

# Ashleworth C of E Primary School



## Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Approved by:	Full Governing Body
Date:	21 September 2020
Next review due by:	September 2021

## *Early Years Foundation Stage Policy*

**\*Please note that the amendments made to the policy to reflect the current situation of COVID-19, are in red.**

The EYFS applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Churcham and Ashleworth C of E Primary Schools, all school children join us at the beginning of the school year in which they are five (compulsory schooling begins at the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday). Key Stage 1 begins for all our children at the beginning of year 1. The EYFS is important in its own right, and in preparing children for later schooling. The Early Learning Goals (ELGs) set out what is expected of most children by the end of the EYFS. Children joining our school have already learnt a great deal. Many have been to one of a range of settings that exist in our community or to our nursery onsite at Churcham School (Acorns Nursery).

### **Our Aims:**

At both Churcham and Ashleworth C of E Primary Schools, we aim to give each child a positive and meaningful start to their school life, in which they can establish solid foundations on which to develop into independent and enthusiastic learners.

We will encourage children to develop independence within a secure and friendly atmosphere; to support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing; to help each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and by developing the confidence to work towards personal goals.

Our high expectations will enable each child to develop socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally and to achieve their full potential. We will offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited availability for development through a wide range of new and exciting first-hand experiences that will give children the opportunity to consolidate, explore and test their skills, knowledge and understanding alongside existing experiences. We will ensure that children are kept healthy and safe and that they achieve the knowledge and skills they need to start school. **Aim to build resilience (especially with today's current Covid 19 circumstances)**

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

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

## A Unique Child

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 assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

## Positive relationships

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships and aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families. Regular parent meetings and 'drop in sessions' are made available to parents to ensure that there is a strong link between parents and staff in the EYFS. Both teachers and class teaching assistants work alongside the children working in the EYFS and this enables all staff to build strong relationships with YR children.

Reception children often have the opportunity to join Year 1 and 2 children during the afternoons for topic work. This allows the Reception children to work collaboratively to share ideas. This grows their confidence and relationship skills with children of different ages.

## Enabling environments

We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. **Due to the current situation, we are having to restrict the resources that the children in the Early Years can access. However, we will ensure that the children have a range of resources offered throughout the week (they will be cleaned thoroughly after use). Resources will be put out on a daily basis and these resources will be carefully selected to help develop all of the EYFS areas and we will also follow the children's interests.**

Through observations, we assess the children's interests and stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging and achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest.

The outdoor learning environment is valued and plays an important part in the children's development. Staff working in the EYFS are always looking for ways to further improve the learning environment to enhance the children's learning/broaden the children's experiences. The weekly plans show when the children will have access to the outdoor area as well as encouraging them to use designated learning areas within the classroom. **The outdoor areas will be cleaned on a regular basis (after every use).**

## Areas of Learning

The EYFS consists of **three prime** areas of learning:

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

There are **four specific areas** of learning:

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

At both Ashleworth C of E and Churcham, all areas are delivered through a well-planned play-based approach, with a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities. Throughout the foundation stage, our long, medium and short-term plans ensure that each child has the opportunity to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in every area at the appropriate developmental level. Our long-term planning ensures coverage so that all children have opportunities to work towards and achieve the Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS. We follow a half termly topic-based approach which allows flexibility to ensure that both children's needs and interests are taken into account.

**We recognise the importance of teaching children about good hygiene practice and this will be built into the curriculum and into our weekly PSHE sessions.**

## Play

Learning through play underpins our approach to teaching and learning in the foundation stage. We embrace the fact that young children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them to learn. In doing so, we can provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning and to help them make sense of the world. Children have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own. They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experiences at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests, inspire those around them and consolidate their understanding and skills. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. Our adults (teachers and teaching assistants) take an active role in child-initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating, teaching and extending play, skills and language.

## Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning and the nursery and Reception teachers plan activities with these in mind. The characteristics highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them. The three characteristics are;

**Playing and Exploring** – children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'

At Ashleworth the children have the opportunity to do Forest School for one afternoon a fortnight. Forest School sets learning in a different context for children where they can undertake a range of practical activities. The children at Churcham now also have Forest School learning opportunities throughout the year.

**Active Learning** – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements

Teachers and teaching assistants encourage all children to persist and to overcome any difficulties.

**Creating and Thinking Critically** – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

## Inclusion

We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning and we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of individual children, so that children can reach their full potential. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds. We aim to build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs.

Those children that did not meet the ELGS due to the school closure, will have the opportunity to access the EYFS curriculum to ensure they are not left with gaps/have the learning opportunities they need.

Early Years Pupil Premium – we will endeavour to identify our least advantaged pupils and inform parents or carers of their opportunity to apply for their child's entitlement to extra funding in school. All extra funding we receive will be used to support areas in which we identify that the child will benefit from the most.

If additional needs are identified, the class teacher will liaise with the SENDCo to set targets to support the child's progress and a My Plan for that child may be put into place to ensure a good level of progress is made. If a child enters EYFS with an EHC plan we will work closely with all agencies involved to ensure the child's needs are met and planned for.

## Assessment

The Reception children's knowledge, understanding, skills and achievements are assessed and tracked using the developmental stages set out in the document 'Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)'.

We gather assessment information from a range of sources, including; observations of the children in play, in adult led activities, through discussions with parents and carers and through talking to the children. We keep 'Learning Journeys' for every child in Reception. These 'Learning Journeys' include written and photographic evidence to help us build up a picture of children's strengths and achievements and to help us to plan for children's next steps with their learning. The 'Learning Journeys' also include examples of the children's work.

In September, the EYFS teachers make a baseline assessment of every child and this progress is then tracked every term (at the end of every term, the assessment grids are highlighted and these assessments are recorded and reported back to the Head Teacher).

If we feel that children are not making good progress, interventions will be put into place to help ensure that the child progresses in that specific area of the EYFS curriculum. Observational evidence and samples of children's work throughout the school year will be used to assess children as 'emerging', 'expected' or 'exceeding' based on their understanding and achievement of the Early Learning Goals set out in the EYFS curriculum.

## Transitions

At both Churcham and Ashleworth C of E, we recognise that starting school has the potential to be a stressful time for both children and parents. **At Churcham, we usually have weekly 'Rising 5' sessions where the nursery children from Acorns join Class 1 (this takes place in the Summer term) but unfortunately due to Covid19, these did not take place in the 2019-2020 academic year. At Ashleworth C of E, they usually have a number of 'settling in' sessions for the children during the second half of the summer term but again these were not able to take place.**

Before the Reception children start school, there is a meeting with all YR parents to pass on any key information, school expectations, knowledge on our curriculum and assessment and advice on how they can help their child to settle into school life. The class teacher then meets with the parents on a 1 to 1 basis where personal information about the child can be passed onto the class teacher and the parents can ask any questions/share any concerns.

At the beginning of the school year, parents are given the option to either have their children start full time from September or to just bring their children in for mornings to begin with. The class teacher and the parent discuss what is best for each individual child.

## Partnership with Parents

We believe that parents and carers are a child's first educator and therefore work very closely to ensure they are involved in what their child does at school. We want parents to feel they can speak to us about their child and to feel comfortable in our setting. Parents are

welcomed and encouraged to share information about their child, to ask questions and to discuss their child's learning with the teachers. They are asked to contribute towards their child's Learning Journey at least once every term. **They are also encouraged to send messages to the class teachers via Dojo to allow them to communicate any concerns/celebrate any successes.**

At Ashleworth 'WOW Vouchers' are given out to the parents. These slips allow the parents to communicate to the teachers something amazing that they have seen their child doing at home. These may be some writing or recognising numbers.

Parents are also encouraged to support children's learning through; listening to their child read and by writing comments in their reading records, simple homework activities and by sharing assemblies and whole class activities. Children in Reception are given sounds/words/a book to take home (according to their stage of development). In the Summer term, more formal homework is set to help the Reception children prepare for Year 1.

**When it is safe to do so,** Parents will be invited into school for a 'Tea Party.' During the session, parents will be able to take part in a range of learning activities alongside their child. They will also be able to chat informally to their child's teacher. **For now, teachers will be posting on a weekly basis on Dojo to show parents what the children are doing in class so they are involved in their children's learning.**

## **Health & safety and safeguarding**

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. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance (2014) and we adhere to the school's safeguarding policy.

Reception children have a daily snack/milk time together as a small group and with the class teaching assistant. During this time, the children are encouraged to try a range of fruit and vegetables to help build a positive attitude towards healthy eating.

Class 1 have access to toileting facilities, and we teach the children the importance of hygiene, hand washing techniques and throughout the year we plan cooking activities to give children experiences of a range of healthy food. **The children wash their hands at regular intervals in the day and we put measures in place to ensure that we are reducing the risk of COVID-19 spreading.**

**This policy also links to:**

Teaching and Learning

Marking and Presentation

Behaviour

Anti-Bullying

Child Protection and Safeguarding

E – Safety and Acceptable Users

**In all aspects of our work and day-to-day provision at Ashleworth C of E and Churcham Primary Schools, the safety and well-being of our pupils is paramount. We expect all staff and volunteers to share in this commitment.**

This policy was approved by the Governing Body at their meeting on.....

Signed..... Chair Of Governors