



DIOCESE OF CHESTER

**ASTBURY ST MARY'S
CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**EARLY YEARS
FOUNDATION STAGE
POLICY**

Approved for Issue: **Sept 2016**
Review: **July 2018**

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to their full potential. A child’s experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure safe and happy childhood is important in its own right, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.”

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage Department for Education (2012)

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Astbury School, all children join us at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. We offer a graduated approach to full time education in which they begin part time in the mornings only for two days, then staying for lunch time the next day. Until finally staying full time starting at 8.45 until 3.20. The amount of these days may change yearly due to the first week of the school term.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based upon four themes:

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

This policy explains how our practice is underpinned by these four themes.

A Unique Child

At Astbury School we recognise that every pupil is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Their attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and rewards, to encourage them to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within Astbury School and believe that all our children and their families matter. All our pupils are treated fairly whatever their race, gender, religion or abilities. We give them every opportunity to achieve their best, by taking account of their range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In the Early Years we set realistic and challenging expectations for all our pupils: 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 with English as an additional language.

We meet the needs of all our children through planning opportunities that build upon and extend their knowledge, experience and interests, and we develop their self-esteem and confidence using a broad spectrum of teaching strategies based on their learning needs. We

- Provide wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively.

- Provide a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued.
- Use resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping.
- Plan challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills.
- Build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence.
- Monitor children's progress and take action to provide support as necessary.
- Use children's key learning moments to develop and nurture their learning through class planning.
- Allow all children to be involved in every step of their learning from planning to deciding on which resources they want to use.

Welfare

It is important to us that all our pupils are 'safe'. We aim to educate them on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide them 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 Astbury School Safeguarding Policy.)

We are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the *Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage*. 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 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 every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their need.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

Positive Relationships

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

Parents as Partners

We know that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value being partners with them in their child's education:

- We talk to parents and their child's key worker before their child starts in our school.
- The teacher offers to visit all children in their nursery setting prior to their starting school.
- Children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school in the summer term

before starting in September.

- All parents are invited to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school and to a Meet the teacher meeting in September.
- We offer parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress, to contribute to their child's learning in their learning journeys and to support their child in the learning environment.
- Parents are encouraged to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a private formal meeting each term at which the teacher and the parents discuss the child's progress. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.
- We arrange a variety of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: information workshops, parent days, sports day, mother's day, father's day, special learning days, trips etc.
- We operate an open door policy for parents with any queries.
- Information about the children's learning is communicated regularly and we encourage learning at home to be shared in school and become part of the child assessment through newsletters, blogs, Clever Cat work annotated from home etc.
- The child's learning is recorded on an online learning journal which gets shared with parents. The information about the pupils is saved on a remote secure cloud based service.

Key Person

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 and Teaching Assistant take shared responsibility acting as a 'Key Person' to all children in the class.

We have good links with New Life Nursery, The Nursery and often have individual children coming from several other nurseries within the area as well. Regular visits are undertaken by the EYFS teacher and Teaching Assistant, who meet with staff to discuss new intake children.

Enabling Environments

At Astbury School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Through observation we assess the children's interests, stages of development and learning needs, before planning challenging, achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

The planning within the EYFS is based on the Development Matters statements from the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. These plans are flexible so that teachers can respond to the needs, achievements and interests of the children. This will be indicated in weekly planning. This fostering of the pupils' interests develops a high level of motivation for their learning. We make regular assessments and 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. These observations are recorded in a variety of ways and contribute to each child's individual 'Learning Journey' profile which is on 2build a profile. At the end of the Reception year in school, the child's progress is recorded on the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and the level of development is indicated against the seventeen Early Learning Goals.

The learning environment inside and outside is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, quiet, creative etc. Each classroom has defined learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The Foundation Stage has enclosed outdoor areas, and children are able to free-flow between the indoor and outdoor spaces. Being

outdoors offers the children opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. They are able to explore, use their senses, develop their language skills and be physically active. We plan activities and resources both inside and outside enabling the children to develop in all the areas of learning.

Learning and Development

We recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and have their own learning styles. We develop the learning through the Development Matters 'Characteristics of Effective Learning' by

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically

These characteristics are supported inline with the seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in Early Years settings. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are often inter-connected. Three prime areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

Prime Areas:

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

Staff will also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. These four areas also support children with their learning and transition to the National Curriculum.

Specific Areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Teaching and Learning Style

We recognise that features of effective teaching and learning in the EYFS are:

- The partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement.
- The teachers' understanding of how children develop and learn individually, and how this affects their teaching.
- The use of a range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication.
- A carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS.
- Provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities.
- Encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence.
- Support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment.
- Identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations.

Play

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. They have the opportunity to express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations. We deliver learning for all of the areas through, purposeful play and learning experiences, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

Active Learning

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. They need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides them with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Creativity and Critical

Children should be given an opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Our pupils can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

Monitoring and Review

The Headteacher, Foundation Stage coordinator and subject coordinators carry out monitoring of the EYFS through observation and discussion as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

Adopted by the Governing Body:

Sept 2016 Signed:

To be reviewed: **July 2018**