



ALKBOROUGH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Early Years Policy

January 2022

Our aim in school is to provide our children with an exciting and engaging curriculum that prepares them academically, physically and mentally for learning and life today and for their future in modern Britain.

Alkborough Primary School is a small, rural school with an evolving curriculum that responds to the academic and emotional needs of our pupils. It focuses on developing individual and collaborative learning experiences, a positive growth mind-set and responds to the needs of our learners and their interests.

As a small school, we promote and consider all of our school community as belonging to our 'Alkborough School family', where all staff provide a caring and nurturing environment that ensures pupils feel a sense of belonging, a sense of pride and a sense of feeling valued. Staff know all of our children and their families well, and as a result of this we are able to work very closely together to ensure that the needs of our children are met, including those children who have individual academic and/or emotional needs.

Every child at Alkborough School is recognised as a special and unique individual and we celebrate and welcome differences and diversity. For those children who have individual needs, we recognise the importance of identifying their needs at an early stage. As a result of this, the staff and SENDCO are able to work with parents, pupils and other outside agencies to provide an individualised and differentiated curriculum and relevant support, where appropriate.

We believe that our children need to have a positive and self-motivated attitude, believe in themselves and their individual capabilities, display resilience, develop life skills and knowledge to be an effective learner and be prepared for their next stage in learning.

Children leave Alkborough Primary School with a sense of pride in belonging to the local community, with the skills to prepare them for their next stage in learning and with the self-confidence and life skills to make well informed decisions, be reflective, make relationships and become lifelong learners.

The early years Foundation stage (EYFS) framework sets the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth through to five years. In our School, we have a mixed Nursery (F1) and Reception (F2) class.

Our EYFS intent

At Alkborough Primary School's Foundation unit we aim for children to be happy, confident, inquisitive learners who are self-sufficient and motivated to learn and achieve. We aim to equip them with the basic skills, knowledge and vocabulary to set them on their journey through primary school and their life beyond this.

Our curriculum is designed to recognise children's prior learning and their home circumstances and work in partnership with parents and carers so that we provide the best possible start for each child. This will help us to ensure that all children achieve the best possible outcomes and progress within our setting from their various starting points. We will quickly identify any children who may be struggling to access our provision and make the necessary adjustments and put measures in place for them to keep up with their peers and our curriculum.

We place a strong emphasis on the Prime areas of learning: Personal Social and Emotional Development, Communication and language and Physical Development. These areas are woven through everything we do and build a foundation for learning. This is particularly important for the nursery children who spend shorter periods of time with us but also important too, for the reception children, especially in the first half term as new routines and relationships are established.

We are therefore keen to utilise our outdoor learning environments as much as possible to promote all areas of the curriculum but in particular those prime areas. Many children often feel more able to readily converse in the outdoors, less inhibited and more willing to engage in their learning. Furthermore, the outdoors allows children to be active learners, providing them with the opportunity to develop their gross motor skills, for risk taking, to be inquisitive learners, for collaborative group work and paired work. In addition, the outdoors will support their mental health and wellbeing, facilitate high levels of engagement and develop self-confidence and independence.

Our enabling environments and warm, skilful interactions provided by the adults support the children as they link their learning through play and exploration. We believe that high levels of engagement will facilitate high levels of attainment. Therefore, we aim to provide an engaging curriculum that provides meaningful cross-curricular links and promotes the unique child.

By the end of the reception year our intent is that all children make at least good progress from their starting points and have the skills and knowledge to have a smooth transition into Year 1.

Implementation

The Foundation stage class is staffed by a full-time qualified teacher and a part-time early years manager. Other adults working under the supervision of the teacher and Early Years Manager include a teaching assistant, dining supervisors, students and volunteers.

All staff are involved in five in house training days every year. The dates and focus for these are agreed in advance and can be found from the focus on the School Development Plan. Both the Class teacher and Early years manager attend relevant training courses and continually keep abreast of changing issues within the Early Years and current pedagogy.

To work in partnership with parents we offer home visits, transition visits, stay and play sessions, communication via class dojo and parent consultations. We also value Parent's contributions in the form of proud clouds.

Our early years curriculum is child-centered and based upon themes and books which are carefully selected to engage the children. We encourage active, hands-on and most of all fun learning so that children are motivated and interested. After taking time to get to know the children we are able to provide for their own unique interests and develop their next steps in learning.

We explore seasonal change and celebrations through stories and real life experiences. The Early years Teacher and Early years Manager plan collaboratively to provide a linked series of activities over each term, week and day. We aim to plan for a balance of adult directed, free choice and enhanced activities. This ensures staff have time to engage in play with the children to move their learning forward, in the most effective way, addressing their next steps in learning, where possible in the moment.

We believe that the children's personal social and emotional development is the key to ensuring that they develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they need to manage their lives, now and in the future. These skills and attributes will help them to stay healthy and safe.

Within our curriculum, adults support children to manage their own emotions, build relationships and have confidence in their own abilities. As well as the interactions adults have with children, modelling and guiding them to develop their skills in this area, they are also taught weekly discrete PSHE sessions following the school's SCARF PSHE scheme.

We believe that children's physical health and development is a key aspect and the foundation to support their well-being and their learning in the wider curriculum. Therefore, we aim to provide children with high quality, challenging gross and fine motor experiences throughout their time in both nursery and reception. We recognise that children need to develop their core strength, balance, stability, coordination and agility. Experiences such as write dance sessions, dough disco, yoga, PE sessions, GO Noodle and the outdoor learning environments will provide opportunities for this. Furthermore, the learning environment will facilitate the development of children's fine motor skills, by providing experiences such as sewing, woodwork, using tools, puzzles and small world toys to ultimately support their hand to eye coordination in preparation for early literacy skills and handwriting.

We want pupils to develop a love of reading, a knowledge of authors and illustrators and be able to understand more about the world through the knowledge they gain from books. In addition, we want children to listen to and discuss stories about the world in which we live to develop their understanding and knowledge of an inclusive society, in an age appropriate way.

We use the Talk 4 Writing approach as a tool to develop vocabulary, story language and story composition to aid their future narrative writing. As part of our provision we identify Core Books for Nursery and Reception years which are used to support children to build the foundations for literacy; understanding and enjoying stories, books and rhymes, recognising that print carries meaning, reading a range of familiar words and simple sentences.

Each half term's theme will be introduced using a talking tub and Floorbook approach; these topics will be evident on the long term plan but will develop via the children's interests and fascinations. By following the children's lines of enquiries it ensures we identify their interests, creating unique learning opportunities which excite, interest and motivate the children. Through these themes, children will be

exposed to a wide range of vocabulary and language. The floorbook will document the children's voice and record how the initial stimulus progressed to include the children's interests and the different areas of learning.

In Nursery, children focus on Phase 1 of letters and sounds, with additional resources and activities planned, which concentrate on developing children's speaking and listening skills. The emphasis during Phase 1 is to enable children to become attuned to the sounds around them and ready to begin developing oral blending and segmenting skills. This continues into the autumn term of reception but lays the foundations for Phase 2 teaching. As well as letters and sounds in Reception, we also use the Jolly Phonic programme of songs and mnemonics to teach children the letter sounds. The children will systematically work through the Phases.

To work in partnership with parents meetings are held to discuss the teaching of phonics and reading and how this can be supported at home.

Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically (Development matters 2021).

In Nursery, children develop a love of maths through games, songs, rhymes, and play using concrete manipulatives. There is a focus on the following counting principles; one to one correspondence, stable order and cardinal principle. Children's fine manipulative skills are a focus to develop 1-1 correspondence so children count each object only once.

In Reception, as well as following the White Rose Maths Scheme of work we provide a high quality learning environment and meaningful interactions with adults, which support children to develop their mathematical thinking, reasoning and problem solving. This ensures that our long term plans are flexible and responsive to the learners needs.

We ensure activities support the Characteristics of Effective Learning to ensure learning takes place. These are:

- Playing and exploring - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go',
- Active learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements.
- Creating and thinking critically- children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Children in the EYFS learn by playing and exploring, being active and through creative and critical thinking which takes place both indoors and outdoors. Our outdoor areas are used all year round and in most weather conditions.

Children are supported for their transition into key stage 1 by regularly spending time with the key stage 1 class and teachers. In addition, they have organised visits into their new classroom in the summer term to spend time with their new teachers and children in class.

Impact

Prior to the children starting, staff spend time talking to the child's parents and carers to gain an understanding of the whole child and where they are at developmentally. During the first half term in Nursery or reception staff will use ongoing assessments, observations and conversations with the child to develop their baseline assessment. In addition, reception children will take part in the statutory reception baseline assessment.

All ongoing observations are used to inform weekly planning and identify children's next steps. This formative assessment does not involve prolonged periods of time away from the children and excessive paperwork. Practitioners draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgements through discussions, photographs and physical examples such as a child's drawing / mark-making.

Safeguarding and Welfare

All necessary steps are taken to keep the children in our care safe and well. Any safeguarding or welfare issues will be dealt with in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and all members of staff in the EYFS are required to read this policy and keep up to date with any changes.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is Mrs K Webb (Headteacher)

The deputy DSL is Mrs C Birkett.

The DSL is responsible for safeguarding children and liaising with local children's services as appropriate. The deputy DSL will undertake the duties of the DSL in their absence, but overall responsibility for safeguarding will remain with the DSL.

The DSL and deputy DSLs will undertake child protection training annually. Staff in early years and throughout school will receive safeguarding training that enables them to understand the safeguarding policy and procedures, have up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues, and recognise signs of potential abuse and neglect. Training is completed annually. For further information please read the school's safeguarding policy.

Health and safety

A first-aid kit is located in the EYFS setting and staff carry a first aid kit to other areas in the wider school when children are learning and playing in other areas. Early years staff will report any accident or injury involving a child to their parents on the day it occurs, either in person, via CPOMS medical slip or message on dojo and any first-aid treatment administered to a child will also be reported. Accidents and injuries will be recorded on CPOMS safeguarding website. See also health and safety policy and safeguarding policy. The school has a Fire Evacuation Plan in place.

Organisation and admissions

In foundation, each day begins with registration at 9.00am. The F2 (reception) children have an hour for lunch break. During this time they eat their lunch in the school hall and then have playtime on the KS1 playground. Throughout the day, children are encouraged to access the foundation stage outdoor area as part of their child initiated play.

School has one yearly intake in September of full time F2 children that are aged 4 and will become 5 in that academic year. In order to ease the transition from either F1 (nursery) to F2 or home to F2, children have a soft start to the school year. For at least the first week of term, they attend for mornings and the lunchtime period only, finishing at 1pm.

For nursery children we offer part-time sessions. Depending on the spaces available, this might be mornings from 9am till 12 pm, afternoon sessions from 12.30pm till 3.30 pm or a combination of the two. These Nursery (F1) sessions are available to the children the term after their 3rd birthday. The Nursery operates on a three-term entry. Sep, Jan and Easter. This is in line with the 15 hour funding and LA admissions policy.

Before Admission:

- “Information for Parents” booklet and a school prospectus are provided for parents interested in their children attending the school. Potential parents can also access the schools website.
- Our “Information for Parents” booklet contains information about early years provision.
- Parents have a chance to meet with the Head Teacher, teacher and Early Years Manager if they wish before admission.
- Children and parents are invited to attend a taster session before they enter F1 - this enables them to experience the school environment with the option of their parents or carer remaining with them if needed.
- Before admission Information on emergency contacts and medical conditions are collected for each child and regularly updated.
- Staff work with the parents to ensure a smooth transition that meets the individual needs of each child.

After Admission:

- We operate an open door policy where parents and carers are encouraged to share any concerns or queries as well as their children's achievements. This can be face to face at the beginning or end of the day or via class dojo app.
- We hold termly formal parents' evenings for both F1 and F2, where we share the children's learning journey and class achievements. It is also another opportunity for parents to share evidence from home that supports the child's development and discuss any concerns or ask questions about their child's learning and development. All children receive a written report at the end of the academic year.
- All parents are encouraged to share books with their children at home. Children are able to loan a class library book to share at home. Reception parents are encouraged to support their children with reading and write in the home/school reading diary.
- Frequent newsletters are circulated to parents outlining the recent learning that has taken place so that parents can support this at home. This is shared via Class dojo.

Parents and carers are asked to contribute to their child's assessment by sharing home evidence to be included in learning journeys – proud clouds are filled in by parents and carers to share achievements as well as sending information via class dojo. Information is transferred from other providers i.e. playgroups, nurseries and childminder.

We are involved in the monitoring and evaluation of the provision of our early years children by:

- Staff discussions (staff meeting agendas regularly contain evaluations of our effectiveness)
- Analysis of statistical information (we discuss the achievements of individuals and groups at regular evaluation sessions during the year)
- Early years staff have been involved in specific training relevant to monitoring and evaluating the EYFS
- Incidental observations are used to inform every child's personalised learning.
- The annual collation of the profile is uploaded to the LA
- The FS profile data is sent to us from the LA - we use this analysis to inform the SDP the EY action plan and our Medium term and short term planning.
- Teaching is monitored through lesson observations.
- Learning is monitored through moderation meetings within the local authority.

EARLY YEARS ADMISSIONS POLICY

Children are admitted to F1 nursery the term after their 3rd birthday. Using the following cut off dates

Birthdays between Sep 1st And Dec 31st admission from January

Birthdays between Jan 1st And March 31st admission from Easter

Birthdays between 1st April And Aug 31st admission from September

This means children with autumn birthdays can have 5 terms in F1 before admission to F2. Children with spring birthdays can have 4 terms in F1 and children with summer birthdays can have 3 terms in F1.

1. Admission therefore needs to be addressed on a rolling programme each term as our cut off number for each academic year is 12 pupils. Before each term the Class Teacher and early years manager checks through the waiting list in the office and in line with policy agrees with the Head Teacher , which children will be invited to be admitted into F1. If numbers exceed our limit, places will be allocated according to LA policy. Children within our catchment would have first priority and then priority would go to those children with siblings already in school.
2. Initial contact is made with parents of new starters by telephone and then letter offering their child a place. At this point we also invite the child with his/her parent/carer to attend a taster session. In addition, a home visit is also offered.
3. Our taster sessions usually run within a normal nursery session and last for about an hour. New starters attend with or without their parents to get a taste of our environment and the types of activities that they can enjoy at nursery. The parents are given a data form to be returned to the school office so all the child's personal details can be inputted into the school system before the child starts school. We check that we have relevant details i.e. contact names and numbers and names and addresses of people with parental responsibility.

4. At the first full nursery session we welcome parents to stay for a while if this is what is needed for their child. However, we work with parents to address the individual needs of each child and how to make a smooth transition for them. needed. Parents would always be telephoned if their child was upset or we had concerns.
5. As every session begins with an open door start, parents and children mostly develop a calm goodbye routine so that they can separate independently with decreasing support from staff. As part of the open start, staff identify particular children for supported play and choice of their first activity in conjunction with an adult.

System for foundation entry into school AM

- 8.50 am foundation gate opened.
- Teacher and Early Years Manager or Teaching Assistant are either in the outdoor provision or classroom. A member of staff stands at the gate and welcomes parents and children. The Early Years staff will be available for parents to share any information regarding their child.
- 9.00 staff will lock the gate. 9.05 am register time in class.

System for foundation entry into school pm

- 12.30 pm foundation gate opened.
- A member of staff will be in the outdoor provision to welcome parents and children. The member of staff will be available for parents to share any information regarding their child.
- A member of staff will assist the children inside, and help the children to the cloakroom to hang up belongings.
- 12.40pm the nursery register is taken and the session continues with reception children joining at 1pm after their lunch has finished.

In the event of your child being late for the beginning of the session.

- We kindly request that if the foundation gate is locked/shut you bring your child to the front door.
- A member of staff sign your child into school.
- That member of staff will welcome your child and deliver them safely to the Early Years staff.

Entry into Reception at the beginning of the academic year.

- We have a soft start to the beginning of the academic year in September.
- For at least the first week of term Children will attend school for mornings only. The children begin the day at 9am. They stay for their lunch and will be picked up by parents/carers at 1pm after the lunchtime break.
- Early years staff support the children during the lunch time period and in the playground after lunch, to ensure a smooth transition from half days in nursery to full days in reception.

