

September 2022 2023

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



A Diggle EYFS Lead

Audley Infant School



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Aims:

At Audley Infant School, our over-riding aim in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is for our pupils to develop a positive foundation for lifelong learning.

'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.'

(Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021)

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year.

The EYFS is based upon four distinct but complementary themes which guide the work of all practitioners:

- A unique child
- Positive relationships
- Enabling environments
- Learning and development in different ways and at different rates

Child development:

At Audley Infant School we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, 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/sharing circle times and reward incentives, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning. We engage with parents through their child's learning journey to ensure that there are opportunities for positive dialogue.

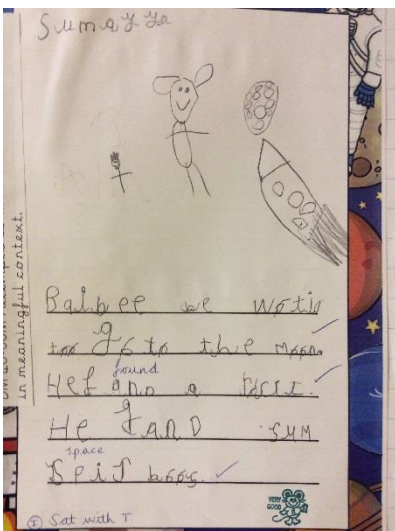
Inclusive practice:

We value the diversity of individuals within the Foundation Stage Department and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children and their families are valued.

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In our Foundation Stage, we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking into account our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.



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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 liaise closely with all relevant professionals in order to provide early support for those children and their families who need it.

We 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 variety 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 contributions of all children are valued
- assigning a key person to each child in our Nursery setting who makes links with children's home experiences through parents/carers
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping
- planning challenging activities for children whatever their age and stage of development
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

Keeping safe:

It is important to us that all children are and feel 'safe'. We help children become familiar with safety, 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, emotional and psychological well-being of all children. (See our Safeguarding Policy)

'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 2021)

At Audley Infant School we understand that we are legally required to comply with the welfare requirements as stated in the 'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021'.

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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.

Health and well-being:

Children's health is an integral part of their emotional, mental, social, environmental and spiritual well-being. We promote healthy snacks and offer foods from different cultures to develop their taste preferences. Activities relating to the food cycle are interwoven in planning e.g. planting seeds, gathering, preparing and eating. We ensure that children can rest during the day and have a designated quiet areas indoors and outdoors where children can relax alongside space for vigorous free movements.

Positive relationships:

Respecting each other:

At Audley Infant School we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent through forming secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as partners:

We recognise that parents/carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we highly value the contribution that parents make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in supporting their child/ren's development.

We do this through:

- Talking to parents about their child before they start in our school.
- The children having the opportunity to spend time with staff prior to starting at our school as part of transition.
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's development and progress and allowing free access to their children's learning journeys.

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- Encouraging parents to talk to their child's key person about any concerns they may have.
- Offering various activities throughout the year that involve parents/ carers in the life of Audley Infant School, for example, community events.
- Encouraging parents to contribute towards the child's learning journey.
- Supporting parents/carers whose first language is one other than English.

Supporting learning:

Effective teaching approaches will be secure where we:

- Engage and stimulate the learner.
- Allow for regular review of progress towards learning outcomes.
- Vary what we provide to match children's needs.
- Maximise opportunities to explore in a whole group, small group, paired, individual and independently.

Routines are an important way that children feel secure and can make sense of all the opportunities offered throughout their time at Audley Infant School. This includes self-registration, signs and timetables, snack-time, small group time and whole group story or circle time. Children will use continuous provision throughout their day and will also be supported through adult-led activities.

Key person:

In our nursery setting each child has a key person. The key person builds confidence, gives children opportunities to express their thinking and use their initiative. We believe children learn and develop effectively when the key person provides:

- First-hand experiences
- Individual and collaborative learning experiences,
- Appropriate pace
- An environment where children can take risks
- Innovative delivery
- Clear expectations
- Opportunities to review and reflect
- Thinking time
- Thorough preparation and organisation
- Activities building on prior learning
- Open-ended, thought provoking challenging questions
- Support for children with differing needs
- Support for parent or carer.

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All staff involved with children in the early years foundation stage aim to develop good and warm relationships, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen.

'The best kind of teacher is one who helps you do what you couldn't do for yourself but doesn't do it for you.'

(Child aged 8, quoted in "Teaching Children to think" by Robert Fisher, Nelson Thornes 1990)

Observation, assessment, planning and supporting every child:

At Audley Infant School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's learning and development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, before planning challenging, but achievable, activities and experiences to extend their learning and development. Assessment of their achievements will ensure they make the appropriate progress.

Observation is key to planning an appropriately challenging and exciting curriculum. The recording of observations will be practicable, organised and well-managed. Observations are recorded in children's individual 'learning journeys', using Evidence Me software online. They also contain information provided by the practitioner, parents and other professionals.

Planning meetings are held frequently to enable all staff to contribute towards learning and development, based on their observations. Children also play an important part in planning their own learning through assessment for learning (AFL) and consultation, particularly when 'new' themes are being formulated so that a personalised learning is paramount.

Long term planning:

The EYFS practice guidance details the development matters which are adhered to. At Audley Infant School we have themes appropriate to our cohort of children and the community to which they belong.

Medium term planning:

This can run for a few weeks/month/half termly and is based on the needs and interests of the children for all areas of learning and development. They detail the proposed development matters to be focused upon giving an overview of possible enhancements to continuous provision, the adult focused activities, resources, display and visits/visitors. Sometimes themes are used as a vehicle for delivery.

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Short term planning:

This occurs weekly for adult focused and child-initiated learning. This will outline the elements of development, effective learning for children and will detail look, listen and note prompts as well as key language/questions and resources.

Evaluations and next steps will determine planning for subsequent weeks. Planning for and with other agencies is also incorporated. Our planning shows how staff are deployed. Reference will be made on short term planning for children with Special Educational Needs or disability linked to their EHCP or for children in our care (CIOC) linked to their personal education plan (PEP). For children who have a first language other than English, links to bi-lingual support will also be made using specific strategies.

At Audley Infant School we use the EYFS development matters, OTrack and learning journeys to track children's attainment and achievement throughout the school year. Staff complete these assessments on an on-going basis and at least termly.

On entry to school, we carry out the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) within the first six weeks of school. This assesses the children in Literacy, Communication and Language, and Mathematics.

'The RBA assesses a child in early mathematics, literacy, communication and language. The purpose of the RBA is to form the starting point for cohort-level school progress measures. Data from the RBA is compared to key stage 2 outcomes 7 years later to form the overall progress measure for a school.'

(Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021)

The learning environment:

A high quality environment is key to success. It is the shared responsibility of adults and children to care for the environment both indoors and outdoors. Adults will take pride in developing areas of continuous provision and displays which enhance and broaden opportunities.

The EYFS learning environment is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely indoors and outdoors. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The environment is organised into continuous provision areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. Our outdoors provision offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children the opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant.

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We are committed to providing high quality continuous provision. Areas are established and maintained, long term plans are displayed in areas, with short term planning detailing enhancements. Areas are audited and resources replenished regularly. Resources are labelled and organised to aid self-selection and the provision reflects the cultures and community that we serve. Risk assessments, where appropriate, are in place and areas are print rich.

Our displays are interactive, inviting and of high quality.

We aim to reflect the community we serve and represent our children appropriate to their age and/or stage of development. We are respectful of children's uniqueness across all areas of learning and development and displays reflect current themes in learning. Displays show what children have experienced and learnt and are annotated by adults describing the process involved and, where appropriate, the outcomes.

The wider context:

We recognise that children's social, emotional and educational needs are central to any transition from home to setting, within one setting or from setting to setting. We communicate with other settings and with parents/carers to ensure that children's needs are met. Information is shared in order that there is continuity in their learning and development.

We have good links with local nurseries. Visits are undertaken by early years' teachers to meet with the children prior to them starting at Audley Infant School. These visits provide the opportunity to discuss individual needs and to meet the children within the environment.

Staff work together across services in order to achieve the Every Child Matters outcomes. This may involve working with multi-agency professionals. Our aim is for all key partners to communicate well and put the children and their family's needs first. Staff know the local area well and use this knowledge to plan the children's learning.

Learning and development:

Play and exploration:

At we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. They develop their skills through a variety of processes. These include:

- investigation
- experimentation
- listening
- observing
- talking and discussing
- asking questions

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- practical exploration and role play
- retrieving information
- imagining
- repetition
- problem solving
- making choices and decision making

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.'

(Principles into Practice Card 4.2 from the EYFS DCSF Crown Copyright 2007)

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. This happens best when children have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides our children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning. Children's learning is extended through accessing resources freely and being allowed to move them around our setting.

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.'

(Principles into Practice Card 4.3 from the EYFS DCSF Crown Copyright 2007)

Children will be given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning and development, 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-ended questions.

Areas of learning and development:

The EYFS is made up of three prime areas of learning and development and four specific areas.

The prime areas are as follows:

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- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional development

The Specific areas are as follows

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

All areas are delivered through a balance of adult focused and child initiated activities. In each area there are early learning goals (ELGs) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS (end of the reception year).

Children will be taught how to use all resources safely through focused activities. The adult's role within continuous provision areas will encourage children to interact with resources and the environment with care and respect; and with regard for health and safety. We offer a range of resources both natural and man-made. We have a range of multi-sensory, multi-cultural and non-stereotypical resources.

Leadership and accountability:

We work hard to ensure our practice is ever evolving. Internal and external mechanisms regarding quality include: observations, data analysis, consultations, action planning and target setting and policy review. Monitoring takes place through the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), Governing Body, 1-1s/appraisals, performance management and through Ofsted inspections. We evaluate as a staff and SLT with parents/carers, our multi-agency partners and the community.

We review our practice and provision annually with key staff linking areas to our school development plan.

Continuous professional development:

We are committed to all staff accessing continuous professional development. Individual training will be chosen or identified based on individual's interests or remits, linked to appraisal or performance management and in response to Ofsted inspections and national/local initiatives. We have systems in place to cascade this information with others and ascertain the impact of the training on our provision.

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This policy is to be shared with Teachers and Governors.

Shared – November 2022

Reviewed – November 2024

Allison Diggle November 2022