



**Ashby Hill Top Primary School**  
**Early Years Policy**  
**Next Review January 2023**

*"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 Early Years Foundation Stage",  
Department for Education, 2012

At Ashby Hill Top Primary School, we are committed to providing a high quality early years' education, which gives children a secure and confident start to their school life and nurtures a lifelong love of learning. We are fully committed to the purpose and aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework.

EYFS is based upon four themes and we work to meet these in the following ways;

- A Unique Child – We value the diversity of all children in our care and aim to meet the needs of every individual. We recognize that every child is an individual who learns and progresses in their own way and at their own rate. We believe that every child is a successful learner and we work hard to provide learning opportunities that stimulate and motivate all children to develop. We do this by planning opportunities that build upon and extend each child's knowledge and experience by taking into account their own learning styles and interests.
- Positive Relationships – we aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationship with the children and their families. Through secure and trusting relationship children develop the confidence to take risks and cultivate their independence. We highly value the parents'/carers' role as educators and work hard to develop a partnership with them in their child's learning. Strong relationships with feeder settings have been developed and maintained allowing an ongoing dialogue about children and provision and school staff visit settings at least annually.
- Enabling Environments – we recognize that the environment plays a key role in the learning and development of young children. Through careful planning and the skillful intervention from staff children's play is an extremely successful vehicle for learning. The outdoor environment is used as much as possible to provide the opportunities for exploring and creating on a wider scale. In the classroom environment we aim to provide places where the children can be loud, quiet, creative, physical and reflective.
- Learning and Developing – staff have a clear understanding of how young children develop and learn and this impacts upon their teaching. We feel that it is important that children are provided with opportunities and the freedom to lead and control their own play and learning. Staff are well trained in how to facilitate children's learning and we feel strongly that through scaffolding children's play we encourage improved language development, knowledge, skills and understanding. Providing a balance of adult and child initiated tasks is fundamental to the acquisition of new learning, consolidation of skills and further development of understanding.

### **Staffing and Organisation**

At Ashby Hill Top Primary School, we have two Foundation Classes that share a large classroom base and dedicated outdoor area. The classroom is organised into learning zones for the children to access. There are



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two full time teachers, supported by a full time Nursery Nurse and another Learning Support Assistant. Other learning support or teaching assistants may be deployed in EYFS based on the needs of the children.

Staff are organised to support the children in a balance of adult led and child initiated experiences throughout the day. Most sessions include free flow access to the outdoor area. Practitioners are aware of the need to be flexible in order to respond to unplanned events that the children are interested in.

### **Planning**

The Early Learning Goals are the knowledge, skills and understanding, which young children should have acquired by the time they reach the age of five.

There are three **prime areas of learning**:

Communication and Language

Physical Development

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

In addition, there are **four specific areas of learning**:

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the World

Expressive Arts and Design

Our planning has a sharp focus on the children's needs, their interests and their stages of development. We recognise that the seven areas of learning cannot be delivered in isolation and seek opportunities to make links between them. We aim to deliver the curriculum through planned, purposeful learning experiences and present new concepts in meaningful contexts that enable the children to build on what they already know.

### **Effective Teaching and Learning**

We encourage the children to play an active role in shaping their learning experiences. Adults engage in discussion with the children about what they are interested in, which skills they would like to develop further and which resources they need to support their learning. At the beginning of the topic, the children take part in an "inspiration day" to start off the topic. At the end of the topic, the children look at and discuss their learning and take part in a "learning celebration" which brings together all of the children's learning from over the half term.

We aim to provide an attractive, challenging learning environment that offers high quality opportunities for the children to learn through play, both indoors and outdoors. There is a range of "continuous provision" available in the classroom, that is designed to offer open-ended, practical learning opportunities. Children are supported to think creatively and imaginatively and explore how resources can be adapted. Each week, this provision is enhanced with additional learning opportunities that link to, extend and consolidate that week's teaching focus.



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Adult led learning are practical in nature and based on first hand experiences wherever possible. The children are supported to develop problem-solving skills through open-ended tasks and opportunities to share their thinking with others. We recognise that the balance of child initiated and adult led learning is crucial and staff use their knowledge of the children to provide opportunities that best suit their learning styles, characteristics and needs.

**Observation and Assessment**

At Ashby Hill Top Primary School, we use a range of strategies to gather information about children's learning and development and use this information to ensure that our planning meets the needs of all learners. During child initiated learning, staff scaffold children's learning and record significant next steps within each child's development. The Early Excellence Assessment Tracker (EExAT) is used to build a story of children's development and progress. This includes observations and photographs which is used alongside a paper based Learning Journey to provide a rounded view of the whole child. Parental contributions to EExAT are valued as part of our assessment process.

Initial assessments are made when individual children display high levels of wellbeing and involvement. Teachers use their knowledge of each child to indicate starting points for learning towards the Early Years Outcomes as well as making a summative assessment on EExAT. This allows learning opportunities to be pitched appropriately and also provides a baseline of the children's attainment. This information is closely monitored throughout the year to ensure that all children are making good progress.

In the Summer term, staff consider the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELGs) in the EYFS Profile (EYFSP) to decide whether each child is working at the expected levels, exceeding the levels or have not yet met the levels. Judgements against the ELGs are based on ongoing observation; all relevant records; discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

The results of the EYFSP are shared with parents and/or carers, and there are opportunities for them to meet their child's class teacher to discuss this information.

At the end of the year, Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the EYFSP results together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This helps to create a smooth transition and assists with the planning of teaching and learning in Year 1.

The EYFSP results are reported to the local authority, who monitor and moderate the judgements made.

**Learning Environment**

An effective learning environment provides opportunities for inspiration, exploration, challenge and discovery. It should reflect the learning needs and interests of young children. Our classroom is organised into learning zones through which children can work independently or alongside an adult to develop their skills, understanding and knowledge. Key literacy and mathematical skills, as well as Prime areas of learning, are encouraged across the learning environment. We aim to develop children's independence as learners within the classroom environment by resources being easily accessible and clearly labelled. Staff regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the learning zones and make adaptations as necessary.



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**Parent Partnerships**

We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- Having high quality discussions with parents/carers during our induction process
- Offering fortnightly open door sessions within which parents/carers can come into the classroom and share the learning that has taken place
- Enabling parents/carers to have regular access to their child's paper based Learning journey
  
- Enabling parents to have free access to their child's online Learning Journey and encouraging them to make contributions regarding their child's achievements at home
- Contributions from parents about their child's progress in all areas of the curriculum are collected at various points throughout the year
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There are formal meetings for parents twice a year at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress.
- Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents/carers such as 'stay and play' and a Christmas celebration
- Inviting parents into school once each half term at the end of the topic to celebrate the work the children have completed over the half term

**Community Links and the Wider World**

Over the year, we arrange visits from members of the local community to support our topic work. The children take part in several educational visits or experiences linked to their topic work. Film clips, non-fiction texts and artefacts are also used to introduce new concepts in real-life contexts. We aim to develop the children's awareness of other cultures by exploring different countries and celebrations.

**Behaviour Management**

Please refer to the school's Behaviour Policy.

**Safeguarding**

Please refer to the school's Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy.

**Inclusion and Equal Opportunities**

We have a responsibility to ensure positive attitudes to diversity and difference. We can support each child's needs by:

- Removing or helping to overcome barriers where these already exist
- Being alert to the early signs of needs that could later lead to difficulties and responding quickly and appropriately, involving other agencies as required
- Stretching and challenging all children

Please refer to the school's Equality of Opportunities and SEND policy.



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**Premises and Security**

All access to the school is through the main school office, which is kept locked. Staff use a key fob to gain access to the building and sign in and out. The office staff are responsible for verifying the identity of any visitors before they enter school. Visitors are asked to sign in to the school visitor's log and are given a visitor badge to wear. Staff are aware of their role in challenging anyone who is not recognised and asking for identification from anyone claiming to be from an outside agency.

The playground gates are kept locked, except when the children enter and leave the setting at the beginning and end of their sessions.

The playground gates and classroom door are closely monitored by staff when children are entering or leaving the setting, to ensure that they cannot leave unaccompanied. All staff are aware of the need to monitor these to ensure that they are secure during the session. The register is used to check how many children are present. When moving from one area within school to another, head counts are used to check that all children are present before leaving.

**Arrival and Collection of Children**

Children can enter the classroom when the gates open at 8.45am. Each child is marked in on the day's register by the classroom staff. At the end of the day parents wait in an allocated space in the playground and each child are dismissed from the classroom door when an authorised adult arrives to collect them. If a child needs to be collected during the school day, parents report to the school office.

Under no circumstances is a child allowed to leave with anyone other than those named on the EYFS collection permission form, unless we have received prior notification from the parent/carer. If there are queries regarding a child's collection, the class teacher will contact the child's parent/carer to discuss the situation with them.

If a child is not collected and the parent/guardian is uncontactable, the other names on the child's contact form will be called to collect the child. If no-one on the child's contact form is contactable, the head teacher should telephone the Social Services Duty Officer or Out of Hours Duty Point. Arrangements should then be made for the child to be removed to an appropriate place of protection agreed by the Social Services Department. It remains the responsibility of the Social Services Department in conjunction with the Police to contact the parents and if appropriate, to inform them of their child's whereabouts.

**Missing Child**

If a child disappears during the school day, staff will; check with all members of staff when the child was last seen and that they have not been collected by a parent/carer, organize a thorough and systematic search of the building and surrounding playground etc, inform the head teacher of the situation and telephone the child's parents or other emergency contact to explain the situation and double check that the child is not there or their whereabouts known. If the child is still unable to be located, the school will notify the police of a missing person.



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### **Outings**

Written parental permission to take the children into the local environment is sought upon admission to the school. Further permission is obtained for any other outings. Risk assessments are completed for each type of outing.

### **Key Person Approach**

The class teacher is responsible for the well being of all of the children in their Foundation class. In EYFS, each child is assigned a "Key Person" At Ashby Hill Top, the EYFS teacher acts a 'Key Person' to all children in EYFS, supported by the Teaching Assistant/Nursery Nurse.

The key person's responsibilities include:

- Helping the child to become familiar with the setting
- Building a relationship with each child's parents, working in partnership with them to ensure that the child is being cared for appropriately for each family
- Responding sensitively to the child's needs, feelings, ideas and behaviour
- Ensuring that the learning opportunities on offer meet the needs of each child

### **Promoting Awareness of Dangers and How to Stay Safe**

We encourage the children to take an active role in ensuring their own safety and involve them in discussions about health and safety issues. For example, the children may take on the role of a 'Danger Detective' and look for possible hazards around the classroom.

### **Risk Assessments**

In addition to the school's risk assessment, daily checks are completed in Foundation to ensure that any hazards are identified and managed before the children enter the classroom and outdoor area.

### **Complaints**

Please refer to the school's Complaints policy.

### **Information for Parents and Carers**

We provide a pack for new parents and carers that includes information about our daily routines, the types of activities provided, staffing and food and drink. There is a parent's notice board located in the outside area that is regularly updated.

### **Transition from Pre-school to Foundation**

Our induction process starts before the half term break of the summer term. We spend the following weeks developing relationships with the new children and families to ensure that starting school is a positive and happy time for all involved.

The starting point of our relationship for many families is a tour of the school with the Head teacher or a senior member of staff as parents/ carers decide which schools to apply for a place at. Children can spend time in the EYFS classroom with their parents and see the current EYFS children busy with their learning and parents have the opportunity to ask questions about our provision.



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Parents/carers are then invited to an evening meeting during which they meet the EYFS team and receive information about our induction process and our school life.

Children are invited to three story sessions alongside the current EYFS children. These allow the children to become used to a short time in the classroom environment without their parent/carer. Parents/carers will stay in the school hall and will be provided refreshments from the current parents. They will be on hand to offer support and guidance to the new parents in a more informal atmosphere.

One to one visits will take place at the end of the summer term or within the first two days of the autumn term. Each family will have visit from two members of the EYFS team; this can either be done at the child's home or in the classroom at school. Parents will be given the opportunity to share information about their child such as their personality and character traits, interests and medical details. The benefits of these visits are many;

including the child receiving individual attention from staff and parents/carers having the opportunity to share information and ask questions confidentially.

We work closely with our feeder settings to support a smooth transition into school. Where possible, staff will arrange a visit to observe the children in their pre-school setting and collect valuable information about the child's learning and behaviour, things they enjoy and who their friends are. If a visit in person is not possible then a telephone conversation will take place to ensure there is an opportunity to share information.

The children have two half visit days at school before the summer break. The second visit includes a lunchtime - through consulting with parents/carers we established that lunchtime was one of the main areas of anxiety, therefore this arrangement allows for some reassurance before Autumn Term. Parents are encouraged to leave their child at school for the duration of these visits.

Children are admitted in one intake in at the beginning of the Autumn Term. They will complete half days for the first full week of the school year in two separate groups before starting full time the following week. This enables each child to get more adult attention and provides a calmer environment. Lunchtime is gradually included into the children's day.

Children who are five within the first week or are already in full time day care are offered the opportunity to begin full time straight away. During the part time week, a joint decision will be made between staff and parents/carers about whether or not their child is ready to begin full time days before the end of the part time period.

### **Transition from Foundation to Year One**

In the summer term, we begin a programme of transition to support the children with their move to Year One. This involves visits to the Year One classrooms, joint activities and discussion with current Year One children, walks to look at where they will enter school and opportunities to ask any questions about the next year. Parents are invited to a transition meeting during which teaching staff are introduced and the main changes to the curriculum and routines are explained. Parents are also given a booklet outlining the changes that their child will be facing. The school holds a 'Move Up' day, giving the children a taste of their new class. New and



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old class teachers discuss each child sharing all important information regarding their needs and records are passed on.

**Being Active**

The children have access to an outdoor area, which enables a range of learning experiences but large scale physical development takes place on the playground alongside an adult. A range of resources support children's physical development including stilts, wheeled vehicles, ropes, balls and den making equipment. The children take part in two PE sessions each week.

**Food and Drink**

We provide a 'free flow' snack area in the Foundation classroom. A range of healthy snacks are available, supplied by "The School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme". Children are supported to wash their hands with soap before selecting a snack and pouring their own drink. The snack bar is accessible throughout the day, allowing the children to make decisions about when they are hungry and thirsty. Practitioners monitor who has accessed the snack bar and remind the children to remain seated when eating and drinking. Fresh drinking water is available at all times and in hot weather, it is also provided in the outdoor area.

The snack table is cleaned at the beginning of each session and is regularly checked throughout the session. All food is stored according to manufacturer's recommendations and in line with food hygiene legislation.

Information about the children's dietary needs is sought when they enter the setting. A list of the children's dietary needs is available in the classroom and in the register and all practitioners have regard to this when putting out food and drink in the snack area or when leading a cooking or food tasting activity.

**Illnesses and Injuries**

Parents and carers are asked not to send their child to school if they are unwell and to inform the school office of their absence. Parents/carers are asked to inform staff if their child is suffering from a minor ailment so that appropriate care can be given. Children must not return to school within 48 hours of a bout of sickness or diarrhea.

If a child becomes unwell whilst at school, a member of staff will:

- Phone the parents/carers, explain that their child is unwell, explain the symptoms noted and ask them to collect their child
- Sit with the child in a quiet place away from other children, if possible, until the parents arrive
- If the child has had sickness or diarrhoea, explain the policy of at least a 48 hour clearance of either symptom before the child may return

Advice relating to notifiable diseases is displayed in the school medical room.

In the case of an injury, appropriate first aid will be administered by a qualified paediatric first aider. A first aid equipment is kept in the school medical room and its contents are in accordance with advice from the Health and Safety Executive and the Community Health Physician. First aid cover is provided at playtimes and



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lunchtimes. All accidents are recorded in one of the school's accident books and signed by the member of staff who dealt with the incident. The staff member dealing with the incident is responsible for completing an accident slip and this is sent home with the child at the end of the day. Parents/carers may be contacted by telephone to inform them of an injury if deemed necessary.

In the case of a more serious accident to a child, the practitioner/school will contact the parent/guardian to agree a course of action if time permits. If the parent/guardian cannot be contacted the practitioner/school will seek appropriate medical attention or treatment for the child. The child should not be given anything to eat or drink. If a child or adult needs to be transported to hospital, every effort should be made to use a car with fully comprehensive insurance including business use. Two adults must accompany the child, and one adult must accompany a member of staff. Should an ambulance be required, one adult must accompany the child or adult. The child's registration form must be taken to the hospital with the child.

### **Medicines**

Only drugs/medicines prescribed by a registered Medical Practitioner will be administered to children. Parents should complete and hand in a Medication Consent Form, along with medicine, to a member of staff. Drugs/medicines must only be administered to the child for whom they are prescribed and all drugs/medicines must be kept in the original container stating whom they are prescribed for and dosage information. Unwanted or unused medicines must be returned to the parent for disposal. A record of the drugs given should be made indicating the time, dosage and signed by the person administering the dose.

Training for prescribed medication that is invasive i.e. EPIPENS etc is available via the school nurse. If an individual child requires a care plan, this will be drawn up in partnership with parents and the school nurse.

We have daily contact with parents at the beginning and end of each day and a contact book is provided, and checked daily, for parents who are unable to bring their child to school.