

# **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**



## **Introduction**

Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage,  
Department for Education, 2014

It is every child's right to grow up safe, healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and with economic well-being. At Amblecote the overarching aim of the EYFS is to help young children achieve these five "Every Child Matters" outcomes.

## **We aim to:**

- provide high quality care and education for Pre-school and reception children;
- work in partnership with parents to help children to learn and develop;
- offer children and their parents a setting that promotes equality and values diversity; and
- add to the life and well being of the local community.

## **Parents/ Carers**

We value our partnership with parents/ carers and recognise that parents have a right to be:

- valued and respected;
- kept informed;
- consulted;
- involved; and
- included at all levels.

## **Pre-school**

As a community based, voluntary managed setting, operating under Section 27 Community Powers we also depend on the good will of parents and their involvement to keep going. Membership of the setting carries expectations on parents for their support and commitment. The Pre-school is overseen by a Care Committee which meets at regular intervals during the year. On a daily basis the Pre-school is run by the Manager and qualified staff. A staff ratio of 1 adult to 8 children is adhered to at all times.

Amblecote Pre-school has a 24 place morning session and a 24 place afternoon session for 3 and 4 year olds. Places are allocated to children who are on our waiting list and the following criteria applies:

- 1. looked after children**
- 2. To children for whom the setting is the most suitable available setting to meet either the child's special educational needs or medical needs.**
- 3. For children who attend Amblecote Time for Two's (T4T's) provision**
- 4. To children who have a brother or sister already at Amblecote Primary school who will be attending the school at time of entry.**
- 5. On the basis of proximity.**

If a child cannot access the funding available by the government or they exceed their 15 hours of allocated funding a fee will be charged (available on request).

## **Reception class**

A Home-School Agreement is shared during the induction meetings and parents are requested to sign this and return a copy to school.

## **Children's development and learning**

We aim to ensure that each child:

- is in a safe and stimulating environment;
- has the chance to join with other children and adults to live, play, work and learn together;
- is helped to take forward her/his learning and development by being helped; to build on what she/he already knows and can do;
- has his/her own key person who makes sure each child makes good progress; and
- is in a setting that values parents as partners in helping each child learn and develop.

## **The Early Years Foundation Stage**

The provision for children's development and learning is guided by The Early Years Foundation Stage (DFE 2012). Our provision reflects the four overarching principles of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## **A Unique Child**

- Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self assured.

## **Positive Relationships**

- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.

## **Enabling Environments**

Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners, parents and carers.

## **Learning and Development**

- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in Pre-school and reception including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

## **How we provide for development and learning**

There are 7 areas of learning and development that shape educational programmes in early years settings.

### **Prime areas:**

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

### **Specific areas:**

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

For each area, the practice guidance sets out the Early Learning Goals. These goals state what it is expected that children will know and be able to do by the end of the reception year of their education.

'Outcomes for Children' set out the likely stages of progress a child makes along their learning journey towards the Early Learning Goals. Our setting has regard to these matters when we assess children and plan for their learning. Our curriculum supports children to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding they need for:

### **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

- Making relationships
- Self confidence and self awareness
- Managing feelings and behaviour

### **Communication and Language**

- Listening and attention
- Understanding and
- Speaking

### **Physical Development**

- Moving and handling
- Health and self-care

### **Literacy**

- Reading and
- Writing

### **Mathematics**

- Numbers and
- Shape, space and measure.

### **Understanding of the World**

- People and communities
- The world and
- Technology

### **Expressive Arts and Design**

- Exploring and using media and materials
- Being imaginative.

### **The Learning Environment**

We aim to create an attractive, welcoming and stimulating learning environment which will encourage children to explore, investigate and learn through first hand experience. We also aim to make it a place where children feel secure and confident, and are challenged to develop their independence.

Activities are planned for both the inside and outside; children have the freedom to move between the indoor and outdoor classroom throughout the school day. The learning environment is divided into a variety of different areas: role play, book corner, writing area, Numeracy area, topic display table, listening centre and computer, creative, malleable, sand, water, outside, construction, PSED area, small world and puzzles. These areas are carefully arranged to encourage quiet areas and more active areas within the learning environment.

Children are encouraged to become independent learners and to take some responsibility for initiating their own lines of enquiry and investigation.

### **Our approach to learning and development and assessment**

#### **Learning through play**

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Play is essential for 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 ongoing judgement to be made by practitioners about the balance between activities led by children, and activities led or guided by adults. Practitioners respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. Pre-school practitioners focus strongly on the three prime areas, which

are the basis for successful learning in the other four specific areas. 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.

### **Characteristics of Effective Learning**

In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice. Three characteristics of effective learning are:

- Playing and exploring- children investigate 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.

### **Planning**

Good planning is the key to making children's learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive. Effective learning builds on and extends what children know and can do. Our planning shows how the principles of the EYFS will be put into practice and is always informed by observations we have made of the children, in order to understand and consider their current interests, development and learning. All practitioners in the EYFS are involved in this process. There are three stages of planning the curriculum:

#### **Long Term Planning**

A long-term plan is a way of ensuring that all seven areas of learning are given equal emphasis and that all aspects of learning within the seven areas are covered regularly and frequently.

#### **Medium Term Planning**

We address particular aspects of the curriculum in more detail for each term.

We include links between areas of learning and development and opportunities for ICT. Learning objectives and activities and experiences for each area of learning and development are identified. Planning is shared with parents and children at the beginning of each half term.

#### **Short Term Planning**

We identify specific learning objectives, activities, differentiation, deployment of adults and resources, to meet the learning needs of the children on a weekly and day-to-day basis. It allows for flexibility in response to individual children's needs and interests and for revision and modification, informed by on-going observational assessment.

### **Assessment**

We assess how young children are learning and developing by observing them frequently. We use information that we gain from observations, as well as from photographs of the children, to document their progress and plan next steps for learning. We believe that parents know their children best and we ask them to contribute to assessment by sharing information about what their children like to do at home and how they as parents are supporting development.

We make periodic assessment summaries of children's achievement based on our ongoing development records. These form part of children's records of achievement. We undertake these assessment summaries at regular intervals as well as at times of transition, such as when a child moves from Pre-school to a Reception class.

Early Excellence Baseline Assessment will be carried out during the first half term of the Reception class.

Parents are asked to share information from the progress check at age two prior to their child commencing Pre-school.

### **Early Years Foundation Stage Profile**

Each child's development is recorded against 17 early learning goals and divided between the 7 areas of learning and development. Judgments against these scales are made from observation of consistent and independent behaviour from children's self-initiated activities and focus activities. The EYFS profile provides

year 1 teachers and parents with reliable and accurate information about each child's level of development as they reach the end of the EYFS. Reception staff indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are exceeding expected levels, or not yet reaching levels 'emerging'.

## **Learning Journeys**

Pre-school and reception class practitioners keep a record of achievement for each child called a learning journey. Staff and parents work together on their children's records of achievement this is one of the ways in which the Key Person and parents work in partnership. Your child's record of achievement helps us to celebrate together her/his achievements and to work together to provide what your child needs for her/his well-being and to make progress.

Your child's Key Person (class teacher in reception), will work with you to keep this record. To do this you and she/he will collect information about your child's needs, activities, interests and achievements. This information will enable the key person to identify your child's stage of progress. You and the Key Person will then decide on how to help your child to move on to the next stage.

**"2 Build a Profile" Electronic Learning Journeys are also used.**

## **Working together for your children**

In our setting we maintain the ratio of adults to children in the setting that is set through the Welfare Requirements. We also have students/ volunteer helpers where possible to complement these ratios.

## **How parents take part in the setting**

Our setting recognises parents as the first and most important educators of their children. All staff see themselves as partners with parents in providing care and education for their children. There are many ways in which parents take part in making the setting a welcoming and stimulating place for children and parents, such as:

- Exchanging knowledge about their children's needs, activities, interests and progress with staff,
- Sharing 'wow' moments
- Sharing their own special interests with children e.g. talking about their job
- Helping to provide and look after the equipment and materials used in children's play activities
- Taking part in events and informal discussions about the activities and curriculum provided by the setting
- Joining in community activities, in which the setting takes part such as the Easter Hat Parade at Amblecote Church.

## **Key Person and your child**

Our setting uses a Key Person approach. This means that each member of staff (Pre-school) and the two class teachers (reception class) has a group of children for whom s/he is particularly responsible. Your child's Key Person will be the person who works with you to make sure that we meet your child's particular needs and interests.

## **Continuing Professional Development**

We are always aiming to improve our teaching skills, knowledge and understanding and so all practitioners are encouraged to participate in local authority courses, in-service and local cluster group training. Practitioners also attend in-house training and disseminate new initiatives, ideas and teaching methods to colleagues.

## **The setting's timetable and routines**

At Amblecote we believe that care and education are equally important in the experience we offer children. The routines and activities that make up the day in Pre-school/ reception are provided in ways that:

- Help each child to feel that s/he is a valued member of the setting;
- Ensure the safety of each child;
- Help children gain from the social experience of being part of a group; and
- Provide children with opportunities to learn and help them to value learning.

## **Policies**

Copies of the setting's policies are available for you to see at the setting or on the school website. The staff and parents of the setting work together to adopt the policies and review them annually.

## **Safeguarding**

Our setting has a duty under the law to help safeguard children against suspected or actual 'significant harm'.

Our employment practices ensure children against the likelihood of abuse in our settings and we have a procedure for managing complaints or allegations against a member of staff.

Our way of working with children and their parents ensures we are aware of any problems that may emerge and can offer support, including referral to appropriate agencies where necessary, to help families in difficulty.

## **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**

As part of our policy to make sure that our provision meets the needs of each individual child, we take account of any special needs a child may have. We work to the requirements of the New Code of Practice 2014. Our Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators are Mrs Perigo (Pre-School), Mrs Sprague/ Mrs Dunkley (School).

## **Liaison with Pre-school settings and Induction**

At Amblecote we have close links between Pre-school and reception. The Reception and Pre-school practitioners meet regularly to discuss planning, assessment and induction issues, and attend training together. We are continually looking at ways to integrate the activities of the Pre-school and Reception classes e.g. through open door play sessions. During Summer Term 2, Pre-school children who will be starting school in September make regular visits to the Reception class.

All prospective children have the opportunity to visit their classroom prior to starting Amblecote. (See appendix 1 for details of transition arrangements.)

**Review Date: September 2018**

## **APPENDIX- EYFS INDUCTION PROCEDURES**

### **Induction of children into Amblecote Pre-school**

1. During the second part of the spring term before the children are due to begin Pre-school in the September, letters are sent to parents/carers informing them that their child has been offered a place in the Pre-school at Amblecote Primary School.
2. An invitation will accompany the letter inviting the parents/carers and the child to come and visit the Pre-school. This visit will be undertaken during the **Open Week** which is held during the first half of the summer term. The children, parents/carers will be allocated a specific day and time to look around the Pre-school. The visiting children will stay and play in the Pre-school alongside staff and other children whilst their parents are invited to attend a short meeting led by the Pre-school Manager within the Pre-school room.
3. The Pre-school Manager will give information about the setting and about the Induction procedure. An **Induction Pack** containing a **Welcome To Amblecote Pre-school Handbook** and a **This Is Me Booklet** to be completed with the child at home prior to starting Pre-School and brought in when the child officially starts, will be given out and parents/carers will be asked to complete a school enrolment form. Parents will be asked to complete further forms at home and return the whole pack at the next meeting to be discussed with the child's Key Person.  
**The Welcome to Amblecote Pre-School Handbook** will contain information on:
  - Pre-School sessions and times, staffing.
  - An overview of the Early Years Foundation Stage ethos and curriculum.
  - Guidelines for parents/carers regarding handwriting.
  - School uniform
  - Main policies (other policies are available on the school website)
  - Pre-school routines
4. Parents/carers will have an opportunity during this visit to talk to the Manager and staff either for their own reassurance or to give personal information.
5. A further appointment will be made for re-visits to the Pre-school to meet with the child's allocated Key Person and for a Home visit. Staff will obtain consent and information from the parent/carer to visit children within their current setting so as to get a more detailed picture of the child.
6. Further visits are welcomed and encouraged to the Pre-school over the summer term where relationships with the child's Key Person can be built upon.
7. The children start Pre-school in small groups over a consecutive number of days. Each child is allocated a specific time and date. If the child is upset parents/carers are welcome to stay until their child is settled. (This may continue for as long as necessary).

## **Induction of Pre-School Children into Reception Class**

1. Pre-school children will take part in Transition sessions once a week in the summer term. The Reception staff will make a number of visits into the Pre-school to meet the children prior to them starting school. Pre-school children will have the opportunity to use the Reception class during these transition sessions.
2. During the second half of the spring term before the children are due to begin reception, letters are sent to parents/carers informing them of our transition arrangements.
3. The Reception staff will meet the parents/carers at the New Parents Meeting, Stay and Play sessions and the Induction dinner which will be held during the final half term that the children are in Pre-school.
4. Parents are invited to attend a meeting led by the head teacher and the Foundation Stage co-ordinator where information will be given about the setting and the induction procedure. An Induction Pack containing a reception handbook will be given out and parents/carers will be asked to complete a school enrolment form and further forms at home and return the whole pack to the school office by end of the first week in July.
5. The Handbook will contain information on:
  - The reception class day and staffing.
  - An overview of the Early Years Foundation Stage ethos and curriculum.
  - Guidelines for parents/carers regarding handwriting.
  - School uniform
  - Main policies (other policies are available on the school website)
  - Reception routines
6. Starting Reception photograph books will be given to all the new reception starters detailing staff, the environment and reception routines. Pages are available to parents to add information to be shared during the new parent meetings in September.
7. The Pre-school children will make more formal visits to their new class prior to them starting school during the last weeks of term.
8. Reception staff will inform other Pre-schools of our transition arrangements via a letter and visits to other Early Years will take place in the second half of the summer term. Copies of the starting reception photograph books will also be sent to other Pre-school settings.
9. Reception staff will meet with Pre-school staff to pass on information about the children.
10. Induction meetings will take place in September where staff, parents and the children discuss the information pack and gather further information about each child to ensure a smooth transition into school.
11. The children start reception in small groups over a consecutive number of days. Each child is allocated a specific time and date.



## **Reception to Year 1 Transition**

The Reception and year 1 staff work together to make the transition from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 as smooth as possible.

At Amblecote:

- Children are encouraged to develop independence when dressing and undressing and when organising their personal belongings throughout the reception year.
- Reception practitioners plan for more structured activities to be undertaken during the summer terms, encouraging less dependence on adult support.
- Reception children meet year 1 teachers during assembly, playtime and other whole school activities during the reception year.
- Individual EYFS Profile folders and 'Learning Journeys' are passed on to year 1 teachers.
- An EYFS Profile end of year class summary is passed on to year 1 teachers.
- Reception and year 1 teachers meet to discuss individual needs of children in July.
- Reception children visit their new Year 1 class and teacher for story times and a half day play session during Summer 2.
- Reception children design their own coat peg label to take to Year 1.
- Reception children take home a memory bag over the summer holidays to collect objects to show their new teacher in September.
- Parents are invited to a transition meeting and a stay and play session in year one.
- There is a similar structure to the school day during the Autumn Term when the children move into year 1.
- There is an overlap in approach and routines, e.g. Fruit time, behaviour systems, timetables, etc
- Where possible, the year 1 children continue to enjoy practical learning experiences which gradually becomes more formalised towards the end of the academic year.