

Anchorsholme Academy



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Anchorsholme Academy **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy.**

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Anchorsholme Academy, children join the Reception class in the year that they will turn five. In partnership with parents and carers, we enable the children to begin the process of becoming active learners for life.

In our Foundation Stage, we endeavour to ensure that children, “learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe.” We promote teaching and learning experiences that “give children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.”(Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2012).

The EYFS is based upon four important principles:

- **A Unique Child** – developing resilient, capable, confident and self-assured individuals.
- **Positive Relationships** – supporting the children in becoming strong and independent.
- **Enabling Environments** – where opportunities and experiences respond to the individual needs of the child by developing a strong partnership between practitioners, parents/carers and the child.
- **Learning and Developing** – An acknowledgement that children learn in different ways and at different rates

A Unique Child

At Anchorsholme Academy, we recognise that each and every child is an individual learner. We encourage all our children to become resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates and this is reflected in our high quality teaching. Children’s attitudes and dispositions to learning are strongly influenced by feedback from others and so we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning also towards themselves.

Special Educational Needs (SEN)

All children and their families are valued at Anchorsholme Academy. Children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all provisions available. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. Assessments take into account contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential special educational needs is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage and the school's Special Needs Co-ordinators (Hilary Newbery and Jane Carter) are called upon for further information and advice when needed. Appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the school's policy for SEN.

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.

In order to accommodate each individual's particular learning style, sessions are planned wherever possible in a multi-sensory way so that the various activities will cater for all pupils in the spirit of inclusion. Consideration is also given as to how to record lesson outcomes so that children are offered a variety of methods and are not inhibited by any specific difficulty.

Parents and carers are always consulted with at an early stage and the school's Special Needs Co-ordinators (Hilary Newbery and Jane Carter) are called upon for further information and advice when needed. Appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the school's policy for SEN.

Equal Opportunities

All members of Anchorsholme Academy are treated as individuals. We meet the needs of all, taking account of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, special educational needs, disability, and social circumstances. All staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect cultural diversity and the need to prepare pupils for life in a diverse and multi-faith society. (See British Values Policy)

Positive Relationships

At Anchorsholme Academy, we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from building secure and stable relationships. Through general discussion, circle time and PHSE activities we ensure that our children know that they are valued and cared for. All our staff aim to develop caring, respectful, trusting and professional relationships with our children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value highly the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents play in educating their children by:

- inviting parents to look around our school and talking to parents about their child before he/she starts in our school,
- inviting the children to spend time with their teacher before starting school during transfer sessions,
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school in order to detail how we aim to work with their child,
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns, however small. All teaching staff meet the children outside in the playground, and are always available for a chat at the beginning and end of each day,
- holding two parents evenings at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private,
- sending parents termly target sheets for their child, to which they are encouraged to contribute,
- sending home "stars" for the parents to write on any special achievements and send into school for celebration,
- sending home a home/school reading record daily, in which both teachers and parents comment on the child's reading,
- sending parents a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year,
- sending home a fortnightly FS newsletter,
- sending home a weekly whole school newsletter,
- arranging a range of open afternoons throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents for example on World Book Day,
- inviting parents to share in our magical "Bedtime Story Night" evening,
- providing parents an opportunity to celebrate their child's learning and development by inviting them to the weekly Golden Book assembly, and also whole class assemblies,
- inviting parents to come into school to hear readers, talk about their job, help with trips etc.
- encouraging the children to bring in anything special from home that they would like to talk about, for example a memento from a trip to a museum or a card from a special family celebration.
- putting a fortnightly topic round up of Foundation Stage activities on our Blog, along with photos, for parents to view and comment on.
- giving parents access to their child's online learning journal "Tapestry" through which parents can view and comment on annotated photographs showing their child's day at school.

Enabling Environments

At Anchorsholme Academy, we have created an attractive and stimulating learning environment in our FS unit where children feel happy, confident, secure and challenged. The children have daily access to both indoor and outdoor environments that are set up in areas of learning with both adult led and topic enhanced continuous provision in each. We have a Literacy Room, Numeracy Room, Creative Play Room, Art and Design Room and a large safe outdoor area for extending physical development. The children have access to all of these learning zones on a daily basis. We also have several small quiet rooms which are used as a library and small group intervention areas, and we have weekly access to the large PE Hall and smaller Gymnastics and Dance Hall.

In each of these areas, the teaching and learning builds and extends upon prior learning through high quality teaching. Effective planning is informed by observations and assessments of the children to ensure we follow their current interests and experiences. These observations and assessments are recorded on the "Tapestry" electronic learning journal which tracks each child's individual progress against the EYFS Framework.

Play based learning is encouraged in each of our learning zones and children direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities provided by staff. Staff enhance play and extend opportunities as appropriate to continually further individual learning.

Learning and Development

Qualified Teachers and teaching assistants ensure the full curriculum is met across the three Foundation Stage classes, which each has up to 30 children. There is always a minimum of six members of staff. All staff are fully up to date with both Development Matters and The New EYFS Framework.

In the EYFS Framework, there are seven areas of learning and development, of which three are “prime areas,” and four “specific areas.” The prime areas are:

- Communication and Language
- Physical development
- Personal, Social and Emotional development.

The specific areas are:

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

Through ongoing play based assessments and observations of both adult-led and child-initiated activities, and information provided by parents and other settings, the children’s development levels in each area are assessed on entry in a thorough and detailed Baseline assessment. Purposeful activities are then planned to ensure that every child has a wealth of opportunities to extend their learning in each and every area. Many activities are play based as children build confidence as they lead their own learning. Progress is continually monitored to ensure that the children are always being challenged, stimulated and moved onto their next step. Staff have high expectations for all children. Progress and attainment is reported to parents at the parents evenings in November and March, and then in full at the end of the year through the EYFS profile report.

At Anchorsholme Academy, we recognise that children learn in different ways and we support children in using the three **Characteristics of Effective Learning** as set out in the EYFS Framework. 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 achievements; and
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

The FS staff observe the children on a regular basis and assess the children's development in each of these learning styles. Staff record observations and consider how to further the children's progress in each area. This information is reported to parents at the end of the year as part of the school report and is also sent to the Year 1 teachers as part of the transition process.

Religious Education is also taught in the Foundation Stage classes in accordance with the Lancashire guidelines.

Planning, recording and assessment

Activity planning is linked to topics which capture the children's interests and inspire them to investigate and discover. The plans for each topic cover all of the areas of development. Adult focused and independent activities are planned on a fortnightly basis. Children have the opportunity to work in each of the 5 learning areas (Literacy, Numeracy, Creative, Art, Outside) every day. Whole class, group and individual activities are designed to develop skills in all areas of the curriculum and continuous provision is available in every learning space for children to access freely. In addition, children engage in daily mental and oral maths work and guided reading, as well as discrete daily Phonics (following "Letters and Sounds"). They also engage in weekly sessions covering Mandarin, RE and PHSE. All lessons are linked to the Development Matters statements and/or the ELGS. After an initial period of baseline assessments, pupils progress is tracked electronically using Tapestry. Evidence of progress is gathered in a range of ways such as quotes on post-its, annotated photographs, children's work in their Literacy, Numeracy or Topic book and on the electronic learning journal. Children's progress is closely monitored each half term and new targets are set half termly which reflect the stage they are at. These targets are shared with parents. Targets and "next steps" are shared with the children continuously as they receive and respond to verbal and written feedback on a regular basis.

Assessment is carried out through a mixture of informal observations, regular interaction with the child, the use of the information on record sheets and regular discussions with all FS staff. We observe the children working independently and also on focus tasks with a specific learning objective both indoors and outdoors.

Parents are encouraged to contribute to their child's learning journey by sending in "star moments" sheets (which are celebrated and displayed), making comments on the half termly targets sheets, writing comments in the home/school reading record, adding comments to the blog and writing comments on the fortnightly FS newsletter. Parents may also add to their child's "Tapestry" electronic learning journey. At the end of the year, all FS teachers complete the EYFSP. Judgements are moderated within the school, within the MAT schools and also through attendance at the Blackpool moderation clusters. Final assessments against all 17 ELGs are shared with parents and Y1 teachers.

Health and Safety

At Anchorsholme Academy, there are clear procedures for assessing risk (see whole school Risk Assessment policy) which includes procedures for keeping children safe during outings and for any aspects of the environment or provision that may require a further risk assessment. In addition to this, in the Safeguarding and Child Protection policies, there is detailed information and procedures to ensure the safety of the children. All the staff in the Foundation Stage are up to date with Local Authority Child Protection/Safeguarding training and PREVENT training and are all able to identify, understand and respond appropriately to possible signs of abuse of any kind.

In line with the EYFS Statutory Framework, at Anchorsholme Academy we have:

- A whole school medicines policy ensuring that there are systems in place to ensure that medicines and the systems for obtaining information about a child's needs for medication are kept up to date. Medicines will not be administered unless they have been prescribed by a doctor, dentist or nurse. Medicines (both prescription and non-prescription) are only administered to a child where written permission for that particular medicine has been obtained from the child's parent and/or carer.
- Fresh drinking water is available at all times.
- Children's' specific dietary needs recorded and acted upon when required.
- A first aid accessible at all times and a record of accidents/injuries is kept.
- A Health and Safety policy and procedures which cover identifying, reporting and dealing with accidents, hazards and faulty equipment.
- A fire and emergency evacuation procedure and policy is in place. The evacuation procedure is practised regularly.
- A Safeguarding policy stating how mobile phones and cameras are to be used and stored securely whilst children are in the setting. Cameras that are used in school must not be used for staff own personal use.

Welfare

It is important to us that all children in the school are safe. We educate the 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. Children should be allowed to take calculated 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 at all times. (See whole school Safeguarding Children Policy)

“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.”

At Anchorsholme Academy we fully understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage. As such, we:

- promote the welfare and safeguarding of children.
- promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children’s stage of development and individual needs.
- ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- ensure that the premises, furniture & equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
- ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences which are tailored to meet their specific needs.
- maintain records, policies & procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

All of our FS staff are First Aid trained and several have a Paediatric First Aid qualification (August 2017).

Transition

'Transition' describes the movement that takes place from one year to the next, and in particular from one phase of education to the next.

The best changes for children take place where conditions are similar, communication is encouraged, and the process of change takes place gradually over time. At Anchorsholme Academy, this transition time from Nursery to FS and from FS to Y1 is carefully planned as otherwise children can suffer in terms of their emotional well-being and this in turn affects academic achievement if transition doesn't take place effectively.

Aims of effective "transition":

- To ensure our children and their parents experience a smooth educational and emotional transition from one phase to the next.
- To ensure that the process of transition from Nursery to FS and from FS to Year 1 guides children in a sensitive & supported way through this period of change.
- To have similar approaches to teaching and learning in FS and Y1 during the transition period. These styles are to meet the needs of the children.
- Staff have a professional regard for the information that is passed on and planning is based upon assessment information.
- Children's emotional welfare, wellbeing and involvement is of utmost importance during the transition period.
- Children should enjoy the transition process and should be motivated and challenged.

From pre-school settings to Reception-

During the Summer term prior to a child's entry into the Reception, the following procedures have been put into place to ensure successful transition:

- Parents are invited to an Induction Evening to ensure they know about all school procedures. They meet the FS staff, look around the classrooms, listen to a talk on routines and arrangements, receive a detailed information pack, sample the school dinners, meet the SEND team, meet the breakfast club and after school team and meet the school nurse. It is also a chance for them to raise any questions or concerns they may have.
- Over the Summer holidays the children are encouraged to complete an "All About Me" booklet which helps to prepare them for school. This booklet also includes information about the school day and has photographs of the FS team.
- The children are invited to visit to their Reception class for taster mornings without parents.
- The children from Anchorsholme Happy Days Nursery visit once a week during the Summer term for story time.
- Members of staff from Anchorsholme Academy make visits to the nurseries to see the children in their current setting and to gather valuable information from the staff about the children. All documentation, including the assessments against Development Matters statements is passed on and is used to help inform the baseline assessments.
- Children requiring extra support have additional visits if necessary (organised in conjunction with the SEN team). The SEN team meet with parents to create care plans where necessary.
- Parents are invited to a "Getting ready for school" information talk from the school nurse.

From Reception Class to Key Stage 1

During the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their "readiness" for Year 1. Each child's level of development is assessed against the **Early Learning Goals**. The profile indicates whether children are meeting "expected" levels of development, if they are "exceeding" expected levels, or if they are not yet reaching expected levels ("emerging"). Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key Characteristics of Effective Learning. All relevant records regarding the academic and personal aspects of each child's development are passed on during meetings between Foundation and Year 1 staff. Time in the Summer Term is devoted to the handover period to allow the transfer of data from the EYFS profile and for the discussion around Characteristics of Learning. This is of particular significance for children with special educational needs. Transition arrangements also include support staff in each class and the detailed knowledge that support staff have of the children as people and learners is shared. Time and effort invested in this enhances children's well being and also ensures that the children's learning is taken forward through careful considered, differentiated planning of the curriculum that meets the needs of all children and help move them onto their "next steps".

Parents are invited into school at the beginning of Year 1 to meet the teacher and to learn about the routines and the curriculum in Y1. It is an opportunity for them to ask any questions surrounding the transition period.

Year 1's learning area mirrors the FS area so the children are already familiar with the layout of the physical space. The FS children also play on the Y1 playground at lunchtime and so are already familiar with the outdoor area and the learning support staff on duty. The Y1 teachers create high quality learning classrooms and provide areas of continuous provision to support and extend children's independence skills. The Year 1 staff effectively plan appropriately challenging work which builds on the children's previous skills, knowledge and understanding. Academic challenge is built into both child-initiated and independent tasks.

During the Summer term the FS staff build aspects of Numeracy and Literacy from the National Curriculum into the FS planning and extend the periods of time for which focused adult-initiated learning is expected. This helps to ease the transition into Y1 where there is a gradual increase in teacher led focused tasks and activities. There will be children in Reception who by the end the year are “Exceeding” the ELGs and are already accessing aspects of Year 1 curriculum and this is recorded on our whole school “O’ Track” tracking system so that the Y1 teachers can smoothly build upon their previous knowledge. There will also be children who leave Foundation Stage as ‘Emerging’ and who will need to continue with aspects of the FS curriculum into Year 1. These children receive intervention at the appropriate level.

At Anchorsholme Academy, the FS and KS1 leaders have a good professional relationship and they liaise closely at all times to discuss and monitor the well-being and academic achievement of the children.

Tina Foster. Foundation Stage Leader. Reviewed January 2018

Other whole school policies referred to:

- Health and Safety
- Safeguarding
- Risk Assessment
- Medicines
- Child Protection
- SEN
- Fire Evacuation Procedure
- British Values policy