

# AIRE VIEW INFANT SCHOOL

## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Adopted : March 2015

Review : September 2016

Next Review due : September 2017

## **Introduction**

Early Years education is the foundation upon which young children build the rest of their schooling. It is a holistic education that encompasses all learning and development. The Early Years Foundation Stage extends from the age of three to the end of the Reception year. Entry into our school is at the beginning of the school year in which the children are 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. It is the Early Learning Goals that sets out what is expected of children by the end of the Foundation Stage.

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 activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
- it provides a rich and stimulating environment.

## **Aims**

In the **Early Years Foundation Stage** setting at Aire View Infant School we believe that all children are entitled to the best possible start in their school life, both intellectually and emotionally, in order to enable them to develop their full potential and that all children will:

- feel secure, in a caring, stimulating environment and allowed to be themselves
- be able to develop socially, emotionally, intellectually, morally, spiritually, aesthetically and physically
- become aware of themselves and others: what they are, what they are like and what they do in relation to others
- be able to think for themselves and operate independently
- form stable relationships with others, both children and adults, at home and school
- be able to draw on their past experiences, to build on them, and to have new experiences
- be able to explore, experiment, observe, discover and learn
- be able to have opportunities to develop physical skills- gross and fine motor skills
- be able to communicate ideas, feelings, experiences and needs, both verbally and non-verbally
- be able to enter a world of fantasy and imagination
- become aware that learning is exciting, absorbing and rewarding

### **We aim to enable:**

- Parents to participate as partners in their children's learning
- Continuity from Nursery to Reception and from Reception to Key Stage One.

## **The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum**

Our curriculum for the Early Years Foundation Stage embodies the areas of experiences and learning as identified in the document, 'Early Years Foundation Stage' Development Matters Statements and Early Learning Goals. The Early Learning Goals cover the skills, knowledge and understanding which the children should acquire by the end of the Reception Year. We ensure there is a balance of adult directed and child initiated activities.

The **Early Years Foundation Stage** curriculum (**EYFS**) is organised in seven areas of learning 3 Prime Areas and 4 Specific Areas and 17 Early Learning Goals.

### **Prime Areas:**

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Physical Development

Communication and Language

### **Specific Areas:**

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the World
- Expressive Art and Design

The curriculum for the Early Years Foundation Stage underpins all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children's:

- personal, social and emotional well being
- positive attitudes and disposition towards their learning
- social skills
- attention skills and persistence
- language and communication
- reading and writing
- mathematics
- knowledge and understanding of the world
- physical development
- creative development

The children are provided with a wide range of activities, each offering learning opportunities in several, or all of these areas of experience. The basic provision gives the opportunity for both in-depth work with adult interaction, input and involvement, and for child initiated work at a high cognitive level. We have a two-year long-term plan, which offers a balance across the areas of learning from starting Nursery to the end of the Reception year. Activities are based around topics or themes. This is shown on the medium-term plan that includes the focus on the areas of learning. Short-term planning is informed by observation and assessments of individual children and groups. Nursery and Reception classes make full use of the outdoor curriculum, where a planned programme of appropriate activities

takes place at all times of the year. We hope that by giving the child a structured environment with freedom to experiment we will develop the whole child. Reception children will participate in both the Literacy and Numeracy strategies when appropriate to their stage of development.

### **Active learning through play at the Early Years Foundation Stage**

We recognise that young children learn best when they are active. We understand that active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods. Therefore, we believe that Early Years education should be as practical as possible and our EYFS setting has an ethos of learning through play. Through play our children explore and develop the learning experiences that help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up their ideas, learn how to control themselves, and begin to understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively both alongside other children and on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. We provide both structured and unstructured play opportunities inside and outside.

We firmly believe in offering the children in our setting every opportunity to learn in a way that best suits their needs and interests and as such we ensure that our outdoor environment is as rich and stimulating as the indoor provision. We encourage independent learning as much as possible and every child has the opportunity to make decisions about where they would like to conduct their learning.

### **Inclusion at the Early Years Foundation Stage**

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 we are planning for their learning. At the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations keyed to the needs of our children, so that they can achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage and many 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.

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.

### **Health and Safety**

Please see school Health and Safety policy. In planning and delivering the activities, staff should be mindful of the need to ensure the health and safety of children and colleagues at all times.

## **School / Nursery Liaison**

Nursery and Reception work closely together.

- Staff follow the same long-term plan to ensure the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage cover areas of experience in a balanced way.
- Nursery children often join school for special assemblies. These children can also access the curriculum that is offered in Reception at any time but especially when they are preparing to start full time school.
- The Reception teachers and teaching assistants are able to visit and work with the children in Nursery.

## **Assessment /Recording**

Ongoing assessment is an essential aspect of the effective running of the Early Years Foundation Stage setting at Aire View Infant School. Regular, planned and focused assessments are made of children's learning and individual needs. A record of each child's progress in all areas of their learning is kept by retaining and filing their assessment data. The main Early Years Foundation Stage assessment method is through observations of children in different teaching and learning contexts, including both adult focused activities and child initiated play. Observations take place on a daily basis (both formally and informally). Adults make time to carry out planned observations of individuals and groups of children regularly. They also make spontaneous observations in order to capture significant moments of children's learning.

We use advancing technology wherever possible and have used iPods to enhance our observation process. Our extensive observations are carried out through the use of iPods and printed out to compile a 'My Learning Journey' profile. This profile of photographic and observational information is also shared with parents during our parents' consultation meetings. All staff uses the system and contributes to observational evidence. This evidence is closely scrutinised and is used to provide constantly challenging and relevant next steps for each child based upon their interests and achievements. All staff are involved in observing children.

Staff use observations to support their developing knowledge of individual children. It informs them of children's abilities, needs, interests, play schemas and learning styles. Observations are evaluated, children's learning priorities are identified and relevant learning opportunities are planned to support children to make the next steps and progress.

Other methods of assessing children in the Early Years Foundation Stage setting include engaging alongside children in their play, annotation of children's written work and talking with children about their task or play.

The children's attainment is updated at least once each term to track individual progress. At the end of the year it provides a summary of every child's development and learning achievements which are then passed onto the Reception or Year One teachers accordingly.

Nursery baseline assessments are carried out using the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile during the children's first six weeks upon entering the setting and in Reception within the first 3 weeks. Judgments made on children's development in the 'Profiles' are based on practitioners' evidence of children's behaviour observed independently and consistently in their self-initiated activities across all Areas of Learning and Development. Parents and carers receive an annual report that offers brief comments on each child's progress in each area of learning. They also receive a termly progress report, in Reception. The end of year report highlights the child's strengths and development needs, and gives details of the child's general progress. The report is completed in June and sent to parents and carers in early July each year. At the end of the year the Early Years Foundation Stage profile results are sent to the L.A.

## **Planning**

The Early Years Foundation Stage framework provides a long term plan to follow by ensuring that all Early Learning Goals are covered throughout the academic year. The whole school was involved in deciding the termly topics, based on the school's two year topic plan. Medium term planning is created with all early years practitioners involvement and takes into account the individual children's learning and developmental needs. All Areas of Learning and Development are planned for and available to access within the setting. The learning opportunities provided include a range of adult focused and child initiated activities indoors. The setting also makes use of the outdoor environment whenever possible. Educational visitors, visits within the local community and further afield are also planned to support children's learning within the classroom.

## **The role of parents/carers**

We recognise the importance of establishing positive relationships with parents, as highlighted by the Early Years Foundation Stage framework. We understand that an effective partnership between school and home will have a positive impact on children's learning and development. We value the role of parents as children's primary educators. Through questionnaires and informal chats at the beginning and end of the day, practitioners encourage parents to share their unique knowledge of their child, providing further insight into the child as an individual (e.g. characteristics, interests, experiences, likes, dislikes). This supports practitioners in establishing interesting and stimulating learning experiences and in responding to children's needs and interests. Parents are kept informed of what is happening in the setting through regular letters, half termly 'Curriculum News Letters', the school website and Blog and informal chatting at the beginning and end of the day. This also gives suggestions of how parents can support their children's learning at home; consolidating and building on what has been covered in the setting.

Parents are invited to attend parents' consultation meetings during the course of the academic year. The first of these takes place during the Autumn term (Nursery this is within the first term on entry) and allows practitioners and parents/carers to discuss how children have settled into the setting. Another parents' evening takes place during the Spring term where practitioners will feedback on children's learning and development progress. Other opportunities for practitioners to share children's learning, development and well-being with parents include looking at the children's 'My Learning Journey' profile and an end of year report.

Parents are also invited to get involved with school life. There are opportunities for them to help with activities such as educational visits and reading, as well as offering their particular skills (e.g. cooking, art, music) to support children's learning. Parents may be invited into the setting on other occasions such as 'helping with home learning' workshops, special events for Father's Days end of topic finale celebrations. The school has a friendly, open-doors ethos and practitioners are available to talk to parents at the beginning and end of the day. Parents are always welcomed into school and encouraged to discuss any concerns they might have.

## **Admissions and Induction**

Aire View Infant School provides part- time education for children in the Nursery Year and full- time education in the Reception Year. This is for children who enter school from September of the academic year in which they will turn three or five years old. Before they start in the setting, all children are offered a series of visits during the Summer term in the form of 'transition' sessions. The purpose of these initial visits is for the children to meet their new practitioners and start to become familiar with the setting environment.

Practitioners may undertake home visits for children before they start school, to meet children in the environment within which they feel most comfortable at their parents' request. Staff, with parental permission, will also go to visit the children in their current pre-school settings if appropriate. The aim of these visits is to support practitioners to develop their knowledge and understanding of each child in order to make the transition period to Aire View Infant School as smooth as possible.

In the Summer term Nursery parents/carers and their child are invited to have a school dinner in preparation for starting in September, they will have an opportunity to meet the dinner time staff, learn the routines and taste some of the delicious and nutritious meals available.

In the Summer Term (Nursery the term before starting) parents are invited into school to meet the setting practitioners. At this meeting information regarding the induction process and what goes on in the setting is shared. There is also time for informal chat and parents' questions. School information packs will be distributed to parents at this meeting, detailing school routines and expectations. 'All About Me' and 'Chatterbox' induction information will also be given out to parents as another way to support practitioners' knowledge and understanding of each individual child.

In Nursery from September children attend the setting part-time for either 5 morning sessions or 5 afternoon sessions, however there is also a January and April intake of children when necessary. In Reception from September children attend the setting full-time. Every effort is made to make children feel safe, secure and happy. There is a relaxed and open ethos in the setting. Established routines, a calm atmosphere and encouraging talk are some of the strategies practitioners use to maintain children's positive feelings about school.

### **Resources**

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage children to make their own decisions and choose activities that are on offer, as we believe this encourages independent learning.

Monitoring and review:

This policy will be reviewed in two years, or earlier if necessary.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**(Head Teacher)**

Signed : \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**(Chair of Governors)**