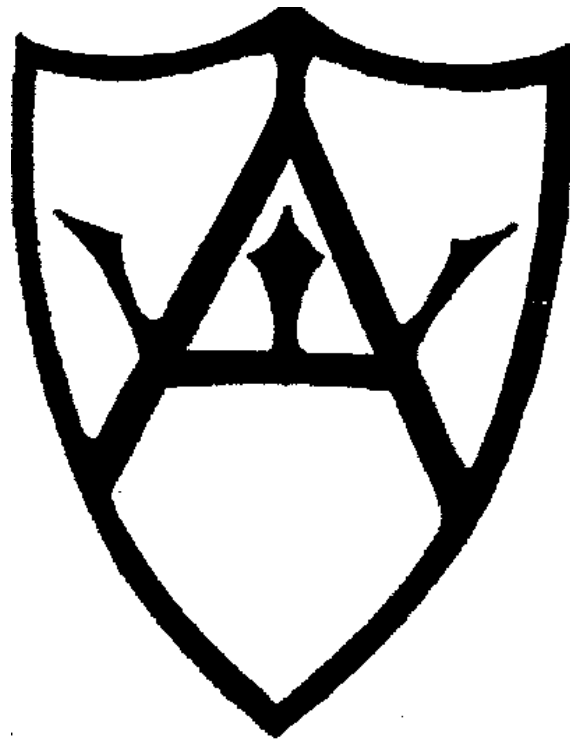


# Alfriston School



## Early Years Policy

Approved by FGB: Jan 2017

Next Review: Jan 2020

**Introduction**

*'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.'*

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile - Department for Children, Schools and Families 2012

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Alfriston Primary School children are admitted to Reception in the September following their fourth birthday.

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Alfriston Primary School we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. However, we also believe that early childhood is valid in itself as part of life. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

**Our Aims at Alfriston Primary School**

We are a small village school with four classes covering the age range from 4+ to 11. Foundation stage children form one of these classes. They are gradually introduced to participation in the life of the whole school community. They take part in most activities with the older children and are a valued and integral part of the school.

We aim to:

- To develop the whole child
- To build positive relations between adults, children and parents
- To encourage confidence, independence and self-esteem as a prerequisite for effective learning
- To celebrate success and achievement
- To provide broad and balanced experiences

**The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum**

The curriculum for the Foundation Stage reflects the areas of learning identified in the Early Learning Goals. There are three prime areas:

**Prime Areas:**

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

There are also four specific areas through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

**Specific Areas:**

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

The areas are equally important and depend on each other to develop a child's full potential. None of these areas are delivered in isolation from the others and learning experiences help to develop a number of competencies. All areas are developed through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities where children are encouraged to develop ideas, concepts and skills.

Full details of the curriculum can be in the document 'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage: Setting standards for learning from birth to five'. This can be downloaded from the Internet at: [www.everychildmatters.gov.uk](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk)

The principles which guide good Early Years practice are grouped into four themes:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

**A Unique Child**

The diversity of individuals is respected and no child or family is discriminated against. Children are given clear boundaries, but they are encouraged to make choices to help them develop their sense of self. We aim to identify and provide for any needs as early as possible, taking into account factors such as maturity and family circumstances. We integrate all children and aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum. Any additional needs are met through providing appropriate resources and learning opportunities as well as additional adult support.

**Positive Relationships**

Children learn best when they have warm trusting relationships with adults. We work hard at developing our relationships with children by observing and listening to them to ensure we know them well and can support and extend their learning.

We believe in working closely with parents and carers and provide both formal and informal opportunities to review children's progress and celebrate achievements. Parents are invited to formal meetings in Terms 1, 3 and 6 to discuss progress. Parents are also invited into school weekly to share their child's Learning Journey and look at their class learning environment. We actively seek parental involvement in many other ways, including helping in the classroom, sharing topic activities at home, joining us on our outings and becoming part of our PTFA. In the first 4 weeks at school parents are invited into the classroom every morning.

### **Enabling Environments**

The environment plays a key role in developing the child. At Alfriston Primary School we believe that children need to play in stimulating indoor and outdoor environments. We plan to ensure that children can explore and learn in a safe, secure but also challenging area. We observe and reflect on children's spontaneous play and build on this to extend and support specific areas of learning.

### **Learning and Development**

In our school we know that children learn in different ways and at different rates. In the Early Years there are three characteristics of effective learning which describe the different ways children learn rather than what they learn. These comprise of:

- **Playing and exploring**

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences which help them make sense of the world. They initiate activities and are willing to have a go.

- **Active learning**

This is typically when children are motivated and interested and they have some control over their learning. They develop a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

- **Creativity and thinking critically.**

Adults support children's thinking and help them to make links and connections in their learning by asking open ended questions and allowing them to access resources and extend their learning.

### **Assessment**

On entry to Reception we carry out baseline assessments for each child. Throughout the Early Years the Class Teacher submits end of term assessment data to the Head Teacher showing each child's development across the seven areas of learning.

**Look, listen, note** - ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process. Staff extend and develop children's concepts, language and reasoning skills through sensitive observation and intervention, building on what the children know in an appropriate way.

During the Foundation Year a Foundation Stage Profile will be completed for each child. This will detail each child's progress and achievement in the ELGs. Parents are then invited to come and discuss the completed profile.

**Monitoring**

The Headteacher undertakes monitoring of the Foundation Stage Curriculum and a named governor has responsibility for the Foundation Stage.

**Transition**

Alfriston School has a strong link with Alfriston Pre-school and visits are arranged between the two settings on a regular basis. We also have good relationships with other Pre-school settings in the area and visit any children who will be attending our school from these settings. Pre-schools all complete a summative transition record so we are aware of children's developmental stage and learning styles. We attend Early Years local cluster group meetings with Nursery and Reception staff across the local area.

Before children start at school in Term 1, they will have several opportunities to visit their new setting. We have an informal meeting with parents/carers and their child, discussing the child's family circumstances, achievements, medical history, likes and dislikes and any concerns they may have.

In their last term of the Foundation Stage the children will be given opportunities to meet their KS1 teacher, and the other children who will make up this class, on a more formal basis. The Foundation Stage and KS1 teacher work closely together throughout the year and regularly discuss the individual profiles of the children in order to provide a continuing curriculum based on the children's achievements.