

Our Intent, Implementation and Impact for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is the period of education from birth to 5 years. In our EYFS Unit we have two reception classes - Ladybirds and Butterflies. Both classes work together supported by our team of experienced EYFS staff. We work closely with our feeder Nurseries, Pre-Schools and Child-Care Providers as well as our local Children's Centre. We recognise that starting school is a big milestone and are committed to doing everything we can to ensure that children settle into their new surroundings easily and happily. As part of our commitment to these principles, we are proud to offer home visits to all of our children prior to starting school.

INTENT

At Alford Primary School, we understand that children learn best when they are absorbed, interested and active. We are proud that our EYFS setting has an underlying ethos of 'Learning through Play'. We provide our children with a curriculum that is intended to be flexible, engaging and exciting so that their individual needs, passions and interests are embraced. Our curriculum is designed to recognise children's prior learning from both their experiences at home and their previous setting. We inspire our children to become accomplished, happy individuals, ready to reach their full potential in an ever-changing world.

It is our intent that children who enter our EYFS begin their lifelong learning journey by developing physically, verbally, cognitively and emotionally. We aim to embed a positive attitude to school and a love of learning in an environment which values all cultures, communities and people.

Our EYFS Curriculum is driven to;

- Work in partnership with parents and carers to ensure children become competent, creative and curious learners who thrive in school and reach their full potential from their different starting points and stages of development;
- Create an indoor and outdoor environment which promotes exciting opportunities, challenge and exploration, where high-quality planned play experiences are an integral part of learning;
- Provide opportunities for children to become skilful communicators who connect with their peers and familiar adults within a vocabulary rich environment;
- Inspire children to become secure and confident and develop a sense of belonging to our school community, ready to transition to Year 1 the following academic year.

IMPLEMENTATION

At Alford Primary School, we meet the welfare requirements laid down in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021) and actively safeguard and promote the welfare of all of our children. This framework specifies the requirements for learning and development in the Early Years.

We provide a play-based and experiential learning environment, combined with focussed teaching and basic skills, to ensure children make rapid progress before moving onto Year 1. We work hard to provide a stimulating environment that provides exciting opportunities, promotes challenge, exploration, adventure and a real love of learning. We understand that play is an integral part of learning and this is at the heart of our Early Years curriculum.

Our curriculum is taught through topics which are enriched with classroom enhancements, trips and visitors. Topics are supported by quality key texts. These are chosen carefully to encourage children's speech, language and communication development. All planning however, is flexible and responsive to children's needs so plans can be changed and adapted dependent on children's interests.

We prioritise creating a 'language rich' environment through the use of songs, nursery rhymes, stories and providing time for quality interactions between adults and between peers. Trained staff ensure that interactions are positive and progressive, allowing children to flourish and gather words at pace in order to become confident communicators. Children are encouraged to become early readers through enjoyment of books and the systematic teaching of phonics. We want our children to become confident mathematicians who can apply what they have learnt to real life experiences.

We have built our school environment to enable our children to strengthen their core muscles through physical play. Children spend time outdoors in their natural environment in all weathers. They develop through wonderful, exploratory, sensory experiences in our Mud Pie Kitchen, Woodland Den Making Area and sensory Garden Area. Our learning environment is adaptable in order to reflect children's interests and progression. The children are supported to learn to work together, manage their feelings and ask questions through skilled adult-facilitated play. In Early Years, our environment and all our interactions and routines are intentional.

We understand the importance of parental engagement and recognise that our parents have a crucial role to play in their children's education. We work hard to create strong partnerships between home and school. Parents receive Topic Newsletters to inform them of what their child is learning each half term. Our whole school news sharing App, Parent Hub is used frequently to share active ways that parents and carers can support and extend their child's learning at home. Parents and carers enjoy using our electronic Learning Journal Programme, Tapestry to engage in their child's learning. This two-way communication tool celebrates children's significant learning milestones and special proud moments along their child's learning journey.

Children benefit from meaningful learning across the curriculum. Staff plan resourcefully for opportunities for communication, sustained shared thinking and physical challenge to build on existing skills, taking into account the Characteristics of Effective Learning. Our curriculum promotes and supports children's emotional security and development of their character, enabling children to take risks in a safe and secure environment.

Rich first hand encounters (inside, outdoors, visitors and school trips) are planned to widen experiences, awe and wonderment. New vocabulary and concepts through reading will excite and engage all learners which includes staff modelling standard English and asking high quality questions.

IMPACT

Our curriculum and its delivery ensure that children, from their own starting points, make strong progress. Children in our Early Years, on average, arrive with much lower starting points than national starting points. During their time with us, children make rapid progress towards the national expectation for a good level of development at the end of the year.

Children develop their characteristics of learning and are able to apply their knowledge to a range of situations making links and explaining their ideas and understanding. Children are confident to take risks and discuss their successes and failures with peers and adults drawing on their experiences to improve or adjust what they are doing. We believe our high standards are due to our carefully planned environment, enriched play-based curriculum, quality first teaching and the rigour of assessment.

The impact of our curriculum is measured by assessment procedures which allow us to measure outcomes against all schools nationally. Our assessment judgements are moderated both in school and externally with local schools. We also partake in local authority moderation, which further validates our school judgements. Our curriculum is reviewed annually to ensure relevance and to guarantee the voices of our pupils, parents, staff and governors are heard.

The impact of our curriculum will also be measured by how effectively it helps our pupils develop into well rounded individuals, who embody our values and carry with them the knowledge, skills and attitudes which will make them lifelong learners and valuable future citizens. We endeavour for pupils to be Key Stage 1 ready and have our school values embedded by the time they leave Reception, preparing them for their future.

At the end of EYFS our children:

- have strong communication skills, who listen respectfully and with tolerance to the views of others;
- take pride in all that they do, always striving to do their best;
- demonstrate emotional resilience and the ability to persevere when they encounter challenge;
- develop a sense of self-awareness and become confident in their own abilities;
- are kind, respectful and honest, demonstrate inclusive attitudes and have a sense of their role in our wider society.