



Parents' & Carers' Guide to the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework

This leaflet is designed to give you an introduction to the curriculum that we follow at school, in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).



We know how important the first year of school is for you and your child. We begin our journey together in EYFS and believe that a strong partnership between home and school

helps your child to flourish. Our priority is that all children have a happy start to their school life and they enjoy each and every day that they spend with us.

What is the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)?

- The EYFS is a Statutory Framework for children's development from birth to the end of their first (Reception) year in school.
- The EYFS is a play-based curriculum which covers seven key areas of learning.
- The EYFS Framework describes how early years practitioners should work with children and their families to support their development and learning.
- The EYFS describes how your child should be kept safe and cared for and how all concerned can make sure that your child achieves the most that they can in their earliest years of life.

At Alford Primary School the EYFS Framework **is implemented through planned, purposeful play**. Our aim is to ensure we provide a happy atmosphere where children are valued, where they have fun and where they thrive in all areas. We have a **'child-centred' approach recognising each child as a unique individual** and we encourage meaningful play because this is how children learn in the early years.

Your child will be learning skills, acquiring new knowledge and demonstrating their understanding through these seven areas of learning and development. These are divided into two areas; Prime areas and Specific areas.

Children should mostly develop the 3 prime areas first. These are:

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

These prime areas are those most essential for your child's healthy development and future learning. The 4 specific areas include essential skills and knowledge for children. They grow out of the prime areas and provide important contexts for learning. These are:

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

The EYFS framework also describes **"Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning ... playing and exploring ... active learning and creating and thinking critically."** These describe exactly the approach we take to learning in our EYFS at Alford Primary School.

Why do we learn through play?

The EYFS places emphasis on a 'principled play based approach to learning and development'. It is through play, indoors and outdoors, that children develop intellectually,

creatively, physically, socially and emotionally. At Alford Primary School we are wholeheartedly committed to these principles.

“Remember that what your child brings home in their head is more important than what they bring home in their hands.”

In our EYFS we have a workshop style environment indoors and outside. All of the resources are available to the children. The children select what they want to do in each area. The principle to this is that resources are accessible to the children and they are varied, open-ended and high quality. This gives children the opportunity to select resources to support their chosen activity. The children are given opportunities to play and explore, to investigate and experience things and to ‘have a go’. They are active and develop their own ideas. They are all unique and will have different interests and abilities.



During the school day your child will take part in small adult-led group activities, focused around a focused area of learning. For example, phonics. Although adult-led, the activities will always be fun and engaging for the children, with their interests and needs in mind.

Outdoor Learning

In EYFS all children will be given the opportunity to play and learn outside throughout most of the day whatever the weather.

It is important that you dress your child for school appropriately: warm clothes and a waterproof coat when it's cold and wet; sun hat and sun screen when it's sunny. Children get wet, muddy and messy when they play outside. We provide protective clothing for them to wear. We teach children how to minimise how messy they get and they do get better at this as they get older, but it's part of their learning and development.

We will not compromise on allowing children to play outdoors as we believe it to be an essential component of young children's learning and development. Children must be allowed to experience the world around them in a full, messy, muddy, wet environment if they are to make useful meaning of it.



Remember...**getting wet does not cause us to catch a cold**. If the cold virus is around, we will pick it up regardless of whether we are wet or dry.

How can I help with my child's learning at home?

It is important that we work together. We believe that to be able to plan to meet your child's needs successfully and provide them with enjoyable experiences we need to know as

much as possible. We observe your child at school to get to know them, but we rely on you to give us information about what they like to do at home. You are the experts on your child!

Let us know the kind of things your child has enjoyed doing at home so that we can tailor activities at school to support your child's learning in ways they will enjoy. They may have enjoyed a trip to the park; they may have identified some numbers or counted toys; they may have spent their evening helping Grandad dig up some potatoes – the possibilities are endless!

We actively encourage you to contribute towards your child's special and unique Learning Journal using our online Tapestry. You can help us to create a really good picture of your child's development by commenting on entries made by us or by adding your own entries in your child's online Learning Journal.

Where can I go for further information?

Do ask as many questions as you need to, we really do welcome speaking with you. You can find the Early Years Foundation Stage which includes the early learning goals at www.foundationyears.org.uk We also highly recommend the '**What to Expect, When?**' document which is an easy to use guide for parents on their child's learning and development in the EYFS.