



Early Years Foundation Policy

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year at school. At Ashmole Primary School, children join us during the Autumn Term of the academic year in which they are five. The older children attend full time from when they start and the younger children attend for mornings initially with the aim for all children to be attending full time by the beginning of the second half of the term.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

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

A Unique Child

At Ashmole Primary School we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self assured. We appreciate that children develop in different ways and 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 within the classroom, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of everybody within the school and do not discriminate against children because of differences. All children at Ashmole Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, culture, religion or ability. All children and their families are valued within our school. At Ashmole Primary School we believe that all our children matter and we give them 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.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of the children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children in the EYFS 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 appropriately challenging activities for children including those 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 welfare of all children.

Welfare

At Ashmole Primary School we endeavour to meet the legal welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2007. These requirements are 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 all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so,
- ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment are safe and suitable for purpose,
- ensure that each 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 children.

Positive Relationships

At Ashmole Primary School we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are the children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We appreciate the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating their children. We do this through:

- The home/school liaison teacher offering to visit the parents and children in their home setting during the academic year prior to the children starting school.
- The teacher or teaching assistant offering to visit the parents and children in their home setting in the week prior to them starting school.
- During the Spring and Summer Terms prior to the children starting school, all parents who put Ashmole as their first choice are invited to bring their children to the school where they can spend time with the reception teaching assistant and other parents/carers and children.
- All children offered a place in Reception at Ashmole Primary School are invited to attend pre-school sessions with other parents/carers to meet their teacher, nursery nurse teaching assistant and other children in their class.
- A Reception curriculum evening and morning held in the Autumn Term.
- Having termly open evenings where parents can discuss their child's progress with their teacher and nursery nurse or teaching assistant.
- Having an open door policy where parents can discuss any concerns informally before and after school.
- Encouraging the use of the 'wow book' where parents and children can contribute at home to their child's 'learning journey'.

- A report on the child's achievement and progress at the end of the academic year.

All staff involved with the EYFS at Ashmole Primary School aim to develop good relationships with all the children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At our school each child's class teacher acts as the 'Key Person' to all the children in their class supported by the nursery nurse and teaching assistant.

Enabling Environments

At Ashmole Primary School we recognise that the learning 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.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

The planning within the EYFS is based around themes or topics which are chosen according to the children's interests. These plans are used by the EYFS teachers as a guide for weekly planning; however the teachers may alter these plans in response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children. This will be indicated in daily and weekly planning.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. In the EYFS, observation and assessment is ongoing and is done in a number of ways by the teachers, nursery nurse and teaching assistant by:

- Continually observing the children indoors and outdoors.
- Recording observations on narrative sheets, observation stickers and by photos kept in each child's learning journal.
- Recording/annotating responses to teacher led activities in the child's writing book, maths book and learning journal.
- Keeping child initiated drawing, writing etc. in the child's portfolio.
- Children and parents recording out of school experiences and activities in child's Special Book.

The Learning Environment

At Ashmole Primary School we endeavour to provide a learning environment in the EYFS which enables the children to access resources with opportunities for cross curricular experiences both indoors and outdoors. This enabling environment is planned so that the children can progress and develop in the seven areas of learning.

The reception classrooms provide a stimulating learning environment and can be accessed by the children from both classes. Outside the reception classrooms is an outdoor learning garden.

This outdoor space has a positive effect on the children's learning and development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on a larger scale than when inside. There is room for the children to be physically active – to run, climb, play sports, explore and to use their senses. Apart from teacher input times the children have constant access to this outside space.

There is a core of equipment indoors and outdoors which the children can access at all times and in addition to this, extra resources are made available to the children according to teaching themes and topics.

Daily planning sheets for indoors and outdoors inform the Reception team of resources that are needed. (The children are expected to access resources themselves (where possible) and are encouraged to be inventive in their use.

Learning and Development

At Ashmole 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 inter connected.

Play and Exploration

Children's play reflects their interests and while at play they learn at their highest level. At Ashmole we ensure that the children are given the best opportunities to learn through their play by:

- Offering a challenging environment with a range of flexible resources for children to play and explore in different ways both indoors and outdoors.
- Providing learning experiences which help them make sense of the world and solve problems through play and exploration.
- Giving opportunities to solve problems, be creative and take risks.
- Having role play areas available for the children to allow them to take on and rehearse new and familiar roles.
- Extending the children's learning and development by observation and intervention in their play.

Active Learning

Active learning takes place when children are motivated and interested through physical and mental challenges. Children need to have some choice and control over their learning and as they develop their confidence they learn to make decisions and become increasingly independent. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Creative and Critical Thinking

At Ashmole Primary School children are given opportunities to be creative in all areas of the curriculum not just the arts. Adults support the children's thinking by helping them to make connections by showing interest offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access most resources inside and outside freely and are encouraged to use them innovatively.

Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Literacy
- Maths
- Understanding the World
- Expressive arts and design

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and are interdependent. All areas are delivered through 20% adult led and 80% child initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

Characteristics of Learning

In planning and guiding children's activities, teachers consider the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. These characteristics of effective teaching and learning 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,

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

September 2023

To be reviewed September 2024