



# Abbey Hill Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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# Abbey Hill Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

*Achieving our dreams together*

**‘Each child has a spark inside him or her. It is the responsibility of the people and institutions around each child to find what would ignite that spark’.**

Howard Gardner

## **We want our Abbeyhillians to:**

- **be confident communicators.**
- **develop a strong sense of self.**
- **understand the wide diversity of people and cultures in modern Britain.**
- **acquire knowledge and understanding of the world.**

## **Our Intent**

At Abbey Hill we acknowledge that all children are different, and their needs depend on their cultural background, previous experience and rate of development.

The EYFS Overarching Principles guide our pedagogy (how we teach):

- 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.
- Children **develop and learn** at different rates.

**Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage January 2024**



## Our hopes and aspirations for our children

We want our children to be:

- ❖ Confident
- ❖ Motivated
- ❖ Resilient
- ❖ Problem solvers
- ❖ Happy
- ❖ Respectful
- ❖ Good communicators
- ❖ Creative
- ❖ Friendly
- ❖ Kind

**Abbey Hill Foundation Stage Unit** is intended to replicate a home environment where all children feel welcome, happy, and secure. We strive to develop inquisitive, confident, and independent learners, through providing stimulating and enjoyable learning experiences.

Our aim is:

- ❖ To provide a carefully planned and balanced curriculum, which builds on the children's previous learning experiences as they move from Pre-School to Nursery, Nursery to Reception and Reception to Year 1.
- ❖ To create challenging learning experiences for all children, informed through observations and assessment.
- ❖ To work closely with our parents and carers to support the academic and social development of all children.

### Abbey Hill Foundation Stage Curriculum

- Our approach to learning is based on the Early Excellence Curriculum Development Model 3-5 years. We have a balance between child-initiated play and focused learning.
- Our planning covers the seven areas of learning: Prime Areas (Communication and Language, Personal and Social, Physical) and Specific Areas (Literacy, Maths, Understanding of the World, Expressive Arts).
- To meet the Early Years Statutory Requirements, we have used the Development Matters and the Birth to five documents for guidance, to create our own long-term curriculum.
- Long term plans in each age group are based on the children's predictable interests and the content is sequenced, building knowledge between each age group.
- Our Long-term and Medium-term plans focus on the 'key knowledge' and 'key vocabulary' we want our children to understand and use. Through planned group activities and continuous provision, we teach the



vocabulary identified on our planning. Key texts are also identified in the planning, so children are exposed to quality stories, poems, and non-fiction books from the age of two.

- To support the development of all children in Pre-School, Nursery and Reception, we focus on:
  - Developing listening and attention skills
  - Increasing vocabulary
  - Encouraging communication
  - Improving core strength
  - Strengthening fingers
  - Supporting self-regulation
  - Encouraging and supporting friendships
- We have three Golden Rules which our children are taught to support their Personal, Social and Emotional development:
  - Kind hands
  - Kind words
  - Kind friends
- We measure progress and learning through formative and summative assessment based on the teacher's knowledge of the child.
- The FS Leader tracks the progress of all age groups and children needing additional support are identified and action taken.
- Pupils who are identified as needing additional help receive support in our continuous provision and, if appropriate, in planned interventions e.g. SALT activities with our trained TA.
- All children are supported through visual timelines and signs and symbols. Additional visual aids are used for identified pupils e.g. Now and Next boards, emotion fans and communication fans and boards.
- All staff work closely with outside providers e.g. Speech therapists and the SFSS service to meet children's needs.
- We provide experiences outside of the children's norm (Cultural Capital), through planned activities in our continuous provision, group activities, visitors, and trips.

**Continuous provision – delivering the curriculum through a high quality indoor and outdoor learning environment.**

- Communication Friendly Spaces are created to provide cosy and safe areas, support emotional wellbeing, and stimulate language development.
- Resources are arranged so that children are taught to 'choose it, use it and put it away' and become independent learners.
- Staff support children to work and play cooperatively and extend their language, referring to the vocabulary prompt sheets.
- Children have the opportunity to revisit ideas and experiences in different contexts.
- Staff respond daily to the interests of children and resources are provided to encourage creativity.



### **Enhanced provision – delivering the curriculum through resource stimulus, interactive displays, visits, and visitors.**

- Enhanced activities in continuous provision are based on the ideas on the short-term planning board, informed by Long and Medium term planning.
- Enhanced activities are also planned to develop the interests which children have communicated, or we have observed.
- ‘Busy Finger’ activities are planned in each age group and provided daily, to strengthen children’s fingers, to support mark making and writing.
- Baking is an integral part of our curriculum, as we believe it links many curriculum areas and develops skills, which are important for our children.
- Teaching our children to sing and play instruments is an important element of our curriculum and supports the development of our children’s spoken language.
- We use outside providers who specialise in developing children’s Communication & Language and Physical skills e.g. ‘Jo Jingles’, Next Level Sports, and Muddy Footprints.
- Links with Nottinghamshire Healthcare Health Promotion Specialist support staff, children, and their families with oral health.
- Planned visits and visitors enhance our curriculum and provide our children with new experiences.

### **Directed activities: Curriculum through focused discussion and group activities.**

- Pre-School directed activities focus on the Prime Areas. Stimulating and engaging activities such as baking, tummy time, Lycra time and nursery rhyme box are provided to develop Communication and Language, Physical development, and Personal, Social & Emotional development. Singing and sharing stories is the start to embedding a life-long love of reading and to develop vocabulary.
- Nursery directed activities are planned to cover all areas of learning. Daily Phase 1 phonic sessions are crucial in the development of children’s listening and attention skills and language development, and activities such as Lycra time and dough disco strengthen fingers and develop core strength. Talking time helps children to develop the confidence to express their thoughts, develop knowledge linked to topics, and respond to questions. Early mathematical concepts are taught daily. The use of the Family Box enables children to share their experiences at home with their friends at school.
- Reception children receive daily synthetic phonics lessons, following the Little Wandle programme, and individual and group reading sessions are closely matched to the GPC’s children know. This phonetic knowledge is applied in writing where children learn to write CVC words and short simple sentences. Mathematics is taught through the White Rose



scheme. To ensure children access a well-balanced curriculum, activities linked to Science, Geography, RE and History are planned throughout long, medium, and short-term plans.

## Assessment

Formative assessment is part of our daily learning and development process and is used to understand where the children are in their development, any gaps which need addressing and which activities we need to plan and provide to support their next steps in learning. Parents and Carers are encouraged to share the developments they see, so that we work in partnership together.

There are three points between the age of two and five, when we complete the statutory assessments: **The Two-Year Progress Check, The Reception Baseline Assessment** and **The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Assessment**. All are carried out in line with the guidance.

A record of the children's development is celebrated in the children's 'Special Books' and shared regularly with Parents and Carers. These also form part of the transition between Reception and Year 1.

## Characteristics of Effective Learning

The Pre-School, Nursery and Reception teams plan activities within the indoor and outdoor FSU environment to develop these skills. The Characteristics highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them.

The Three Characteristics 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.

## Parents and Carers as Partners

Building positive relationships with parents and carers is of the utmost importance for Foundation Stage staff, as we believe the best way to support children is working in partnership. We recognise that parents and carers are children's first and most enduring educators, and we develop relationships and trust with them by:

- Offering both parents and children the opportunity to visit the Foundation Stage Unit before starting school to meet staff, including their key worker.



- Providing flexible admission arrangements so children have the chance to build their confidence and settle at their own speed, according to individual needs.
- Holding regular meetings with parents and carers including transition meetings, parents' consultation meetings, SEND review meetings and support meetings with the school's Child and Family Support Worker.
- Talking to our parents daily as children come into the FS Unit.
- Providing information about the curriculum and activities through our FS prospectus, newsletters, text messages and emails, the school website and in home to school diaries.
- Supporting families in meetings with outside agencies.
- Encouraging parents and carers to share 'wow' moments from home, which can be included in their child's 'Special Books'.
- Providing written reports on children's attainment and progress.
- Providing workshops and coffee mornings.

## **Safeguarding and 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 the early years foundation stage (January 2024).

### **Child Protection**

The whole School Child Protection and Safeguarding policies apply to children attending our Foundation Stage Unit

We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage (January 2024). All staff receive Safeguarding training at the start of each year and whole school staff meetings are planned every term to ensure we remain up to date and vigilant. We also receive in depth training every three years. All concerns are logged on our online systems. Mr Jevons-Newman the Acting Head Teacher, Ms Jeffs our Child and Family Support Worker and Ms Ashley are the named Child Protection Officers, and all concerns are discussed with them.

Members of staff do not use their mobile phones or personal handset devices in the classroom and are prohibited from taking photographs with their personal handsets. Members of staff do, however, use School I Pads to take photographs. These photographs are used in the children's 'Special Books', in class displays and on the school website. All parents are asked to state if they give permission for their child's image to be used on the school website through the paperwork in their initial starter packs.

### **Health**

#### **Food and drink**

We are a healthy School, and our children receive free fruit, milk, snacks, and bagels. All children have free access to drinking water at School.

Our staff model good eating and 'healthy living' habits. Staying healthy and developing healthy habits for life is planned into our curriculum. We deliver the daily cleaning of teeth in 'Brushing Buddies' with our children, which is supported by the Nottinghamshire Oral Health team. The Ashfield Children Centre staff provide supportive workshops for our children and families based around healthy eating i.e. 'Family food and fun'.

#### **Medicine**

Foundation Stage Staff follow the school policy and procedures for administering medicines, which complies with the Foundation Statutory Guidance 2024. Medicines are not administered unless specifically prescribed.





Parents sign a sheet giving permission for the medicine to be administered and records are kept of when the medicine is administered and shared with the Parent or Carer on collection.

### **Accident or Injury**

We take all accidents seriously and always log, share with Parents, and send a note home if a child bangs their head. Several members of staff in the EYFS team are trained in paediatric first aid and all staff have basic First Aid training. We have cold compresses and well organised first aid boxes, so that any minor injuries that arise can be dealt with efficiently. In the rare event of a more significant injury, staff will contact the child's parent/carer immediately and for this reason we ask parents and carers to ensure that their contact details are kept up to date at the office.

### **Role of staff and key worker**

Abbey Hill Foundation Stage Unit provide a staffing ratio in line with the safeguarding and welfare requirements set out in the Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage (January 2024).

In Pre-School, Nursery and Reception, each child has a named key worker. Their role is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs and to help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child, and build a relationship with their parents. All adults within the Early Years setting actively seek to form positive respectful relationships with the children in their care. The formation of healthy relationships between adults and children is essential in enabling children's well-being now and for their future successes. There are occasions when significant adults cannot be in the class, and we aim to be consistent in who covers these absences.

### **Special Educational Needs**

The whole School SEND policy applies to children attending our Foundation Stage Unit.

Children needing additional support are identified quickly and swift action taken, which may lead to outside agencies such as SALT, SFSS and Physiotherapists becoming involved. Personalised provision is put in place for identified children and adults are used effectively to support them. Learning Plans ensure that Staff and Parents know how we are providing additional support and are reviewed termly.

### **Managing Children's Behaviour**

We pride ourselves in being a warm, caring, and supportive Unit. The happiness and well-being of our children is of the utmost importance.



The three Golden Rules which our children are taught are the guiding principles of the behaviour in the Unit and the children are reminded of them daily. Visual reminders are used at an age-appropriate level throughout the Unit e.g. Choice Charts in Nursery and Reception, which supports the children's understanding about the choices they make and their attitude to learning. Signs and symbols are used with all the Foundation Stage children to support their listening and attention skills.

Pupils who struggle with self-regulation have individualised support e.g. using a reward token tower to encourage good choices and strategies feed into Learning Plans. We always liaise with Parents/Carers, so it is a joint and supportive approach.

### **Personal Care**

We encourage all children in Nursery and Reception to start school without nappies, but support families struggling with this. Staff working with the Pre-School and Nursery children work alongside any families who are toilet training. We have a separate 'Intimate Care' policy which outlines the correct procedures for staff to take when carrying out intimate care.

We acknowledge that young children sometimes have 'accidents' (i.e. wet themselves) and therefore ask that all children in the EYFS bring in a spare set of clothes to be left in school.

### **Safety and Suitability of Premises, Environment and Equipment**

All large climbing equipment is regularly checked and serviced by contractors annually. Fire drills are held regularly in line with whole school policy. We have separate policies for off-site visits. The Foundation Stage Unit has its own risk assessment for the Premises, Environment and Equipment.

**Julie Cartwright-Fretwell**  
**2024**

