



# Alexandra

## School

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# Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Approved and adopted by the Governing Body on 18 January 2018

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Alexandra School, children join the Nursery classes in the year that they turn four. Children can also join the Reception classes in the year they turn five. In partnership with parents and carers we enable the children to begin the process of becoming active learners for life.

We endeavour to ensure that children “learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe.” We aim to support children in their learning through “teaching and experiences that gives children the broad range of skills that provide the right foundation for good progress through school and in life.” (Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2017)

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A unique child – developing resilient, capable, confident and self-assured individuals.
- Positive relationships – supporting the children in becoming strong and independent.
- Enabling environments – where opportunities and experiences respond to the individual needs of the child by developing a strong partnership between practitioners, parents/carers and the child.
- Learning and developing – An acknowledgement that children learn in different ways and at different rates

### **A Unique Child**

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, 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 assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

### **Inclusion/Special Educational Needs (SEN)**

All children and their families are valued at Alexandra School. Children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all provisions available. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. Assessments take into account contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential special educational needs is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage and the school's Inclusion manager is called upon for further information and advice. Appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the school's Inclusion policy for SEN.

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.

## **Welfare**

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 and promote the physical and psychological well-being of all children. All staff are suitably qualified and are DBS vetted. (See Whole School Safeguarding Policy)

"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 Alexandra 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 2017. We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare 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.

## **Positive Relationships**

At Alexandra School we recognise that children learn to be strong independent learners 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 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;
- the children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during transfer sessions;
- support children through the transition from pre-school / home to nursery and onto Reception. This is also to support staff and parents in getting to know each other as well as the children.
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school and again during the first half term of the child's Reception year in order to

detail how we aim to work with their child particularly in relation to reading and phonics;

- each half term Reception parents are invited in to school, to share their children's learning journeys, to contribute to them and to celebrate their progress
- each half term a challenge is sent home for Reception parents to undertake with their children. It is returned and added to their learning journey
- during Reception we offer learning workshops for parents and children together with class teachers making the curriculum explicit to parents. Where appropriate additional workshops are offered for those children who are not meeting expectations
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents twice a year at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year;
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: stay and play sessions, celebration assemblies, school visits;
- providing parents an opportunity to celebrate their child's learning and development by completing "wow" moments which inform planning and provision;
- ensuring all parents know that their child's teacher and teaching assistant are their key workers.
- by providing a quiet and confidential area where parents are able to discuss any concerns.

### **Enabling Environments**

We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision.

Effective learning builds and extends upon prior learning and following children's interest. Effective planning is informed by observations of the children to ensure we follow their current interests and experiences. These observations are recorded in the children's individual Learning Journeys.

Play based learning is paramount and children direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities provided by staff. Staff will enhance play and extend as needed to further individual learning.

### **Learning and Development**

Our nursery consists of a morning and afternoon session- in each class there are 39 children, taught by two teachers and one nursery nurse.

Our reception classes are taught in classes of thirty taught by a teacher and a teaching assistant.

There are seven areas of learning and development of which three are "prime areas," and four "specific areas." The prime areas are

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development.

The specific areas are

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

At Alexandra 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 of 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 by taking part in play which is guided by adults. There is an on-going judgement to be made by practitioners about the balance between activities led by children, 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 children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1." (Statutory Framework for EYFS 2017)

Planning and guided children's activities will reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. At Alexandra 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 if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements; and
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.  
(Taken from statutory framework for the EYFS 2017)

### **Equal Opportunities**

All members of the school are treated as individuals. We aim to meet the needs of all, taking account of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, special educational needs, disability, and social circumstances. All staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect cultural diversity and the need to prepare pupils for life in a diverse and multi-faith society.

### **English as an Additional Language**

At Alexandra School 48% of the cohort have a different first language from English. In the early years children learn through play using real objects and visuals to support their language development. We ensure that all children have access to excellent English language role models. We run additional language groups to support those children who are learning English for the first time in school.

## **Health and Safety**

At Alexandra School there are clear procedures for assessing risk (see whole school risk assessment) which includes procedures for keeping children safe during outings and for any aspects of the environment or provision that may require a further risk assessment. In the staff handbook, safeguarding and child protection policies, there is detailed information and procedures to ensure the safety of the children.

In line with the EYFS statutory framework 2017, at Alexandra School we undertake;

- A whole school medicines policy ensuring that there are systems in place to ensure that medicines and the systems for obtaining information about a child's needs for medication are kept up to date. Medicines will not be administered unless they have been prescribed by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist. Training is provided for staff where the administration of medicine requires medical or technical knowledge. Medicines (both prescription and non-prescription) are only administered to a child where written permission for that particular medicine has been obtained from the child's parent and/or carer." At Alexandra School a written record is kept each time a medicine is administered to a child and informs the child's parents and/or carers on the same day." (Statutory framework for EYFS 2017)
- Children's' dietary needs are recorded and acted upon when required
- Each child is offered fruit, milk and has access to water throughout the day.
- A first aid box is accessible at all times and a record of accidents and injuries is kept (see accident and injury policy). There are always trained first aiders at school.
- The inclusion manager is the named behaviour manager for the whole school.
- A health and safety policy and procedures which cover identifying, reporting and dealing with accidents, hazards and faulty equipment.
- A fire and emergency evacuation procedure and policy

## **Transition**

### **Starting Nursery**

- Every child is invited to come for a nursery visit in the summer term before they start.
- We also have a Nursery Picnic for parents, siblings and new nursery children in the summer term before they start.
- In September, we visit children in their home environment.
- We have staggered starting days so that we can welcome each child personally. Parents are encouraged to stay with their child until their child is settled.
- A workshop for parents about the Early Years Foundation Stage and Nursery routines is held in the autumn term.
- Parents are always welcome in the Nursery. They often help by cooking and sharing stories.
- There is an opportunity to meet your child's teacher in November and March to see how they have settled in and how they are progressing.

At our nursery we endeavour to prepare children to be ready for school. We expect children to be ready to be separated from their parent or carer, to be able to demonstrate listening skills and to access the learning opportunities available.

## **Starting Reception**

During the summer term prior to a child's entry into the Reception year, the following procedures have been put into place to ensure successful transition

- All children new to the school will be visited by a teacher at their home or current setting.
- Parents are invited to a meeting to ensure they know about school procedures and allocation of classes and any concerns they may want to express.
- During the summer holidays parents are encouraged to provide a box containing photos and comments about their child's favourite activities and interests, so the teachers can spend time talking individually with your child and really get to know them.
- The children are invited to two separate visits to their reception class, to meet their teacher, teaching assistant and new class.
- The reception teachers will spend time visiting the Nursery setting, to ensure that the children are familiar with their new teachers.
- Children requiring extra support will have additional visits regardless of their setting.
- We have staggered starting days so that we can welcome each child personally.

## **From Reception Class to Key Stage 1**

Within the first six weeks of children starting school the teachers observe the children to help them make a judgement of each child's starting point. A Baseline is then completed on target tracker

During the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile includes on-going observations, all relevant records held by the setting, discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

Each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals. The profile indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are exceeding expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This informs the dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1.