

Using a range of strategies to enhance the way in which they learn.

- Assertive Mentoring

Helping children to understand the progress they make, identify areas for concern and encourage positive social skills (e.g. behaviour, punctuality, attendance) that support their learning.

Planned, Purposeful Play

'Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems and relate to others.'

(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage DfE September 2012)

Planned, purposeful play is an important aspect throughout the EYFS. Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, helping 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 emotions and re-live experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Outdoor Learning

We aim to use the designated outdoor area as a context for learning throughout the year. We believe that:

- ❖ Outdoor play provides a wealth of opportunities for learning across all areas of the EYFS.
- ❖ Outdoor play has a positive impact on children's health and wellbeing.
- ❖ Some things can only be learnt outdoors.
- ❖ Some children are more likely to learn outdoors.
- ❖ Children need physical activity.
- ❖ The outdoors offers children the opportunity to develop large motor skills.
- ❖ The outdoors offers children the opportunity to investigate and explore, problem solve, use their imagination and creativity.

Attendance and Punctuality

Children become statutory school age in the term after they are five. This means that Reception summer born children will not be statutory school age until they are in Year 1. However the school's policy on attendance for Reception is in line with the rest of the school, including procedures for monitoring attendance, communicating with parents/carers about concerns, and systems for requesting leave during term time. Reception follows the same Attendance and Punctuality reward system as the rest of the school.

Written by Louise Brown, Deputy Head and EYFS leader
July 2012

Approved byon behalf of the Governing Body
Date.....

Updated by Joyce Jenkins, Headteacher
October 2013

Updated by Sharon Donaldson, EYFS Leader
September 2016

Reviewed by on behalf of the governing body.

Date awaiting interim governors (7th November 2016)

Teaching and Learning

The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the Foundation Stage 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 achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage;
- ❖ 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 identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are regularly shared with parents;
- ❖ The clear aims for our work, and the regular monitoring to evaluate and improve what we do;
- ❖ The regular monitoring and identification of training needs of all adults working within the Foundation Stage.