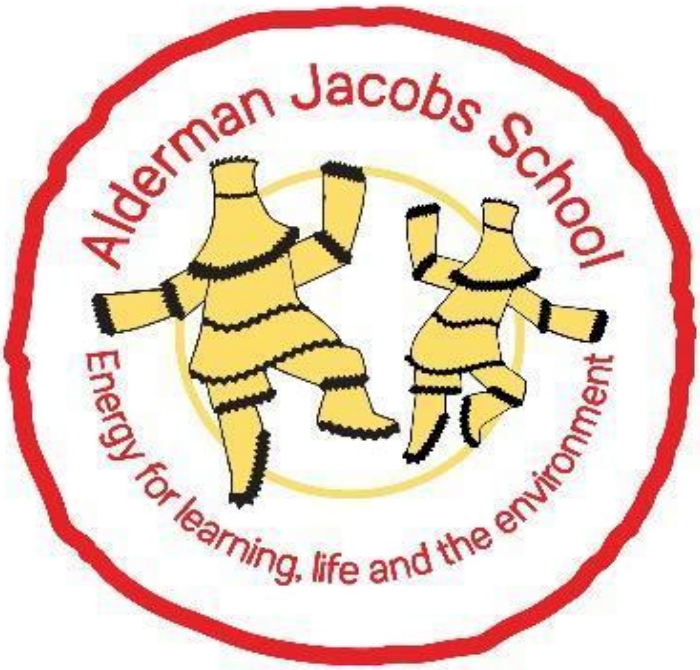

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS) POLICY

Approved	**July 2026**
Review	**July 2027**

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS) POLICY

Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- Close partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

The EYFS curriculum at AJS is meaningful, manageable and motivating. It more than fulfils the requirements of the EYFS Statutory Framework Educational Programmes of study, being ambitious for all pupils in its intent. At Alderman Jacobs we aim to raise educational achievement and attainment equitably as a vital key to improving the quality of life for all of our pupils now and in the future.
The curriculum is a vehicle through which our values are communicated and lived on a day-to-day basis.
We strive at all times to be a force of positive energy in the local community.
We value and promote;

- Energy for Learning: progress, skills and attitude
- Energy for Life: health, aspirations and sport
- Energy for the Environment: Respect, compassion and being 'green'

At Alderman Jacobs particularly value the following skills and actively help our pupils to develop them - we believe these skills are a vital foundation for their future lives:

- Communication
- Independence
- Resilience

The concept-based curriculum at Alderman Jacobs School, we believe that children should explore the 'big ideas', or concepts, involved in the story of our world. This enables them to understand themselves, those who have lived before them or who live in different places to them, those who are like them or different to them, those who interpret the world and those who shape the world. Thus they can make meaning, debate and innovate and more easily navigate their way through their future lives.

Our school curriculum encompasses the following concepts:

- Identity and diversity - understanding these concepts enables children to know themselves, other people and the world both close to them and far away
- Power and systems - understanding these concepts enables children to understand why the world is as it is now and consider how it might be different
- Democracy and change - understanding these concepts enables children to understand how they and others affect the world around them by words and actions

Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on requirements set out in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2024 in both Pre-School and Reception Year. The school refers to the guidance and resources connected with the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and Development Matters (2021).

This document also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

Definitions

The **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)** covers the first stage of children's education from Birth to age 5. A child with additional needs may be referred to as **Special Education Needs (SEN)**

Introduction

The Foundation Stage applies to children from three years of age to the end of the reception year. In our school, children join Pre-School from the age of 3 and all children start Reception at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. (Compulsory schooling begins at the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday). The Foundation Stage is important in its own right, and in preparing children for later schooling. The Early Learning Goals set out what is expected of most children by the end of the Foundation Stage.

All children start at our school with a variety of experiences and learning. Teachers in the Foundation Stage have to take on the challenging task of building upon that learning and experience. The foundations for learning are set out in these first years of education. The Foundation Stage aims to build a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

Three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving. These are the prime areas:

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

Providers must also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

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

Early Years Principles

The following principles underline our practice:

- Effective education requires both a relevant curriculum and staff who understand and are able to implement the curriculum requirements.
- Our Early Years team should establish positive relationships to ensure that all children feel included, secure and valued to support them to be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Every pupil is a unique child who is constantly learning
- Early years' experience should build on what children already know and can do.
- No child should be excluded or disadvantaged.
- Parents and Early Years staff should work together in a strong partnership.
- To provide a carefully structured Early Years curriculum.
- Children will learn in an enabling environment with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time.
- For our children to have rich and stimulating experiences, the learning environment should be well planned and organised.

Strategies for Ensuring Progress and Continuity Planning

Planning

Teachers plan what they will teach in three stages:

- Long Term Overview - Our long term-overview is informed using the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework, Development Matters ensuring that children will develop sequential knowledge and skills. The Foundation Stage currently provides a broad framework to meet the needs of three, four and five year olds, whether in a nursery or reception class. It provides progression and balance within all aspects of the curriculum.

- Unit Overviews – Our unit overviews give a generalisation of the knowledge, skills and vocabulary linked to our AJS Concept Based Curriculum 'big ideas' as well as the facts and questions children will be exploring and learning about.

- Short Term Planning – Short term planning takes place at our weekly year group planning meetings. The weekly plan focuses on skills and enhancements for the continuous provision both inside and in the outdoor classroom, adult focuses and whole class input plans. Planning is informed and modified by ongoing assessments and observations. There is a clear identification of the specific knowledge, skills and attitudes that are the focus of the intended learning both for individuals and groups. This means there is a balance of activities that encompass each area of learning and experience, challenges the more able child, supports the less able child and ensures that there is progression.

  Individual teachers also adapt plans where applicable to their class. They also complete daily timetables. Gap and strength analysis is used to inform provision planning as well as a provision map to focus support and intervention. We write to all parents in each half term outlining our plans for each half term's topics to be covered, visits and visitors.

Assessment and Record Keeping

Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support. Formative assessment is a key part of the learning and development process.

All children undergo a Baseline Assessment during their first weeks in Pre-school or school. Our current baseline comprises observations and short adult focuses based on the Development Matters guidance. The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA)' is a short assessment, taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts reception. The RBA assesses a child in early mathematics, literacy, communication and language. An initial phonic assessment is also carried out in the reception year.

The baseline data is also informed by parents and preschool/nursery settings. This provides the teacher with a starting point from which ~~all~~ future learning is planned.

Parents are informed about their child's progress at the Parent Consultation Evenings in the Autumn and the Spring term and through their child's Annual Report in July. Parents are encouraged to approach teachers with any concerns via the open door policy. This is supported through our Look and Share events and other community days.

Continuous assessment takes place in the classroom for all areas of the curriculum using observation, dialogue and marking of work. When assessing whether an individual child is at the expected level of development, practitioners draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgement.

At intervals throughout the year, pupils are assessed using emerging and expected language In Pre-School, as well as the language associated with the Early Excellence baseline in Reception year in line with our school assessment schedule. At the end of the Reception Year pupils are assessed against the Early Learning Goals. Practitioners must indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). This is the EYFS Profile.

Classroom Organisation

The Pre-School children are based in one classroom and the Reception children are based in three classrooms each with both indoor and outdoor continuous provision. The~~se~~ varieties of areas and floor spaces enable children to be independent, active learners. Both Pre-School and the Reception classes have access to an Outdoor Area which is fenced in for security. The four classes also have access to the group room in between classes India and China.

At lunchtime the Pre-School children eat in the hall with Pre-School Practitioners. The Reception children eat in the main hall overseen by their teachers and midday supervisors. All staff are trained to deal with first aid (including allergies, asthma and anaphylaxis) and resuscitation. This training is updated annually. Early Years Teachers and Pre-School Practitioners are Paediatric First Aid trained.

Strategies for Teaching the Early Years

All teacher led activities are adapted to meet the particular needs of each child.

Our children are encouraged to take responsibility for planning their own learning. This initially takes place during busy learning sessions. The children have access to both the indoor and outdoor environments. The children are encouraged to select and put away the relevant resources.

Play in the Early Years

A key way in which young children learn with enjoyment and challenge is through well- planned play, both indoors and outdoors. It is important that we provide opportunities to support the children's learning through planned play activities and to extend and support children's spontaneous play.

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them to make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, concepts and skills. They learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. There will be opportunities to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They can communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

Inclusion in the Early Years

We meet the needs of all our children, including those who are more able and those with special educational needs, through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interest, 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 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.
- Ensuring that the children are encouraged to respect themselves and others.

- Through discussions with AHTs and SENDCO, children can have access to AIM room and Sensory provision through a sessional approach

- Pupils with SEN are monitored and supported in line with the SEN Code of Practice and the SEND Provision and Inclusive Education policy.

The Role of Parents

We believe that all parents/carers have an important role to play in the education of their child. We recognise the role that parents/carers have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts Pre-School or school.
- The children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting Pre-School or school through visits to the school and home visits.
- Inviting all parents/carers of children starting Reception to an Induction Evening in the summer term before their child starts school.

- Providing the parents/carers of children starting Reception and child with two booklets. First a booklet that explains school procedures for parents and a second one for parents/carers to share with their child. (See Admissions Policy and Appendices). Parents/ Carers of Pre-school children will receive a registration pack which explains Pre-school information and procedures.
- When their child starts their first day at school (Reception) 10 minutes is allocated to each child and their parents/carers. This allows time to find coat peg, and lunch requirements, to have a photo taken and for the child to enter the classroom and find an activity.
- Encouraging parents/carers to talk to the child's teacher or key worker if there are any concerns.

- There are parent consultation meetings for parents/carers in the Autumn and Spring terms at which the teacher or key worker and parent/carer discuss the child's progress. Parents/carers receive a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year and are invited to meet with the teacher or key worker to discuss the report.
- Inviting parents/carers to attend the Parents sessions. This gives the parents/carers the opportunity to work alongside their child both indoors and outdoors.
- Inviting the parents/carers to attend workshops for Literacy and Numeracy so that they can support their child at home.
- Encourage the parents/carers to support their child's reading. In Reception, Reading is sent home every night and the parents/carers are encouraged to comment on their child's reading in the "Reading Record". Also during the Autumn term in Reception, photos of the new Phonics sound and activities to try are sent home after a new phoneme has been taught during school that day. We ask parents/carers to spend time with their child thinking about words that use that letter as well as the formation and corresponding sound. Children also have access to an online reading library 'Oxford Owl'.
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between, child, school and parents/carers.
- Invite parents/carers to Christmas performances, Sports Day, Reading and Maths cafes and any other relevant functions in school.
- Parents/carers are welcome to come and talk to the teacher or key worker at the end of each day/session.
- Parents can view, comment and add observations through their child's own Tapestry Online Learning Journey.

Community Links

The community is to be used as a resource whenever possible. We invite visitors from our local community e.g. vicar, parents, on-site Pre-school and local community members linked to our current theme.

Health and Safety

We aim to plan safe activities in all areas of the Early Years curriculum. Staff must always warn the children of any possible dangers and where appropriate ensure that the necessary precautions are taken. All children will be taught to take responsibility for the safety of themselves and to have a duty of care towards their peers.

Up to date Health Care Plans are kept in the classes' SEN and Inclusion folders. Any prescribed medicines are to be kept in the Office but Epipens will be kept in a labelled container and all staff will be informed of where it is kept. Individual inhalers will be stored in a safe and secure place. (See also Health and Safety Policy and Procedures).

A daily risk assessment is carried out for the entire unit visually, paying particular attention to risks in the outdoor area. Any concerns passed to the site manager.

Use of Technology

Personal mobile phones and other technology (camera, iPad) must not be used within Early Years classrooms and areas. Staff may not use mobile phones/cameras in the Early Years/Preschool setting during school hours. School ipads and other technology should only be used in line with the school's Acceptable Use policy. Parents are required to give their consent to allow the school to photograph their children whilst learning.

All photos, videos and data must be stored in line with the School's Acceptable Use Code of Conduct policy.

Child Protection

The schools' policy for Safeguarding and Child Protection is operated throughout the early years setting and any incidents or concerns are investigated using the normal procedures.
Any incidents of-child on child abuse will be investigated and dealt with through the whole school policy for Anti-bullying.

Links to other policies

Acceptable Use Code of Conduct
Anti-Bullying
Health and Safety
Mobile Phone and Camera Use
Safeguarding and Child Protection