



Abbots Ripton Church of England Primary School

# Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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## **EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY**

This policy sets out our aims and principles in delivering the best Early Years education we can in our EYFS class.

### **Aims and Objectives**

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is supported by the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage 2013 and builds a coherent and flexible approach to care and learning, enabling each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically and creatively. The EYFS applies to children from birth to the end of their first year in school and here at Abbots Ripton CE Primary we admit children in the September after their fourth birthday, into our Reception class known as Van Gogh.

The education is based upon the four themes and 17 commitments of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The four themes are:

- A Unique child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

#### **1. A Unique Child**

*"Every child is a competent learner from birth, who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured."* Development Matters in the Early Years.

At Abbots Ripton, we recognise that every child is a unique individual with their own character and temperament. We recognise that children develop in different ways, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others. We use praise and encouragement and the school token system, as well as celebration/sharing assemblies, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children at Abbots Ripton are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. Our Christian ethos means that all children and their families are valued within our school.

We believe that all our children matter and give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences and their interests 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 which 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;
- Offering a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Employing resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- Planning challenging activities to meet the needs of both boys and girls, of children from all social and cultural backgrounds, of children from different ethnic groups and of those from diverse linguistic backgrounds;
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.
- Working closely with parents, carers and other outside agencies to ensure all children's needs are met

## **2. Positive Relationships**

We endeavour to establish positive relationships both within the classroom and in the wider context of the school community.

### **Partnership with Parents**

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

We do this through:

- Talking to parents/carers about their child before their child starts in our school at information evenings and open sessions;
- Encouraging parents to talk to their child's teacher if there are any concerns;
- Offering all parents a home visit by the class teacher and teacher assistant before the start of term in September
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress at parents' evenings;
- Inviting parents in half termly to view Learning Journeys;
- Sending parents a written end of year report;
- Inviting all parents to a "New Parents" evening prior to their child starting in Foundation;

- Pre-school children are invited to attend morning sessions in the Early Years Foundation class prior to starting as well as a lunch time;
- Arranging a range of social and fund-raising activities through "STARS" to encourage collaboration between school, children and their parents including a welcome picnic;
- Inviting parents to class meetings at the beginning of the school year;
- Regular newsletters and Curriculum Maps which inform and suggest ways that parents can support children's learning at home;
- Providing children with a Reading Diary in which parents can record any concerns;
- Offering support from our SENCO if needed;
- Encouraging parents to share children's achievements from home by completing WOW slips;
- Offering parents opportunities to come into school to take part in learning including Maths Mornings, Exciting Writing Mornings and Christmas Decorating Morning

#### **Links with the Community, other Agencies and other Settings**

We liaise closely with outside agencies who offer individual support, including:

- Local Authority Early Years Foundation Stage Advisor
- Early Years Specialist Support Teachers
- Speech and language therapists
- Social services
- Health services and Health visitors

#### **Supporting Learning**

In the EYFS class there is one class teacher and at least one teaching assistant at all times. All our staff involved in the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to play with and listen to them. They observe children sensitively and respond appropriately to encourage and extend curiosity and learning. By observing and listening, practitioners discover what children like to do, and when they feel confident, scared or frustrated. When children feel happy and secure, they are confident to explore and try out new things.

### **3. Enabling Environments**

At Abbots Ripton we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning.

### **The Learning Environment**

Safety is a priority in our setting and regular risk assessments are carried out by staff. The children have their own risk assessment too, which is carried out each time the outdoor area is used.

Our EYFS classroom 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. The classroom is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. Our EYFS class has its own enclosed outdoor area. Children have free flow access to outside play activities to do things in different ways and on different scales. It offers children opportunities to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. Our indoor and outdoor environments are equally valued.

### **Observation, Assessment and Planning**

All our early years' practitioners are involved in observing children to assess their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend children's learning. All our assessments of children are based on observations of them across all six areas of learning and in a variety of situations. In our EYFS class, children are regularly observed and their development is recorded against 17 assessment scales culminating in the Early Learning Goals at the end of the academic year. A baseline assessment is completed two weeks after entry to school and this data is submitted to Cambridgeshire Local Authority. We use SIMS to record information which is then sent to County in November and June. This information is reported to parents in a written report each term as well as an end of year report. We acknowledge the importance of effective transition and as such all assessment information is passed on and discussed with the Year 1 teacher to aid this.

In our Reception class we have six topics across the year. We ensure that all seven areas of learning are equally covered and aim to provide children with lots of first hand experiences and fun activities which will be built upon, as they enter the National Curriculum in Year 1.

### **Supporting Every Child**

At Abbots Ripton we recognise the need for children to be supported by sensitive, knowledgeable adults who know when and how to engage their interests and how to offer support at other times. We understand that children benefit and learn from a range of experiences and plan carefully to ensure these are predictable, comforting and challenging. We also aim to ensure that children's physical and emotional needs are met as they will then be more ready to take advantage of the play and learning choices on offer.

### **The Wider Context**

Prior to starting school, children may move between several different settings in the course of a day, a week, month or year. At Abbots Ripton we recognise the importance of liaising with other settings to ensure all children's needs are met and there is continuity in their learning. This is done by keeping a record of all the settings children attend and sharing information relating to children's development, interests and progress. Permission is always sought from parents prior to sharing information. We also endeavour to visit pre-schools prior to the children starting with us so that we can observe them in a familiar setting.

### **Safeguarding and Welfare**

*'Children learn best when they are healthy and 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 2014)

At Abbots Ripton we understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for EYFS 2014:

- To provide a setting that is welcoming, safe, stimulating and where children can grow in confidence
- Promote good health
- Manage behaviour correctly in a manner appropriate for the children's age and stage of development
- Ensure that the setting, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for the purpose it was intended
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for the safe and efficient management of the setting

The whole school Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy applies to our Early Years class too and the school Designated Safeguarding Leads takes a lead within the Early Years class too.

### **4. Learning and Development**

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. Across the whole Early Years Foundation Stage, we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of their Foundation year.

The EYFS Curriculum for the Foundation Stage reflects the areas of learning identified in the Early Learning Goals. There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in the Early Years. All areas of learning and development are important and interconnected. None of these areas of learning can be delivered in isolation from the others. Our children's learning

experiences enable them to develop competencies and skills across a number of learning areas. They require a balance of adult led and child initiated activities in order for them to reach the levels required at the end of the EYFS.

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.

The four Specific Areas are:

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

Children in the EYFS also take part in a daily Phonics lesson. We follow Letters and Sounds but deliver this using the Story Time Phonics Resource where the Phonic Fairy makes a daily appearance!

Characteristics of Effective Learning

We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective learning which are;

- Playing and Exploring
- Active Learning
- Creating and thinking critically

Our children learn:

- By doing!
- In whole class situations
- In small groups
- With 1:1 support
- Through first hand experiences
- By having visitors and going on trips
- Both inside and out the classroom including the Wild Wood
- By accessing resources independently
- Through engaging topics/themes

When children start in our EYFS class we give them time to settle in and make friends. During this time, we observe them, talk to them, listen to them and play

with them. We take account of their interests, their likes and dislikes and their personalities. We have six topics areas across the year. These topics are varied and relevant to the children, are balanced in terms of the six areas of learning and aim to give children experience and play opportunities on which they will build as they progress in their education. Children are introduced to the topic and asked what they already know and what they would like to find out about. This then forms the basis for our learning. Children are then involved in a balance of child-initiated and adult focused activities linked to the topic and continuous provision of sand and water play, painting, listening activities and free choice learning - both inside and outdoors. The Early Years team get to know the children very well and are able to observe and assess children on a day to day basis. As the year progresses, more "formal" tasks are gradually introduced in preparation for Year 1.

### **Assessment and Record Keeping**

All our Early Years Foundation Stage children are regularly assessed to ensure that their individual needs are met. Our staff know the children very well and are then able to plan to meet their needs accordingly. Information from parents is also vital in understanding the children. Observational assessments are carried out on a daily basis.

### **Monitoring and Review**

It is the responsibility of those working in the EYFS to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Head teacher and EYFS co- coordinator will carry out monitoring as part of the whole school monitoring schedule. The Governing Body will also be a part of this process particularly the named EYFS Governor who is appointed each year.