



ASTON AND COTE CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

EYFS POLICY

This policy should be taken and used as part of Aston and Cote's overall strategy and implemented within the context of our vision, instrument of government aims, and values of a Church of England School. Aston and Cote is a Church of England School which celebrates a love of God and puts the Christian ethos at the centre of all that it does.

November 2025

Signed:	Headteacher
Signed:	Chair of Governors
Date:	Date of next review: November 2030

Our Vision

~ Aspiring to be the people God created us to be by growing the talents He gave us ~

Our Core Values

Love -
 Respect -
 Courage -
 Honesty -
 Forgiveness –

Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the 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.

Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the 2021 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

At Aston and Cote CE Primary School, we understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2021:

The EYFS seeks to provide:

quality and consistency in all early years settings, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind

a secure foundation through planning for the learning and development of each individual child, and assessing and reviewing what they have learned regularly

partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers

equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice,

ensuring that every child is included and supported.

Principles that shape practice in early years settings:

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

Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships

Children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time.

Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers. The importance of learning and development.

Children develop and learn at different rates.

The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

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Keeping Children Safe

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limitations and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. We encourage children to take risks and highlight the importance of keeping themselves safe by teaching them how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children.

Good Health

All children are provided with a healthy snack each day as well as being given the choice of milk or water to drink. Children always have access to water. We do not permit children to have anything other than water in their bottles. We encourage healthy packed lunches. For further information see our EYFS Food and Nutrition Policy.

Intimate Care

Aston and Cote CE Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. We are committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for intimate care of children and young people always undertake their duties in a professional manner, for further information see our Intimate Care Policy.

Introduction to EYFS

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Aston and Cote CE Primary School children are

- a) able to start in the Nursery from the term after they turn 2.5 for fifteen hours a week offered as a morning place, should places be available.
- b) Able to take up 30 hours place from the term after their third birthday.
- c) admitted to Reception in the September following their fourth birthday. Pupils are offered a full-time place from the September. Applications for Reception are made via Oxfordshire County Council

Early childhood is the foundation upon which children build the rest of their lives. At Aston and Cote CE Primary School we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. However, we also believe that early childhood is valid in itself as part of life. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

Curriculum

Our Early Years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2021 statutory framework of the EYFS. We aim to support all children to become independent and collaborative learners. 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 Aston and Cote CE Primary School, we will:

- 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 establish 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 helping each child to progress.
- Develop 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.

Our curriculum for the Early Years Foundation Stage reflects the areas of learning identified within the Early Learning Goals.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. None of the areas of learning can be delivered in isolation from the others. Our children's learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skill across a number of learning areas. They require a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities in order for most children to reach the levels required at the end of EYFS.

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.

The four Specific Areas:

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

Children's development levels are assessed and as the year progresses, the balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning, as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

However, if a child's progress in any of the prime areas gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents/carers and agree how to support the child.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

1. Playing and exploring – children will have opportunities to investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’.

‘Children’s play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children’s development.

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

2. Active learning – children will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements.

‘Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.

’ Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence, they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

3. Creating and thinking critically – we encourage and support children to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

“When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.”

Children should be given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning. Adults can support children’s thinking and help them make connections by showing interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open ended questions. Children can access resources and move around the indoor and outdoor learning environments freely and purposefully to extend their learning.

Planning

The Early Learning Goals provide the basis for planning throughout the Foundation Stage. Teachers plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, practitioners working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas. Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, 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, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

The planning objectives within the Foundation Stage are from the Development Matters Statements 2020 from the Early Years Foundation Stage document. Planning is based around a theme that allows activities, phonics, maths and reading to be taught daily. However, planning, which is based upon a different topic often occurs in the moment as a vehicle of interest to deliver the children's next steps in learning. Therefore, staff respond to the needs, achievement and interests of the children. Our medium term planning identifies the intended learning, with outcomes, for children working towards the Early Learning Goals, and also for those working towards National Curriculum objectives.

Teaching and Learning

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Practitioners 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.

- The features of good practice in our school that relate to the Foundation Stage are:
- the partnership between teachers and parents, carers and other settings that helps our children to feel secure at school, and to develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this must be reflected in their teaching;
- the range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions, and extend and develop the children's play, talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage;
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests, and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- the support for learning, with appropriate and accessible space, facilities and equipment, both indoors and outdoors;
- the identification, through observations, of children's progress and future learning needs, which are regularly shared with parents.
- the good relationships between our school and the other educational settings in which the children have been learning before joining our school;
- the clear aims of our work, and the regular monitoring of our work to evaluate and improve it;
- the regular identification of training needs for all adults working at the Foundation Stage.

Assessment

During the first term in Nursery and Reception, the teacher assesses the starting points of each child to form a baseline assessment. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children.

Children in Reception will take part in the Government Reception National Baseline (RBA) The RBA is a short assessment, taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts reception. Children that join later in the year who haven't been to another setting will also be expected to complete the baseline within the first six week of starting out school. The RBA is a short, interactive assessment. Although the

assessment is not timed, it has been designed to take around 20 minutes. The assessment can be carried out by a teacher, teaching assistant, early years practitioner or any other trained education professional who should be familiar with the child taking the assessment.

At Aston and Cote CE Primary School ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. Observations also form a basis for planning. Staff are skilled at observing children to identify their achievements, interests and next steps for learning. These observations then lead the direction of the planning. Relevant and significant observations are recorded in the children's Learning Portfolios on Dojo, which can be seen by parents.

The Foundation Stage Profile is the nationally employed assessment tool that enables teachers to record their observations at the end of the Foundation Stage, and to summarise their pupils' progress towards the Early Learning Goals. It covers each of the seven areas of learning contained in the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage.

We record each child's level of development against the 17 early Learning goals as Emerging or Expected. We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs.

Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal observations, photographic evidence and through planned activities. Assessment is completed regularly and involves both the teacher and other adults, as appropriate. The collection of assessment data in the Foundation Stage Profile is a statutory requirement.

At the end of the final term in Reception we send a summary of these assessments to the Local Authority. The child's next teacher uses this information to make plans for the year ahead. We share this information at parent's evening and in the end-of-year report.

Parents receive an annual written report that offers a general comment on each child's progress. It highlights the ELGs the child has achieved or not. Parents receive annual reports in July each year.

Working with Parents

We recognise that parents/carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value being partners with them in their child's education through:

- Talking to parents/carers before their child starts school at our open events and induction meetings.
- Arranging, where possible, visits by the teacher to all children in their home setting and/or childcare provision prior to their starting school.
- Providing a handbook of information about commencing Nursery and Reception at Aston and Cote
- Giving parents/carers and children the opportunity to spend time in Reception Class over planned induction visits before starting school.
- Providing an induction meeting for Reception parents/carers to meet with staff to discuss school routines, expectations and to answer any questions parents/carers may have.
- Holding a parent consultation early in the academic year to establish how a child is settling into the school environment.
- Operating an open-door policy for parents/carers with any queries or concerns. Conversely, if Foundation staff have concerns about the progress of a child, they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss them.

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- Inviting parents to attend informal meetings and parent workshops about areas of the curriculum, such as phonics or reading.
- Offering two parent/teacher consultation meetings per year at which their child's progress is discussed.
- Sending a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of their time in Nursery and Reception.
- Parents are invited to a range of activities throughout the school year such as harvest, workshops, Christmas productions and sports day etc.
- Offering a range of activities, throughout the year, to encourage specific collaboration between child, school and parents.

All staff in the Foundation Stage aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At Aston and Cote CE Primary School we recognise that children learn to be strong, confident and independent from being in secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Each child in Nursery is assigned a key person who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents/carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

Safeguarding

See our Safeguarding Policy

Monitoring

It is the responsibility of those working in Nursery and Reception to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Headteacher will carry out monitoring on EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule. The EYFS link governor of The Governing Body will also be part of this process.