

# **Aspley Guise Lower School**

*Growing Together, Aiming High*



## **EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY**

**September 2020**

**Review: September 2023**

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. In our school, children join us full time in the September of the academic year in which they have their fifth birthday.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

1. A Unique Child
2. Positive Relationships
3. Enabling Environments
4. Learning and Development

### **A UNIQUE CHILD**

At Aspley Guise Lower School we recognise that every child has the potential to be a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, 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 and rewards, 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 Aspley Guise Lower School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. 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. 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 our 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 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 also involve the children in rule setting and discussions about safety as we feel that this gives them more ownership of their environment. 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 wellbeing of all children.

## **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 Aspley Guise Lower School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2012. We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare of children 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 and equipment is 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.

We endeavor to meet all these requirements.

## **POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS**

At Aspley Guise Lower School we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent stemming from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families. We develop these relationships through the use of a structured ‘key person’ system whereby each child and their family have one person as their first port-of-call for any questions or concerns they may have. Both the children and their parents have the opportunity to build a strong relationship with this person.

## **PARENTS AS PARTNERS**

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

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school and encouraging the children to also be involved in information sharing
- the children have the opportunity to spend a morning in the classroom during the half term before starting part time school
- encouraging parents to talk to the child’s teacher if there are any concerns
- encouraging parents to contribute information that they have about their child’s achievements throughout the foundation stage through the use of WOW cards which parents can complete if their child has achieved something at home – these are celebrated in school and included in the child’s learning portfolio

There is a formal meeting for parents in the Autumn and Spring terms at which the parents can discuss the child's progress with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress during the Autumn and Spring terms (the "Interim Report") and at the end of the Foundation Stage in the Summer term. They also receive a summary of their child's progress at the end of the year.

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. All staff are involved in sharing information about the children and their development. Where children attend other settings in a day, we aim to ensure continuity and coherence by sharing information about the children.

### **ENABLING ENVIRONMENTS**

At Aspley Guise Lower 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 around themes that vary in the length of time from 1 to 2 weeks. These plans are used by the EYFS teacher as a guide for weekly planning; however the teacher may alter these in response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children. This will be indicated on weekly planning.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. These observations are recorded in a variety of ways and used to inform the EYFSP.

Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress against the ELGs and assessment scales. The parents are given the opportunity to discuss these judgments with the teacher.

### **THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

Our Early Years provision is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely.

There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. Each classroom has defined learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The children have access to the outdoor area whenever possible, which includes the playground, a garden area and a large covered area to provide cover and shelter from inclement weather. The children also visit the school outdoor classroom regularly which provides opportunities to enhance many areas of learning and provides children with valuable life skills. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers the children further opportunities 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**

At Aspley Guise Lower School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and have their own learning styles. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are often linked.

## **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 have the opportunity to practise skills, develop ideas and think creatively alongside other children as well as individually. The children 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.

## **AREAS OF LEARNING**

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning and development of which three are ‘prime areas’ and four ‘specific areas’.

The prime areas are

- 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.

The specific areas are

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

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other but should a child’s progress in a prime area give cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child’s parents/carers and agree how we can all support the child. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities. In each area there are Developmental Stages plus the Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

At Aspley Guise Lower School, “Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child initiated activities. Play is used as an essential part in children’s development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play and taking part in play which is guided by adults. There is an on-going judgment to be made by practitioners about the balance between activities led by children themselves and activities led or guided by adults. Practitioners must respond to each child’s emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. As children grow older, and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help the children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1”. (Statutory Framework for EYFS 2012)

Planning and guided children’s activities will consider the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. At Aspley Guise Lower School we support children in using the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning.

These are:

- **playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things and 'have- a -go'
- **active learning** – children concentrate and keep on trying even if they encounter difficulties
- **creating and thinking critically** – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

(Taken from Statutory EYFS Framework 2017)

#### MONITORING AND REVIEW

It is the responsibility of the Foundation teachers to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Head teacher and subject coordinators carry out monitoring of the EYFS through observation and discussion as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

All quotations included in this document are taken from the EYFS Framework 2017