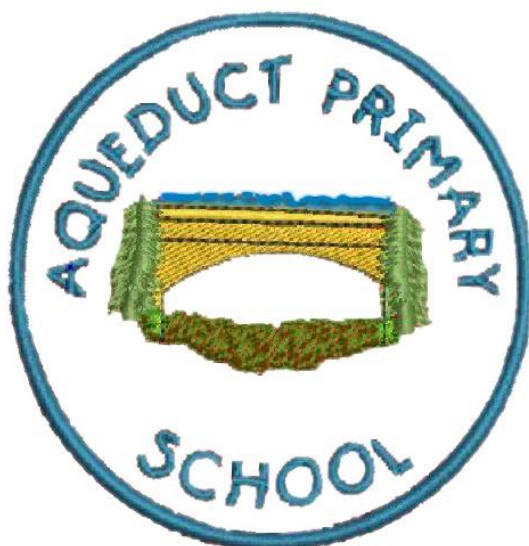


# Aqueduct Primary School Early Year Foundation Stage Policy



2024/25

Head Teacher	Tammy Lockley
Chair of Governors/Safeguarding Governor	Louise Aubrey
Early Years Leader	Cara Duppa
Next Review Date	January 2025

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Building Tomorrow, Leading the way.**

## Introduction

*'All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives, so their experiences in early years 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 early learning provide the foundation children need to fulfil their potential.'*

*(Statutory framework for EYFS (January 2024))*

*We believe that early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives and at Aqueduct Primary School we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. This links with our school's strapline, 'Building tomorrow, Leading the way'. Incorporated within this are the school's values which underpin individual's growth and development to be a unique and to be inspired - Positivity, happiness, learning, kindness, safety & respect.*

## Aims & Objectives

*We aim to support all children to become independent and collaborative learners. Across the Foundation Stage, we will provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential.*

*At Aqueduct Primary School, we will:*

- Endeavour to facilitate every child's right to develop a love for learning and encourage our school values of, 'safety, respect, positivity, learning, happiness and kindness'.*
- Provide a happy, safe, stimulating, and challenging programme of learning and development for the children to experience as they begin their journey through school.*
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond and enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence.*
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and next steps and helping each child to progress. We will use a variety of assessment methods including on-going short and long observations and adult and child led activities.*



- Develop positive relationships with parents and carers to build a strong partnership in supporting their children.
- Provide a caring and inclusive learning environment which is sensitive to the requirements of the individual child including those who have additional needs.

The Early Years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- It builds on what our children already know and can do.
- It ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged.
- It offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children, and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors.
- It provides a rich and stimulating environment.
- It acknowledges the importance of a full working partnership with parents and carers and the benefits of sharing both successes and concerns with them.

### Learning and Development:

The EYFS Curriculum:

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in the Early Years settings. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The three 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.

Specific Areas:

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

More information on this curriculum is available found online at [www.foundationyears.org.uk](http://www.foundationyears.org.uk)



## Characteristics of Effective Learning

In planning and guiding children's activities, staff always reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice.

Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning 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.

**Creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

## Planning

We believe that children have a natural desire to learn. Practitioners promote this drive to learn by fostering children's curiosity and immersing them in an enabling environment that builds upon and extends their prior learning.

Through careful observation and interaction, our committed EYFS team work alongside children in a range of ways to meet children at their individual learning outcomes and drive learning forward alongside the child by planning next steps.

Our team also take into account the interests and needs of each unique child, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding children's activities, our team reflects on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice. We support children to utilise the three Characteristics of Effective Learning (EYFS statutory framework):

**Playing and Exploring** - Children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go' work

**Active Learning** - Children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements

**Creating and Thinking Critically** - Children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

In order to structure our planning for delivery of particular activities and provocations, we teach thematically. Some of our 'big questions' that form our themes include: What happened before? Why are animals amazing? Why are we special? Why is there a commotion in the ocean?

## Learning through play

In the EYFS, there is a large emphasis on using every inch of the enabling environment, both indoors and outdoors, supported with a range of child-initiated and adult-led activities to further learning and development.



"Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems". At Aqueduct Primary School, we aim to inspire our young learners to develop their own curiosity, teamwork, imagination and resilience, leading them to know more and remember more. Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children have time specifically reserved to immerse themselves in leading their own play and for practitioners to support and extend this play to allow children to make progress in all areas of the EYFS curriculum.

Our teaching also sees a range of adult-led activities to teach knowledge and skills more discretely. These are in the form of carpet sessions where new information is delivered or opportunities for discussion are elicited for example, or in specific focus activities, whereby an adult will be working in a one-to-one capacity with a child or in a small group structure to support learning.

Staff 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, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1.

### Assessment

During the first term, the EYFS team work together to assess the ability of each Reception pupil using observations and activities.

These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual and/or groups of children. This first baseline assessment also takes in to account any other records we receive from previous pre-school settings, parents and childminders. We also take part in the Government's National Reception Baseline tests which assess children across a number areas of learning including number, communication and comprehension.

Reception also take part in the Government Baseline Assessment, and this is recorded online.

The Foundation Stage Profile is the nationally employed assessment tool that enables teachers to record their observations at the end of the pupils' Foundation Stage, and to summarise their progress towards ELGs (covering each of the seven areas of learning contained in the curriculum guidance). We record each child's level of development against 17 areas of learning as Emerging or Expected. The Early Years team have weekly planning meetings to discuss each child and the ways we will adapt the provision to address their learning and any needs identified.



Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal observations, knowledge of pupils and photographic evidence. The collection of assessment data in the Foundation stage profile is recorded for school tracking purposes during the year in order to monitor children which are not on track to meet the expected level of development.

This is recorded in progress records, learning journeys and collating examples of each child's work. We share all this with parents at consultation meetings.

If children are not meeting the expected outcomes during half term reviews, the EYFS leader monitors and plans intervention for additional support.

At the end of the summer, teachers will determine whether individuals have met the required ELGs and are at the expected level of development or they are emerging. Outline of all children transfers to the next teacher to how far children are emerging by and what they still need to achieve. This is a best fit judgement and should be based on the professionalism and knowledge of the teacher and staff who have worked with individuals to say they are Year 1 ready.

At the end of the Reception year, we send a summary of these assessments to the LA for analysis. The child's next teacher uses this information to make plans for the year ahead. Parents/Carers receive an end of year report.

The annual written reports offer comments on each child's progress. We complete these in the summer term and send them to parents before the end of the school year.

### Transition

Starting school can be a difficult time for young children; we therefore plan this time carefully to support children with the transition and to ensure it is as smooth as possible for each child and that they settle quickly and happily.

Parents of all children are invited to an induction meeting in the summer term. This is an opportunity for staff to:

- Explain about the uniform, PE Kit, and school dinners/free school meals
- Explain about holidays and absences
- Answer any questions parents may have.
- To discuss school readiness
- Explain the arrangements for starting school in September
- Talk to the parents about the school and Government expectations at the end of EYFS.
- Give out activity packs to encourage fine motor skills/personal and social.



We also try and visit any settings that are sending children to us. We also invite children for planned child-initiated sessions in the summer term to begin building up relationships with adults.

When children begin their Reception year in September, we find it is best for all children to start at the same time. We encourage parents to bring their children for full days from day one. Parents are invited to settle their children in the mornings for the first two weeks.

We actively encourage independence and aim for children to be coming into class independently especially when they have built up a rapport with adults in the summer term ready for September.

Throughout the Reception year we aim to build up their involvement in whole school life helping them to become more familiar with many of the teaching and support staff working in other classes. They will have taken part in the weekly achievement assembly as well as sharing the lunchtime hall with the children. Also, involvement with sports day, sports house mornings and theme days.

### Safeguarding & 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.'*

*(Statutory Framework for EYFS 2017, and then updated for 2021)*

At Aqueduct Primary School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Revised Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2021. We understand that we are required to:

- Promote the welfare of children.
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- Promote the provision of nutritious fruit snacks, access to water throughout the day and significant time for physical development.
- To educate and demonstrate the importance of good oral hygiene.
- Staff and visitors are prohibited from using their mobile phones in our classrooms, only the class iPads are used to photograph children (for Dojo and assessment purposes) and children must be appropriately dressed in photographs. Staff to check photo permissions before putting any images on website/newsletter/social media.



- 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.
- The EYFS staff hold the Paediatric First Aid qualification, which is a statutory requirement of the EYFS.

Aqueduct School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This means that we have a Child Protection Policy and procedures in place which we refer to in our prospectus. All staff (including supply staff, volunteers and governors) must ensure that they are aware of these procedures. Families are welcome to read the Policy on the school website. We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

Our Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) are:

Jo Clarke (Lead DSL and Deputy Head teacher)

Tammy Lockley (Head Teacher)

Cara Duppa (EYFS Lead)

Ashley Palin (Assistant Head teacher)

Eloise Harrow (SENCO)

Lisa Bachelor (Pastoral support leader)

Louise Aubrey (Safeguarding Governor/Chair of Governors)

### Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children and celebrate being unique. All children at Aqueduct Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school. 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 yet 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 help the children to learn about boundaries, rules, and limits. 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 well-being of all children within our caring, nurturing setting.

### The Role of Parents/Carers

We recognise the central importance of parents/carers as children's first educators. We believe they have a significant role to play in the lifelong education of their child. We strive to create and maintain partnerships with parents/carers as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child's learning. We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child's education and care in numerous ways.

- Holding information evenings before the children start school.
- Talking to them about their child's interests and needs during our introductory sessions in school and at our nursery visits carried out each July.
- Being welcoming and approachable and having an open-door approach for parents to voice concerns/ask questions.
- Inviting them to a parent consultation in the Autumn and Spring Terms to discuss how their child has settled and share progress and next steps for learning.
- Valuing parents' contributions to learning journeys.



- Inviting parents into school weekly for our 'Come and Play sessions' and termly for our 'Come and Learn with Us' afternoons.
- Encouraging parents to read with their child at home and make comments in their reading record books.
- Encouraging parents to share their home experiences via the Class Dojo app.
- Providing curriculum planning overviews for each topic, each term, highlighting how they can support their child at home.
- Inviting parents into school for 'parent phonics' sessions to demonstrate how we teach phonics and help them support their child.
- Welcoming parents as volunteers into our school (DBS).
- Providing parents with an annual end of year report detailing achievements and their child's EYFS profile.
- We also draw on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on outings and inviting members of the community into our setting to talk about their lives, work, and experiences.

### Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teacher and team members to follow the principles stated in this policy. There is a named governor responsible for the EYFS. This governor will discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners regularly and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion.

The Head Teacher, Deputy Head and EYFS Manager will carry out monitoring in the EYFS, including Learning Journey monitoring and moderation, as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

The policy will be reviewed for January 2025 or earlier if circumstances require it.

