

The Aylesbury Vale Academy Trust



The Aylesbury Vale Academy

Including Berryfields Primary
COLLABORATING *for* EXCELLENCE

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Policy Reference:	AVA.040
Description:	This policy aims to describe our Early Years curriculum and show how the Academy Primary and Nursery School strives to give children the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential.
Status:	Statutory Policy
Policy Audience:	Staff, Students & Parents/Carers
Academy Contact:	Executive Director
Other related AVA policies and procedures:	Equality Policy, Child Protection Policy, Safeguarding Procedures
Governor Committee:	Full Governing Body
Version:	

In reviewing this policy the Governing Board has had regard to the Equality Act 2010 and carried out an equality impact assessment. It is satisfied that no group with a protected characteristic will be unfairly disadvantaged by this policy.

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1. Purpose

This policy aims to describe our Early Years curriculum and show how the Academy Primary and Nursery School strives to give children the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential.

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the 2017 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The EYFS framework identifies four guiding principles which we use to shape our practice in school:

- 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, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

3. Structure of Early Years:

- Berry Bebies: 2-3 year olds
- Nursery: 3-4 year olds
- Reception: 4-5 year olds

4. The Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2017 statutory framework of the EYFS. The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are equally important and inter-connected. However, three areas 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.

4.1. The prime areas are:

- Communication and language: Listening and Attention, Understanding and Speaking.
- Physical development: Moving and Handling and Self-care.
- Personal, social and emotional development: Making relationships, Managing feeling and behaviour and Self-confidence and Self-awareness.

4.2. The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

- Literacy: Reading and Writing.
- Mathematics: Number and Space, shape and measure.
- Understanding the world: People and Communities, The World and Technology.

- Expressive arts and design: Exploring and using media and materials and Being Imaginative.

5. Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS Framework identifies three characteristics of effective learning. The Nursery and Reception teachers plan activities with these characteristics in mind:

- Playing and Exploring: children investigate and experience different objects, activities and their environment, they take risks and take on a 'have a go' attitude.
- Active Learning: children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, they enjoy their achievements.
- Creating and Thinking Critically: children have and develop their own ideas, make links between their experiences and ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

6. Teaching and Learning

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Carefully planned adult-led activities are important to ensure children learn specific skills and knowledge. Through carefully structured play, they can practise these skills to deepen and embed their learning. Children across Early Years in **AVA** follow a timetable which provides set times for adult-led and child-initiated sessions based on children's needs and any gaps in their learning. Practitioners will make on-going assessments of the progress and attainment of each child and use this information to develop next steps for children. Practitioners respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

7. Learning Through Play (child-initiated learning)

Learning through play and hands on experiences underpins our approach to teaching and learning in Early Years. Through play children develop many skills, including language, emotional literacy, creativity, social and intellectual skills. Children have opportunities to explore and initiate their own ideas, practise and learn new skills and revisit prior learning and experiences at their own pace and at a level that is comfortable to them. Independent learning takes place indoors and outdoors where children can be safe to explore and discover their immediate world. For most children their play/ independent learning is natural and spontaneous although some children may need extra help from adults. Practitioners model and provide time, space and appropriate resources which inspire independent learning opportunities and imaginations of the children. They observe play and join in when appropriate, watching and listening before intervening. Adults will model, observe, facilitate and extend children's learning. They will often ask children questions about the independent learning in order to develop their language and communication skills. All staff value child-initiated learning and provide safe but challenging environments that support and extend learning and development.

8. Adult-led Learning

Through adult-led activities we can introduce children to new ideas, provide opportunities for them to develop their skills and ensure that they experience all areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). In addition to child-initiated learning, children are provided with daily adult-led sessions which usually take place within their key worker or class groups. Reception and Nursery will have daily teaching sessions which cover Phonics, Literacy and Maths through topic work, other subject sessions are also planned for depending on children's learning needs. Children also have a daily story session. These sessions help develop good learning habits: learning as a group, listening to the practitioner, taking turns to speak and sitting. Teachers and practitioners plan sessions based on children's needs and differentiate them accordingly. Children are active learners during these sessions and they are provided with skills which they can go on and practise independently. Adult-led learning can also take place during continuous provision and indoor and outdoor activities are planned to help address gaps in children's learning.

9. Outdoor Learning

Outdoor learning is a fundamental part of the Early Years and it has a positive impact on children's development. The outdoor environment offers children the freedom to explore, use their senses and be physically active thus develop their gross motor skills. It also offers opportunities to learn and play in different ways and on different scales compared to indoors. Our outdoor environment provides a range of resources and activities for children to explore and we try to ensure that each of the curriculum areas are incorporated into the outdoor environment each day. Beebies, Nursery and Reception each have their own outdoor areas and all of the children have free-flow access to them during continuous provision. Over the course of the year children in Beebies have the opportunity to free flow continuous provision shared with Nursery children. Each area has a range of learning opportunities including a mud kitchen, sand and water play, role play/ stage area, balancing equipment, large scale construction, wheeled vehicles and literacy and mathematics opportunities. The outdoor environment is both a teaching and learning environment, where there is a balance of child-led and adult-led learning.

10. Assessment

Ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Practitioners also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

Key assessment points in the year:

Beebies	Nursery	Reception
2 year old check on entry (for assessment entry at end of 1 st half term)	Baseline on entry (for assessment entry at end of 1 st half term)	Baseline on entry
		October

December		
February		
April		
June	June	EYFSP in June
July	July	

11. Parent Partnership

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers. Parents and/or carers play a key role in children's development and it is essential for us to have a strong partnership with the people at home to ensure each child reaches their full potential. We encourage parents and carers to make contributions and share information about their child's learning and development.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. The 2 year old progress check and the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-round picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Each child is assigned a key person who helps ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home.

We aim to strengthen our parent/ carer partnerships by:

- Offering home visits for children new to the setting and Meet the Teacher meetings.
- Providing Stay and Play session for Beebies and Nursery transition times.
- Inviting parents in for workshops.
- Distributing curriculum newsletters.
- Having a home-school link worker available.
- Organising events throughout the year, e.g. coffee mornings, Grandparents Day.
- Liaising with the Children's Centre.
- Working with outside agencies to support children with additional needs.

12. Transition between Year Groups

12.1. Beebies to Nursery

Over the course of the year the Beebies children share the outdoor environment with Nursery when appropriate for their development. In the Summer term, Beebies children visit Nursery to explore and get to know the environment and learn new routines.

12.2. Nursery to Reception

During the Summer term, each Nursery groups has a weekly session in the Reception learning environment. This provides them with the opportunity to get to know the environment and routines in Reception.

12.3. Reception to Year 1

Over the course of the year Reception children will make use of primary school facilities such as the hall, learning resources area, and KS1 playground. In the Summer term Reception children will have weekly opportunities to visit the Year 1 classrooms to get to know the environment and introduce them to some class routines.

At the end of each school year, teachers and practitioners meet to share information on each child with their new class teacher/ key person. This will include end of year assessment data and help to build a picture of the whole unique child for the next practitioner.

13. Safeguarding and Welfare Procedures

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

14. Staffing Ratios

The Academy complies with the statutory requirements for all Early years providers https://www.foundationyears.org.uk/files/2017/03/EYFS_STATUTORY_FRAMEWORK_2017.pdf:

14.1. For children aged under two:

- there must be at least one member of staff for every three children
- at least one member of staff must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification,
- and must be suitably experienced in working with children under two
- at least half of all other staff must hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification
- at least half of all staff must have received training that specifically addresses the care of babies
- where there is an under two-year-olds' room, the member of staff in charge of that room must, in the judgement of the provider, have suitable experience of working with under twos

14.2. For children aged two:

- there must be at least one member of staff for every four children
- at least one member of staff must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification
- at least half of all other staff must hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification

- 14.3. For children aged three and over in registered early years provision where a person with Qualified Teacher Status, Early Years Professional Status, Early Years Teacher Status or another suitable level 6 qualification is working directly with the children:
- there must be at least one member of staff for every 13 children
 - at least one other member of staff must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification
- 14.4. For children aged three and over at any time in registered early years provision when a person with Qualified Teacher Status, Early Years Professional Status, Early Years Teacher Status or another suitable level 6 qualification is not working directly with the children:
- there must be at least one member of staff for every eight children •
at least one member of staff must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification
 - at least half of all other staff must hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification
- 14.5. For children aged three and over in independent schools (including in nursery classes in free schools and academies), where a person with Qualified Teacher Status, Early Years Professional Status, Early Years Teacher Status or another suitable level 6 qualification, an instructor, or another suitably qualified overseas trained teacher, is working directly with the children:
- for classes where the majority of children will reach the age of five or older within the school year, there must be at least one member of staff for every 30 children
 - for all other classes there must be at least one member of staff for every 13 children •
 - at least one other member of staff must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification
- 14.6. For children aged three and over in independent schools (including in nursery classes in academies), where there is no person with Qualified Teacher Status, Early Years Professional Status, Early Years Teacher Status or another suitable level 6 qualification, no instructor, and no suitably qualified overseas trained teacher, working directly with the children:
- there must be at least one member of staff for every eight children
 - at least one member of staff must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification

- at least half of all other staff must hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification
- 14.7. For children aged three and over in maintained nursery schools and nursery classes in maintained schools:
- there must be at least one member of staff for every 13 children
 - at least one member of staff must be a school teacher as defined by section 122 of the Education Act 200241
 - at least one other member of staff must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification
- 14.8. Reception classes in maintained schools and academies are subject to infant class size legislation. The School Admissions (Infant Class Size) Regulations 2012 limit the size of infant classes to 30 pupils per school teacher (subject to permitted exceptions) while an ordinary teaching session is conducted. 'School teachers' do not include teaching assistants, higher level teaching assistants or other support staff. Consequently, in an ordinary teaching session, a school must employ sufficient school teachers to enable it to teach its infant classes in groups of no more than 30 per school teacher.
- 14.9. Some schools may choose to mix their reception classes with groups of younger children (nursery pupils, non pupils or younger children from a registered provider), in which case they must determine ratios within mixed groups, guided by all relevant ratio requirements and by the needs of individual children within the group. In exercising this discretion, the school must comply with the statutory requirements relating to the education of children of compulsory school age and infant class sizes. Schools' partner providers must meet the relevant ratio requirements for their provision. Before/after school care and holiday provision 3.40. Where the provision is solely before/after school care or holiday provision for children who normally attend Reception class (or older) during the school day, there must be sufficient staff as for a class of 30 children. It is for providers to determine how many staff are needed to ensure the safety and welfare of children, bearing in mind the type(s) of activity and the age and needs of the children. It is also for providers to determine what qualifications, if any, the manager and/or staff should have.

15. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the governing body every 3 years.