

Early Years Policy

Last reviewed: October 2021
Date for next review: October 2024



NO OUTSIDERS

EVERYONE IS WELCOME.

'Aspire to be Amazing'

Ashton Hayes Primary School

Church Road, Ashton Hayes, Chester, Cheshire CH3 8AB



Erasmus+



**Cheshire West
and Chester**



Supporting Social Communication



**Cheshire West
and Chester**

Early Years Policy

Introduction

At Ashton Hayes we are committed to the continuing development of Early Years Foundation Stage practice as we strive to work alongside families to ensure a secure and happy start to school life. We aim to support all children to become resilient, independent and collaborative learners. We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential.

Intent

The Foundation Stage Curriculum

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;
- It acknowledges the importance of a full working partnership with parents and carers.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based on four themes:

- A Unique Child - At Ashton Hayes Primary 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 and at varying rates.
- Positive Relationships - At Ashton Hayes Primary School we recognise that children learn to be strong, confident and independent from being in secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.
- Enabling Environments - At Ashton Hayes Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development, where the children feel confident, secure and challenged.
- Learning and Development - The EYFS Curriculum – Our curriculum for the Foundation Stage reflects the areas of learning identified in the Early Learning Goals.

Children in the Reception year follow the new (2020) Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage,

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in Early Years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. None of the areas of learning can be delivered in isolation from the others. Our children's learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skill across a number of learning areas.

Prime Areas

1. Personal, social and emotional development
2. Physical development.
3. Communication and language

Specific Areas

1. Literacy
2. Mathematics
3. Understanding the world.
4. Expressive Arts and Design

The Prime areas underpin all areas of development and act as building blocks for successful learning. We place a high value on these areas of learning, as they raise self esteem and build confidence, which in turn leads to independent learners. We follow the whole school approach of Conscious Discipline in order to support classroom management and positive choices.

Characteristics of Effective teaching and learning

We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

- Playing and exploring - children will have opportunities to investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.

Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

- Active learning - children will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements.

'Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence, they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

- Creating and thinking critically - we encourage and support children to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Children should be given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning. Adults can support children's thinking and help them make connections by showing interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open ended questions. Children can access resources and move around the classroom freely and purposefully to extend their learning.

Implementation

Transition

It is important that a child's first experiences of school are positive, and we aim to achieve this for all our children by-

- Developing close links with local pre-school settings.
- Inviting parents/carers to an information evening prior to starting school. Welcoming them to our home school partnership.
- Providing a welcome pack containing all relevant information.
- Offering home visits
- Offering afternoon visits to school in the summer term.
- Providing a staggered start to school in the autumn term.
- Creating a welcoming and stimulating environment, incorporating the children's interests.
- Encouraging all staff to take an active role in new starters first weeks.
- Encouraging older children to take on a caring role, with buddies from Buzzard class.
- Gradually integrating new starters into whole school times.
- Sending regular newsletters / blog entries home and updating website and use of Facebook

School Grounds

Within our extensive school grounds and outdoor areas, we aim to provide opportunities for learning and development across all areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum and developing skills from the Characteristics of Effective Learning. This also includes Forest School once a week. Opportunities for outdoor learning are including within planning and provision.

Play

We aim to provide opportunities for, well-planned, quality play through which our children can learn, be challenged and make sense of their world. We offer a range of play experiences across the areas of learning. Within the classroom will be carefully planned resources for continuous provision that allow the children to develop and revisit their ideas, both independently and with the support of adults. Enhancements and more specific activities and challenges are also added in response to observations of the children's learning and the curriculum focus or learning objectives. Staff carefully assess the level of adult involvement appropriate in each situation and work with the children to respond to and develop their idea.

Teaching and Learning

In the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations matched to the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage. Careful observation and assessment, and a thorough knowledge of the curriculum, allows staff to build a picture of the children's interests, ask relevant questions, develop play and plan opportunities for the next steps in learning.

The children's ideas are valued and everyone is encouraged to see themselves as learners who are confident to plan, review, reflect and revisit activities, encouraging independence and resilience. In Reception, children will experience a wide variety of teaching strategies and learning styles. Throughout the day the children will work independently, in a group and on adult led activities. We place an emphasis on providing first hand practical experiences for our children where possible as we believe this is how young children learn best.

Planning

A long term planner highlights the learning opportunities across the year and ensures coverage of the Reception Curriculum leading towards the Early Learning Goals.

Medium and short term plans created by the class teacher in collaboration with the Early Years Staff are developed based on the interests of the children and the individual and whole class next steps and assessments / observations made. Plans are developed to build upon quality texts, with texts being used widely as both a starting point and to support a learning focus. They will also incorporate wider opportunities eg whole school themes, National events etc.

Within the plans we ensure structure, balance, breadth, differentiation and progression. Planning is reviewed and adapted regularly according to the children's responses.

Classroom Organisation

We believe that classroom organisation is crucial to developing independence and supporting the children with developing ideas. The classroom is set up and organised for continuous provision. Resources are easily accessible and stored appropriately so the children are able to access them independently. Enhancements may be added to the classroom to support children's interests or learning objectives.

Clear storage of resources also supports the children with helping to tidy them away at the end of a session and develop a sense of ownership and pride with the classroom. The children all have small job responsibilities to develop the sense of being part of a team and to develop respect for their surroundings.

The class teachers are responsible for auditing resources and ensuring they are appropriate and safe for use.

The classroom organisation reflects all areas of the EYFS curriculum. Whilst there are clearly marked areas, these are not exclusive to activities being limited to that area and children are encouraged to access resources and use them in their play whilst developing their own ideas. Mark making resources and texts are available throughout the classroom.

Literacy

We develop our reading and letter recognition skills through the 'Letters and Sounds' programme using a multi-sensory approach to sound recognition incorporating Jolly Phonics and phonics play. Independent reading books are matched in ability to the children's phonic knowledge and word recognition. Children also participate in whole class shared reading and smaller group guided reading as appropriate. The children are encouraged and supported to develop their 'emergent writing' using their phonics and whole word knowledge as well as their emerging knowledge of genres and sentence structure. Key skills are supported through the Pathways programme.

Mathematics

We follow the structure in the White Rose mathematics programme. Opportunities for using and applying mathematics are also promoted throughout the day within play, songs and rhymes, counting opportunities and within continuous provision.

Parents

We recognise the importance of developing strong home school home school links in the early years and strive to build a partnership with parents, encouraging communication channels.

We encourage parent's involvement in their child's learning through curriculum evenings and our website and newsletters, which gives guidance as to how they can support and reinforce learning.

We also encourage parents to make contributions to their learning journeys.

Parents are asked to give regular reading support at home. We often ask parents to help their children collect artefacts for topics and activities.

We may also ask for extra support if they're finding something specific challenging e.g. getting dressed, recognising numbers.

Inclusion

Early years staff will use a wide range of ideas, learning styles and approaches to ensure that all children in our care feel valued, engaged and challenged to become motivated learners with self-belief.

Every child is appreciated and accepted for their gender, culture, strengths and needs. Staff and children alike are encouraged to recognise and value the richness of pupil diversity and promote the whole school ethos of #nooutsiders.

Safety

Health and safety guidelines should be followed as appropriate to each learning situation. Staff will make professional judgements about the level of supervision when the children are playing outdoors in the EYFS area. These judgements will be based upon the activities, number of children and independence of the children and risk assessed accordingly.

Impact

We strive for all children to have become resilient, independent and collaborative learners, who will have achieved or worked towards their Early Learning Goals to the best of their ability and be ready for the transition to Year One.

Assessments

The primary purpose of assessment is to be able to inform planning and the next step of development for the children. As such, this can directly lead to the provision of appropriate activities and opportunities. A bank of evidence can then be used to inform summative judgements.

During the first half term in school all children in Reception will be assessed by staff to gain an overview of their starting points and interests which will inform the next stages of planning. From September 2021, children will be assessed formally using the National Baseline Assessment. Our ongoing formative assessments, in a range of contexts, enable us to determine next steps in each of the foundation stage areas of learning. From this we plan our curriculum, ensuring we meet the needs of each individual.

The profile is updated towards the end of each term to give a summative statement as to where children are up to and next steps with regard to the Early Learning Goals. Summative judgements are made on the Early Learning Goals and results are reported to the LA during the summer term and a formative report is produced for parents through an annual written report.


Teachers keep ongoing records including notes and observations, and also record work on an online assessment system – Tapestry, which builds up an individual profile, whilst also allowing staff to cross reference evidence towards the Early Learning Goals. Assessments are generally made during everyday class activities. Parents are also encouraged to contribute towards the Tapestry profile.

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Chair of Governors: 

Mrs A Lowry

Headteacher: 

Mr J Gilbert

EYFS lead: Mrs V Cuthbert