



Abacus Primary School

# Early Years (EYFS) Policy 2022

Aspire  
Believe  
Achieve  
Creates  
United  
Success

Written by:

Emily Borley  
EYFS Leader

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## Early Years (EYFS) Policy

### Introduction

This policy sets out the aims and objectives of Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Curriculum at Abacus Primary School. The policy was updated in September 2021.

*" 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, DFE, March 2021*

### This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life.
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child is left behind.
- A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

### Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the 'Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)' (September 2021).

## Overarching principles

Four guiding principles should shape practice in early years settings. These are:

- *every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured*
- *children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships*
- *children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.*
- *importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn at different rates. (See "the characteristics of effective teaching and learning" at paragraph 1.15). The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, DFE, March 2021*

## Our Aims at Abacus

We aim to offer an EYFS that:

- Provides a firm foundation for a lifelong enjoyment of learning from the very first days of school - 'What we learn with pleasure we never forget'. (A. Mercier)
- Promotes independence and independent learning skills, helping to develop confidence and self-esteem, enabling each child to grow as an individual.
- Promotes the value of learning through play, extending and enhancing the natural curiosity of the child, including the value of exploring the natural world.
- Values the importance of the outdoor environment in enhancing the learning of young children.
- Provides structured activities for those children who are ready for them.
- Provides opportunities to learn through first-hand, 'hands-on' experiences.
- Provides opportunities for children to build on what they already know.
- Promotes learning as an exciting and enjoyable experience.

## Our Objectives

To achieve our aims we will:

- Provide a stimulating, interesting environment, indoors and outdoors, which encourages learning through play, enjoyment and exploration, using all the senses.
- Provide high quality teaching and facilitate high quality learning through exciting, first hand experiences.
- Value and build on previous experiences.
- Acknowledge that how children learn is as important as the content taught.
- Provide a foundation for positive attitudes and independent learning; 'I Can'.
- Celebrate the achievements of all children.
- Work in partnership with pre-school providers and parents, involving parents in all areas of the children's learning and achievements across the curriculum.
- Deliver the curriculum using a range of teaching strategies and cater for a variety of learning styles.

## A Unique Child

At Abacus 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. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; praise and encouragement are just two ways in which we aim to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

## The Curriculum (Please see appendix A for the Abacus EYFS Curriculum.)

The Abacus EYFS curriculum has been written in accordance with the latest version of the '[Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#)' (September 2021). The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development that are important and interconnected:

- Communication and language.
- Personal, social and emotional development.
- Physical development.
- Literacy.
- Mathematics.
- Understanding the world.
- Expressive arts and design.

However, the first three areas in the list above, 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:

We have developed the curriculum giving communication and language skills a high priority. This is in line with Development Matters 2020: *"The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively."*

A high priority is also given to the teaching of reading. We aim to teach children to read and develop a love of books as soon as they arrive at School, and books are used to teach topics and to enhance our whole curriculum.

We follow a systematic approach to phonics teaching based on the Supersonic Phonics Scheme. Please see our Abacus Primary School Phonics Policy.

We underpin our curriculum with the Personal Social and Emotional Development of all our children. We strive to enable children to be safe, happy, confident individuals. We also encourage self-regulation as much as possible and introduce rules and boundaries through modelling good behaviour and reflection time.

The Abacus EYFS Curriculum is based around cross-curricular topics. Each topic planned is included in the curriculum for specific reasons and we want to ensure that all children leave the Reception Year ready to start the Abacus KS1 curriculum. All the topics have resources and activities ready to use in the continuous provision. Topics are introduced with a good quality storybook or age-appropriate non-fiction text. Using books in this way teaches children that books and reading form the basis of all learning.

### Teaching and Learning

We believe in the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning that are set out in Development Matters 2021. These are:

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

Active learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achieving.

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

The Abacus EYFS Curriculum is ambitious and aims to teach all children the skills and knowledge in order that they reach the seventeen Early Learning Goals described in the Early Years Foundation Stage (see Appendix B). We teach through a range of teaching methods including child-initiated learning, whole class teaching, group teaching, investigations and problem solving together, and independently. As many activities as possible are play-based; however, there is also a need for direct teacher-led activities to ensure children gain essential knowledge and skills from their teacher. All activities are expertly modelled and children are given sufficient time, support and resources to repeat and practise them.

### Enabling Environments

At Abacus Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

## The Learning Environment

We recognise that the EYFS classroom is a learning environment. We celebrate children's work by displaying their work within their classroom and school environment. Every child will have work displayed. The displays in the learning environment will celebrate, reinforce and promote independent learning.

In the corridor leading to the classrooms, there is a Writing wall to celebrate their writing progress.

Both EYFS classrooms have access to an outdoor classroom. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children opportunities to explore and use their senses and be physically active. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all areas of learning.

## Assessment

During the first term in Reception, the teacher assesses the ability of each child using a mixture of the statutory government baseline and also through teacher observations. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children. We record each child's level of development throughout the year and record whether each child is on track or not on track to meet a Good Level of Development (GLD) at the end of the year in July.

Children will be judged at either an emerging level or an expected level in each early learning goal. The exceeding level no longer applies. We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal observations and through planned activities. Assessment is completed regularly and involves both the teacher, teaching assistants, parents and children, as appropriate.

We record each child's level of development throughout the year. At the end of the final term in Reception we assess whether each child is emerging or expected in each strand within each area of learning and submit this data to the local authority. This information is also shared with the child's next teacher who

uses this information to make plans for the year ahead. We share this information too at parental consultation meetings and in the end-of-year report.

Parents receive an annual written report that offers detailed comments on each child's holistic progress across all areas of learning. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs, and gives details of the child's general progress. We complete these in June, and send them to parents in early July each year.

### Inclusion

All children will receive quality first teaching on a daily basis and activities will be differentiated accordingly. In addition to this, where children have been identified as having a specific need, intervention programmes will be implemented. Teachers and Learning Support Assistants plan programmes together and where needed with liaison with the Special Needs Co-ordinator. The SENCO is present during induction meetings in the Summer Term prior to children starting at Abacus and this ensures children with special educational needs are identified as early as possible.

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children at Abacus Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or ability. All children and their families are valued within our school.

In our school we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best and reach their personal potential. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning, and we differentiate activities to allow all children to access the curriculum. We set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of all of our children, which is achieved by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, more able children, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds and ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds, where necessary.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that 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,
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively,



- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued,
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping,
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills,
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

### Safeguarding and welfare procedures

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. We help children to self-regulate and manage their emotions appropriately and Personal Social and Emotional Education is at the heart of everything we do.

Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. We know that children learn best when they are healthy and safe, when their individual needs are met and when they have the chance to build positive relationships with the adults around them and their peers.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our suite of safeguarding policies which have been written in accordance with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021'.

We are a healthy school and participate in the free fruit and milk for under-fives scheme. For our Reception children we provide the universal infant free school meal and the menu is regularly monitored with the chef. We cater for those children who have special dietary requirements and have robust systems in place ensuring that all children receive the correct meal. We make sure that children with allergies or other dietary requirements are catered for in conjunction with our catering providers.

Fresh water is readily available for all children and we encourage children to bring in bottles so that they can help themselves to water at any time.

A member of staff in the setting has a recognised paediatric first aid qualification in line with the EYFS framework 2021.

## Structure and Staffing of the EYFS

The EYFS at Abaucs consists of two Reception Classes. The classes are taught by three qualified primary school teachers (two on a job share basis). All teachers have vast experience of teaching young children.

The phase has one full time experienced EYFS learning support assistant and one mornings only learning support assistant.

Children arrive into the classroom at 8:45 a.m. every morning and children are picked up at 3.15pm.

The children have lunch and breaks in the 'Foundation Playground' in Autumn and Spring terms, then join with the other KS1 children in the Summer Term. The classes join the main school for assemblies and other whole school events.

Extra teaching assistants are employed for children who have an Education Health and Care Plan.

## Parental Involvement

We recognise that parents/carers are children's first educators and we value having a positive relationship with them in their child's education through:

- ✓ Making contact with parents/carers before their child starts school at our parent walkabouts, induction sessions, welcome packs and nursery visits.
- ✓ Inviting parents/carers and children to attend an induction evening.
- ✓ Inviting the children for a morning transition visit during Summer Term
- ✓ Set up a Tapestry account for new starters
- ✓ Offering home visits for all children and parents during the first week in September, before the children start school. This is a good opportunity for parents to ask personal/individual questions, pertinent to their child.
- ✓ Inviting parents to phonic and reading workshops
- ✓ Operating an open-door policy for parents/carers with any queries or concerns. Conversely, if EYFS staff have concerns about the progress of a child, they will approach parents and carers to discuss them.
- ✓ Written contact through reading records and weekly newsletters.
- ✓ Sharing photos, updates and 'wow moments' on Tapestry (our online communication and home learning platform).

- ✓ Offering two parent-teacher consultation meetings per year at which their child's progress and wellbeing is discussed.
- ✓ Sending a written report on their child's attainment, progress and attitude at the end of their time in reception.
- ✓ Asking parents to sign a generic permission form for visits, food-tasting and photographs etc.
- ✓ Parents are invited to a range of activities throughout the school year such as special events, workshops, Christmas productions and sports day etc.
- ✓ Offering opportunities for parents and carers to visit the school as a volunteer to assist with the children's learning e.g. hearing readers.

### Transition

Starting school can be a difficult time for young children; we therefore plan this time carefully to support children with the transition and to ensure it is as smooth as possible for each child and that they settle in to their new class quickly and happily.

Once school places have been allocated and accepted each family receives a welcome letter from us explaining the induction process. A shared Tapestry account is set up for the cohort to open communication between class teachers and families. Our ethos is that as soon as the school place is allocated they are part of our school community and therefore communication with them is very important to us, The children have an induction morning during the Summer term. They will get to spend a couple of hours in their classroom and meet the adults that will be working with them. The Tapestry account is monitored over the summer. The first week of the Autumn Term is allocated to home visits. Foundation staff will visit each child in their home environment.

When children transition into year 1 the teacher has time with the year 1 teacher to give them all the relevant welfare, academic and general information about all the children leaving the EYFS. The Year 1 teacher teaches the Reception children once a week in the last half of the summer term so the children can start to get to know them. One of these sessions is done in the year 1 classroom so that the children see their new classroom before the summer holidays.

### Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Early Years lead teacher every 2 years. At each review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

