

# Abacus Primary School



## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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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 2019.

*"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 2012.*

## Our Aims

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.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. In our school all children join us at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. The EYFS is based upon four, overarching principles:

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

## **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.

## **Inclusion**

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.

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. 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 (See Whole School Safeguarding Children Policy).

## **Welfare**

"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 Abacus Primary School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Revised Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, 2012. We understand that we are required to:

- Promote the welfare 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 that the premises, furniture and equipment are safe and suitable for purpose,
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs,
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children,
- Provide access to clean, fresh water and a healthy, balanced and nutritious daily snack for all children (including those with allergies and special dietary requirements), prepared in a hygienic area suitable for preparing food,
- Carry out risk assessments when completing tasks which carry additional risks e.g. cooking, welly walks or school outings.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

## **Positive Relationships**

At Abacus Primary School we recognise that children learn to be confident and independent through the development of secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

## **Parents/Carers as Partners**

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We aim to ensure that all parents are involved in their child's learning and consequently provide many opportunities throughout the school year to contribute to their child's assessment against the EYFS profile. We recognise the role that parents have played, and value their future role in educating their children. We do this through:

- Holding transition mornings: each child has the opportunity to spend time with their teacher, in the classroom, before starting at Abacus,
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school,
- Carrying out pre-school visits before the child starts school, where necessary. (class teacher and SENCO)
- A cluster meeting in the school hall in the Summer term, where all pre-schools are invited to attend to share information with Wickford Schools.
- 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 questions, pertinent to your child,
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress, as well as daily contact both before and after school at the classroom door.
- Tapestry, which will provide a vital link between home and school. This is set up from the child's first day at school.
- The Home/School communication book serves not only as a reading record, but also allows parents to write notes to the class teacher and vice versa.
- Providing mid - year target reports to identify to parents the areas of development that we are working on in class with their child,
- Providing an end of year report on their child's attainment and progress (July),
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: curriculum mornings, nativity plays and assemblies, Sports Day etc.
- Encourage parents to comment on their child's end of year report.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At our school the EYFS teacher acts a 'Key Person' to all children in EYFS, supported by the Learning Support Assistants.

## **The Induction Process**

During the start of the Autumn Term Foundation staff will visit each child in their home environment. The children will 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.

## **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.

## **Skills and routines**

The children have a rolling snack, which means that can independently choose to have their snack when they are hungry. This is monitored by coin tokens that the children use to put into the till, to 'pay' for their snack. The parents/carers contribute to this £1 a week.

The children take part in a weekly lesson called 'Dough Disco'. This helps the children with their fine motor skills and strengthens their fingers for writing. The children take a picture book home on the first week, in line with the Schools English policy.

## **Learning and Development**

At Abacus Primary School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are all important and interconnected.

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning, which are divided into two areas labelled 'Prime Areas' and 'Specific Areas'.

The **Prime Areas** are those which are essentially the building blocks of children's learning and are particularly important in encouraging children to develop physically, socially and emotionally. These areas are:

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

The **Specific Areas** are four additional areas in which the skills and development introduced in the Prime Areas can be strengthened and applied. These areas include:

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

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led, child initiated and independent activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS. Activities will be planned to incorporate focussed activities, play opportunities and exploration. These activities will be planned for in the Indoor and Outdoor Learning Environment.



## **Play**

"Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development."

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and 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.

## **Assessment**

Staff will observe children at play, talk with them about their findings or work alongside them in their learning to assess their understanding and plan for their next stage of learning. Assessment takes place all the time and staff are continually assessing against the Foundation Stage Profile statements. A copy of the EYFS profile summary will form part of each child's end of Year report.

There will be half termly reading and phonics assessments. The children are set for phonics, so this will determine if the children are in the class they need to be. The children's reading will be assessed to determine if they need to move up a colour band. The children will have ongoing teacher assessment of their maths and writing.

## **Class Organisation**

Our Abacus Foundation Unit comprises of two classes, Blue and Pink. The Year group can accommodate up to 60 children across the classes. We have one full time LSA, and one morning LSA across the two classes.

## **Monitoring and review**

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teachers to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Headteacher and EYFS Leaders will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

This policy will be updated in September 2020.