



Alderman Bolton Primary Academy

Early Years Policy

Ratified: September 2024

Next Review Date: September 2025

Policy Responsibilities and Review

Policy type:	School
Guidance:	Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage Development Matters guidance
Related policies:	
Review frequency:	Annually
Committee responsible:	Early Years team
Chair signature:	<i>D Proudfoot 26.09.24</i>
Changes in latest version:	Statutory Framework for Early years Foundation Stage

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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."

Statutory framework for the early year's foundation stage, Department for Education 2021

Our Intent and Aims

This policy reflects the high priority that Alderman Bolton Primary places on the teaching and learning of the youngest children within our school. Within Early Years at Alderman Bolton Primary Academy, we aim to:

- Recognise that all children are unique and special
- Give each child a happy, positive and memorable start to their school journey within a safe and secure environment
- Enable each child, through encouragement, high expectations and nurture, to develop socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually in order to thrive in a diverse and ever changing world
- Establish solid foundations and foster a love of learning
- Offer a broad and balanced curriculum
- Supporting children to develop care, respect and appreciation for others, including those with beliefs, cultures and opinions differ to their own.
- Offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited opportunity for development
- Help each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements by experiencing success and developing their confidence to work towards personal goals.
- Establish close partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers.

Legislation

This policy is based on the requirements set out in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) that applies from January 2024.

Organisation

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. Our Early Years Foundation Stage accommodates children from the age of 2 to 5 years in separate Nursery and Reception Units.

Children in our Nursery Unit are taught by one teacher and two teaching assistants, all working full time. We can take a maximum of 5 x 2 Year olds in any session, and 26 x 3-4 year olds per session.

The nursery children attend a variety of sessions; places take the form of:

- 15 hours free (funded 2-year-old places) am or pm sessions, not full days
- 15 hours free (3-4 year olds) am or pm sessions, not full days
- 30 hours free (working parents) Monday – Friday 8.30am to 3.10pm with a £2 fee for lunchtime cover

Parents can choose to 'top up' sessions to a full day at a cost of £15, depending on availability, by arrangement of the Business Manager and the EYFS lead.

Reception has two classes in the cohort of 2024-2025 and are taught by two teachers and one full-time teaching assistant.

The Curriculum

Our Nursery and Reception follow the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from January 2024. This framework defines what we teach and we use the Development Matters guidance to support our curriculum.

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development that are equally important and interconnected. However, three areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

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

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through four specific areas:

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

The Early Learning Goals summarise the knowledge, skills and understanding that the children should have gained in these areas by the end of the Reception year. The progress of Nursery children is tracked using the Development Matters age ranges and checkpoints.

We enrich the Early Years framework with our Alderman Bolton curriculum in order to enhance the experiences and opportunities available to our children. This includes special events and celebrations, memorable experiences, themes selected to drive the curriculum and the PSHE Jigsaw scheme. Our teaching of synthetic phonics uses the Monster Phonics scheme; our teaching of mathematics, guided by First4Maths consultants, follows a mastery approach; our Literacy texts and planning, in Reception, follow the Literacy Counts scheme.

Teaching and Learning

In the Foundation Stage a great emphasis is placed on child initiated learning through play and activity. Play is central to learning in Early Education and allows children to investigate, explore and make sense of their world, to be creative and to interact with one another. Through their play the children can extend their skills of communication and develop early reading, writing and mathematical skills. We aim to observe, join in with and follow up the children's play experiences and through sensitive adult interactions with the child provide opportunities for sustained shared thinking between adult and child to develop their thinking skills, broaden their ideas and move their learning forward. Through active learning we aim to develop deep understanding of basic concepts. We endeavour to provide enjoyable challenge and to promote resilience in our children.

Planning - The interests and abilities and attainment of our children are used to inform our planning.

Our Long Term planning highlights what the children will learn over the academic year and is broken down into half terms.

Our Medium Term planning focuses on the skills we next wish our children to acquire. These we hope to meet/teach through the current interests of the children and is broken down into weeks.

Our short term planning is weekly and is broken down into separate planning for key areas of the EYFS curriculum in most cases. There is also separate planning for continuous provision which is available for our children, for example, role play areas, outdoor equipment, painting, play dough, small world and construction equipment, mathematical apparatus and writing opportunities in all areas. These ensure that learning opportunities are available at all times to support children's development within 7 areas of learning.

Differentiation - Activities/work is differentiated according to the needs, interests and abilities of individual or groups of children. We aim provide varied learning opportunities that cater for the differing learning styles of our children -visual, kinesthetic and auditory. For those children with additional needs we make individual learning plans with advice from our SENDCO and involving parents/carers.

Assessment

At Alderman Bolton, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are then used to inform future planning. Observations and significant achievements are recorded in the child's portfolio on Class Dojo which parents/carers have access to and can view and comment. In Reception children also have their own writing book which they will use on a regular basis to show case their writing and letter formation development.

The children entering nursery are observed during their first weeks engaging in a variety of activities and from this and discussion with parents/carers their achievement on entry is recorded by teaching staff referencing Development Matters/Early Outcomes. The progress of every child is then tracked termly. Reception children will usually have preschool records from our Nursery or another setting that enable their achievement on entry to be recorded.

At the start of Reception, all children will complete the statutory RBA (Reception Baseline Assessment) which is a short, interactive and practical assessment, covering early mathematics, language, communication and literacy.

At the end of EYFS, practitioners complete the EYFS profile (Statutory requirement) for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 16 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- 'Expected' – meeting expected levels of development
- 'Emerging' – not yet reaching the expected levels of development

Equal Opportunities

The well-being and progress of every child in our Foundation Stage class matters to us and as such all are treated fairly and with respect, as are their families. We are inclusive. We celebrate diversity and all the learning opportunities it brings.

The Induction Process

To ensure the best possible transition: -

- All children have a home visit whether they start at 2, 3 or 4
- Before moving to Reception from the main nursery children have visits to their new class and staff have transition meeting to discuss each child.
- ALL CHILDREN starting Reception in the September are offered a home visit from their new teacher. We strongly encourage these especially if they are new to the school.

- All reception parents are invited to a meeting in June for a Welcome Meeting. This allows the parents to meet each other, the teacher and Head Teacher. A talk will be given by the teacher and Head Teacher to introduce them to the school and inform them on how they can help prepare them for September.

Home School Partnership

We recognise that parents and carers are a child's first and most enduring educators and we aim for the school and parents and carers to work closely. This can have a very positive impact on a child's development but relies on a two-way flow of information and knowledge.

We develop this strong working relationship between the school and parents and carers as follows:

- Each child in nursery is assigned a key person who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.
- We hold parent consultations in October and March.
- Parents and/or Carers are kept informed on current teaching and learning via the Class Dojo story page.
- We operate an "open door" policy that will allow parents and carers to discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner. Conversely, if staff have concerns about the progress of a child, they are able to approach parents and/or carers to discuss them.
- We conduct workshops for parents and carers to enable them to be familiar with the teaching methods used in school to make it easier to emulate them at home. E.g. Phonics Meeting in September, Literacy in January and Math's in May.
- We hold regular 'stay and play' sessions for parents, grandparents and other family members to join in and see how our setting works.
- Parents and carers can tell us about what the children have been doing at home by sharing photos and comments via Class Dojo portfolios.
- Daily updates are given on Class Dojo with photos of what they have been doing that day and what they have learnt so that parents can discuss their learning with them each evening.
- Home work is given out in Reception each Friday.
- A written report is provided at the end of the school year.

Transition to Year One

At the end of the Foundation Stage our children move to Year One. We want the move to year one to be as seamless and as stress free as possible for our children and parents. Visits to Year One are planned for the children and the EYFS Profile along with any other documentation and knowledge of each child is passed on to the next teacher. The Reception and Year 1 teachers follow a programme of transition that allows a follow through and time to plan together and discuss the needs of the children who have moved into Year 1. Parents are welcome to come and talk to staff about any concerns they or their child might have regarding Transition to Year 1.

This policy will be reviewed by the Early Years Team annually or when changes to the statutory framework occur.