



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



Avonwood Primary School

The best in everyone™

Part of United Learning

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Introduction

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe, and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.”

(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021)

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) refers to children from birth to five years of age. At Avonwood Primary School, children complete their final year of the EYFS.

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 learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each individual child and are assessed and reviewed 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.

At Avonwood Primary School we aim to achieve this by:

- Setting the standards for individual learning, development, and care to enable each child to fulfil their potential.
- Providing for equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- Creating the framework for partnership by working with parents, professionals, and other outside agencies.
- Ensuring that learning and development is planned around the individual needs and interests of the child and informed using on-going interactions with the child as well observations.
- Laying a secure foundation for future learning.

Safeguarding and welfare requirements

“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, 2021)

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone’s** responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

The practitioner designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children in the early years settings is Kim Williams. Please also see our whole school safeguarding policy.

What does successful teaching and learning look like at Avonwood Primary School?

Children initially follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework, and in Year One move to the content of the National Curriculum as they become ready. The principles which guide the work of all practitioners in the EYFS are grouped into four themes (outlined below).

1. A Unique Child

At Avonwood Primary School we believe every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning, can be resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured. We give every child the opportunity to achieve their best by having realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of all our children across the areas of learning and development. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with SEND (including children with medical needs), children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds. We believe in the 'best for every child'.

We meet the needs of all our children by:

- Involving all children in joint planning alongside their teacher under an umbrella topic. We also use individual learning plans for children with specific needs.
- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, skills, experiences, and interests
- Planning opportunities to develop their well-being, self-esteem, and confidence, including experiences that provide risk and challenge
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs
- Providing a secure and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is respected and valued
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination or stereotyping
- Planning supporting, challenging and appropriate experiences for all
- Monitoring children's progress and providing additional support when identified
- Planning learning that is developmentally appropriate
- Using age-appropriate ways to seek the views of all children through observing, listening and sensitive discussion
- Seeking advice from specialist agencies where appropriate.

2. Positive Relationships

Children learn to be strong and independent through high-quality care and positive relationships. At Avonwood Primary School we respect that parents are the child's first and future educators. We believe that the positive relationships we build are the key to effective partnerships between all practitioners, parents, carers, and families.

We meet the needs of all our children by:

- Building strong, nurturing relationships with the children
- Developing positive relationships with parents during our transition programme, Teddy Bear Clubs, and initial parent consultation during the first week of school.
- Working with parents / carers right from the start to find out about their child's needs, feelings, and interests.
- Developing effective partnerships with families throughout the year by offering regular opportunities for them to talk about their child's progress through our open-door policy and parent's evenings
- Providing advice and workshops for parents to further support their child's learning
- Encouraging families to talk to their child's teacher or teaching assistant to foster two-way communication with parents / carers and families
- Helping parents to support children's learning and development
- Recognising that friendships and relationships are an important part of a child's development from birth.
- Encouraging parents to help in school and become involved in a range of enrichment activities, and family learning.

3. Enabling Environments

At Avonwood Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning. Our environment is carefully planned both indoors and outdoors to help children achieve across all aspects of the EYFS. Opportunities are provided for children to take part in a wide range of experiences and to extend their interests.

We meet the needs of all our children by:

- Encouraging children to communicate and talk about their experiences
- Developing children's independence and decision making by providing an environment where children can freely access resources and select from the experiences on offer
- Using the outdoor environment to enhance learning and development
- Analysing children's responses to different situations and identifying their future learning needs
- Using materials and equipment that reflects both the community that the children come from and the wider world
- Encouraging a positive attitude to learning by ensuring our planning begins by observing the children in order to consider their current interests, developmental stage, experiences and learning styles
- Providing a language and vocabulary rich environment (verbally and written)

At Avonwood Primary School we work in partnership with parents / carers, other settings, other professionals and with individuals and groups in the community to support children's learning and development.

4. Learning and Development

At Avonwood, we recognise that children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early year's provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

We recognise the importance of providing a stimulating, interesting, welcoming, safe, and challenging learning environment. All rooms are organised and resourced to provide learning opportunities in the seven areas of learning in the EYFS curriculum and to promote the characteristics of effective learning. Through our curriculum we ensure careful sequencing to build learning over time. Knowledge, skills, and understanding is broken down into small steps and is a 'progression model'. We provide opportunities for learnt skills to be revisited and rehearsed as well as support skill development to ensure progress is continuous. Children are taught how to access the equipment in each area of provision independently to enable them to initiate their own ideas and follow their interests and fascinations.

There is a high level of staff involvement in children's chosen activities and play. There are also planned age appropriate 'focused activities' for specific children, or groups of children providing a balance of child and adult initiated activity. Suitably differentiated activities are organised to meet the learning needs of each child.

How do we achieve successful learning and teaching?

Teaching & Learning/Provision

Our school recognises the importance of providing a stimulating, nurturing, safe and challenging learning environment. The classrooms are organised and resourced to provide learning opportunities in the seven areas of learning in the EYFS curriculum and to promote the characteristics of effective learning. Our continuous provision is planned to ensure children can rehearse previously learnt skills as well as learn new skills and challenge themselves.

Children are introduced to and taught how to access the equipment in each area of provision independently. This allows the children to initiate their own ideas, following their own lines of enquiries. Staff are fully involved in moving children on with their learning through modelling, scaffolding, and extending. There is a balance of child and adult initiated activities.

At Avonwood, we provide a carefully sequenced curriculum that includes children's interests. We ensure that learning opportunities are multi-sensory and practical as a starting point. We plan whole class teaching input sessions which ensure children have access to daily phonics, literacy, and maths sessions as well as opportunities for shared reading. We also plan adult led activities with groups of children in the morning.

All children have access to the outdoor learning environment for most of the day. The provision of outdoor activities matches the learning needs of our children. We believe in the importance of outdoor learning and commit to ensuring high quality provision.

The Importance of Play

We recognise that play underpins much of the learning and development for young children. Most children play spontaneously although some may need adult support. It is through play that children develop, intellectually, creatively, physically, socially, and emotionally.

At Avonwood, play in EYFS is an integral part of learning. When planned effectively, we believe that it helps to develop the whole child. By providing well planned experiences based on children's spontaneous play, both indoors and outdoors, we support our children to learn with enjoyment and challenge. They have the opportunity to think creatively with other children and adults as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. We are committed to providing children with opportunities for child-initiated play; we ensure there is a balance of structured and unstructured play.

The types of play we include are as follow to support the needs of individual children:

Adult-led

Adult-initiated

Child-led

Child-initiated

The Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning

In addition, whilst planning and guiding children, we as practitioners, reflect upon the individual child and understand that all children learn and develop at different rates. Therefore, in the EYFS the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are considered.

- 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.

The Role of the Adults

We recognise the importance of the role that all staff in the Early Years play in caring for and educating our children at Avonwood.

The role of the adult includes:

- Providing an engaging, safe and challenging learning environment
- Building strong, nurturing relationships with all our children and families
- Supporting and developing the well-being of our children
- Provide interactions
- Observing to identify needs, strengths, and interests
- Making accurate assessments of each child and planning next steps for learning
- Engaging and working with children during adult-led and guided activities
- Modelling, supporting and extending child-initiated activity
- Working as a team to ensure that all children reach their full potential

Assessment

A statutory 'on-entry baseline' is carried with each individual child within the first 6 weeks of starting school. This, alongside teacher observations and interactions, provides us with a foundation for each child's development stages to enable appropriate teaching and learning to be planned. Throughout the year, children are observed and interacted with in play and focused activities to plan for appropriate next steps. In addition, assessments are completed and tracked at specific checkpoints throughout the year. At the end of the year, children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals and the Characteristics of Effective Learning are reported upon.

Partnership with Parents

We recognise the importance of parents as children's first and most enduring educators and knowing their children best. The home learning environment plays an important role in the development and education of the young child. At Avonwood, we believe that working in partnership with our families effectively meets the needs of their child. We highly value the home school link and rely on this partnership, so together we can provide children with the highest quality education and care. Parents receive a written report at the end of the school year informing them of their child's progress and development/milestones throughout the year in Foundation Stage. We also report on children's characteristics of learning as well as providing parents with an overview of the EYFS Profile. The profile provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their attainment against expected levels, and their readiness for year 1.

We also ensure partnership with parents through:

- An open-door policy
 - Curriculum workshops
 - Coffee mornings
 - Leaflets to support teaching and learning
- Contributions to child's learning (journals and 'wow' moments)
- Weekly newsletters
 - Events such as topic related visits

- Transition meetings
- Parents evenings

Transition to Year One

At Avonwood, we want the transition from our play based EYFS curriculum to the National Curriculum in Year One to be as smooth as possible. Careful thought and planning is given to the timetable and activities in the summer term to support this.

We support the transition into Year One by:

- Children already sharing lunchtime with Year One children
- Having a more structured timetable in the Summer Term
- Children having transition afternoons with their new class and teacher
- Having story times with Year One teachers
- Jigsaw sessions and circle times supporting the children's transition and their feelings about it
- Foundation Stage staff and Year One staff meeting together for a handover
- Parents being invited to transition meetings about the new year group expectations etc

The EYFS - Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning and development; all areas are important and interconnected. The seven areas are delivered through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult-led (child working with the adult) and child-initiated (child chosen) activities. Over the course of the year the focus shifts from child initiated to adult led activities in preparation for the move to Year One and the start of the National Curriculum.

At Avonwood Primary School, we ensure that the requirements of the EYFS are met through all seven areas of learning and development, for children to make progress towards the early learning goals, which are the established expectations for most children to reach by the end of the reception year. Progress is tracked termly. This information is then passed on to Year One to inform future planning.

The areas are crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. The 3 prime areas are those most essential for a child's healthy development and future learning. As children grow, the prime areas will help them to develop skills in the 4 specific areas, which provide the children with essential skills and knowledge.

The seven areas of learning are as follow:

Prime Areas

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social, and emotional development

Specific Areas

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

Communication and Language

We believe that from birth we communicate with the world and develop a shared understanding with others. Through communication and language, we think and learn by talking, listening, and responding. Children acquire new ideas and vocabulary, construct and reconstruct their knowledge, ideas and understanding through print. Children can develop their imagination and communication - this is part of a child's identity and means of self-expression. It is important to create an appropriate environment to promote communication and language skills to support the development of all children at Avonwood – children's spoken language and development is key to underpinning all other areas of learning.

Aims

We aim to encourage children to develop their communication skills in the areas of:

- Listening, attention and understanding
- Speaking

Skills

- Listen to others talking 1:1 and in groups
- Listen to stories and join in
- Ask and answer questions, responding appropriate to what they have heard
- Join in with and hold conversations
- Talk with confidence and explore new vocabulary and word meanings
- Use language to connect ideas, express thoughts, feelings, and questions

Knowledge

- Know different forms of speech
- Know different words and their meanings
- Know how to express themselves appropriately
- Know and use past, present, and future tenses

Strategies to support communication and language

- Modelling good listening skills to the children
- Providing a language-rich environment
- Introducing and modelling use of (new) language or vocabulary to the children
- Encouraging children to talk in and respond to questions using full sentences
- Repeating sentences back to children and extending what they have said
- Listening and responding to the children, ensuring they feel valued
- Providing plenty of opportunities for children to talk and join in with discussions
- Use of signs/symbols/pictures to reinforce communication
- Use of gesture/expressions/tone of voice
- Providing plenty of opportunities for communication and language through stories, role play, rhymes, songs, circle times etc

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

We believe that personal, social, and emotional development focuses on children learning how to work, play, co-operate with others and function in a group beyond their family. At Avonwood, we believe it is crucial for children to be able to understand others' feelings, emotions and work with others as this provides them the best opportunity for success in other areas of learning. It is important that we support children in developing strategies to manage their own emotions and a positive sense of themselves, providing opportunities for them to express this. At Avonwood, we want children to develop positive, healthy minds and bodies.

Aims

We aim to encourage children to develop their personal, social, and emotional skills through:

- Self-Regulation
- Managing self
- Building relationships

Skills

- Build relationships with adults and peers
- Develop confidence within themselves
- Explain own knowledge and understanding
- Develop sensitivity to others needs and feelings
- Listen to other's ideas and opinions
- Learn how to compromise and problem-solve
- Learn co-operation, sharing and turn taking
- Speak about things that matter to them
- Select and use own resources
- Speak in front of a group
- Understand words and actions affect others
- Manage personal hygiene and personal needs
- Focus and follow instructions

Knowledge and understanding

- Know they are valued as individuals
- Know rules and boundaries for behaviour in their school setting
- Know there is a difference between acceptable and unacceptable within any situation
- Know that people have different needs, views, cultures, and beliefs that need to be treated with respect
- Know different emotions and how to appropriately express them in a variety of situations
- Know the ways to stay healthy through, for example, exercise and eating

Strategies to support personal, social and emotional development

- Building positive relationships with children
- Home/school partnership
- Routines and visual timetables
- Clear behaviour policy

- Children are given opportunities to work independently and in groups
- Allowing children to follow their own lines of interest and enquiry
- Successful transitions from Nursery and into Year 1
- A learning environment organised into areas stocked with carefully selected resources that enable children to self-access activities and equipment

Physical Development

We believe that physical development helps to improve children's self-esteem and confidence as well as developing a healthier lifestyle socially, emotionally, and cognitively. In Early Years, we aid the children in their development of both fine and gross motor skills. Children have access to physical activities throughout the day through 'Fiddly Finger' activities, handwriting, PE, dance, and outdoor learning opportunities. We believe their skills of co-ordination, control, manipulation, and movement will improve.

Aims

We aim to support children's physical development in the areas of:

- Fine motor skills
- Gross motor skills

Skills

- Explore different ways of moving, for example, running, jumping, dancing
- Using movement to express feelings
- Developing and refining gross and fine motor skills
- Moving with confidence, imagination and safety
- Moving with control and co-ordination
- Negotiating spaces and obstacles successfully
- Using a wide range of tools and equipment with developing control and safety
- Use small-scale equipment with some accuracy (pencils, cutlery, scissors, paint brushes)

Knowledge and understanding

- Know different movements and how to co-ordinate them
- Know how to use one handed tools safely
- Know safety measures including transporting equipment and managing risks

Strategies to support physical development

- Opportunities to develop children's fine motor skills for them to develop correct pencil grip and letter formations
- Opportunities to develop children's gross motor skills to develop upper/core body strength
- Opportunities to develop hand-eye coordination
- A variety of resources to support skills development
- Challenging children with their physical development
- Modelling language and skills to match movements
- Educating parents about strategies to use at home to support fine and gross motor skills

Literacy

We believe all children should be able to participate confidently in literacy tasks with enjoyment. Reading is the key to success and is vital to all learning and other areas of the curriculum. We strive to ensure all pupils are confident, fluent readers, reaching their full potential. At Avonwood, we believe it is important to foster a love of books and we want to instill a lifelong love of reading. Many children will learn to read and understand texts as well as write using their phonics and we provide opportunities for children to practice these skills within our provision.

Aims

We aim to support children's literacy development in the areas of:

- Comprehension
- Word reading
- Writing

Skills

- Hears the first sound in words
- Segments and blends words and simple sentences
- Demonstrates understanding of what they have read through answering questions and discussions
- Can make marks and describe them
- Uses some letters to communicate meaning
- Writes some familiar words
- Writes simple sentences
- Write for a variety of purposes

Knowledge

- Knows that marks can be used to communicate meaning
- Knows letters and the sounds they make
- Knows how to hold a writing tool and form letters
- Knows how to write their name
- Knows some tricky words
- Know that we read and write from left to right

Strategies to support Literacy

- Daily opportunities for children to review, learn, practise and apply phonic skills
- Encouraging children to play Phase 1 games to develop listening skills and discriminate between different sounds
- Modelling the pure sounds for correct pronunciation of sounds
- Encouraging segmentation of words for the development of reading and writing skills
- Sharing and enjoying a wide range of texts including texts that have repetition, rhythm, rhyme

- Providing children with a text rich learning environment
- Providing high-quality texts, both fiction and non-fiction (variety of authors, children's interests)
- Modelling book behaviour to children – handling with care, tracking left to right, top to bottom etc
- Providing opportunities to extend story telling through story mapping, puppet, role play
- Home-school reading partnership
- Providing opportunities for children to talk about and answer questions about stories to develop comprehension skills
- Opportunities for the development of gross and fine motor skills
- A variety of writing resources in many areas of the classroom inside and outside to encourage mark-making and writing
- Providing children with meaningful writing opportunities
- Adults modelling the writing process and correct letter formation
- Displaying phonic sounds, tricky words, key vocabulary and other writing resources to encourage children to become independent writers

Mathematics

We believe that children should gain mathematical experiences in practical, meaningful everyday contexts. Children have the right to acquire mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding, which they can apply to real life situations. We believe all children should be able to participate confidently in mathematical tasks with enjoyment. At Avonwood, the children will learn and be encouraged to use a variety of ways/representations to demonstrate their mathematical understanding and thinking. We encourage the children to see themselves as mathematicians.

Aims

We aim to encourage all children to develop mathematical skills in the areas of

- Number
- Numerical pattern

Skills

- Subitise
- Number composition
- Develop the skill to represent in a variety of ways
- Use a range of mathematical language in a variety of situations
- Develop and apply knowledge and understanding to enable them to solve problems in a wide variety of everyday contexts
- Be happy to explore mathematical possibilities and confident to access resources independently

Knowledge

- Know the number that is one more or less than a given number 10
- Know number bonds and doubling to 5 then 10
- Know number patterns for examples odds and evens
- Know how to add and subtract
- Know ways to measure height, length, weight, capacity, time
- Know and recognise coins
- Know the names of 2D and some 3D shapes and how to describe them

Strategies to support Mathematics

- Daily opportunities to practise numbers and problem-solving skills
- Use of songs and rhymes to support mathematical development
- Providing a variety of accessible mathematical resources to encourage children to become independent mathematicians
- Modelling different ways for children to represent their maths
- Providing children with real-life contexts

Understanding the World

We believe that children should be taught the skills, knowledge and understanding to help them make sense of the world around them. Understanding the world will provide children with the foundations for later subjects in the National Curriculum such as science, history, geography, D&T, and ICT. Effective teaching of UW in the EYFS must involve the development of skills and attitudes alongside a knowledge rich curriculum that enables the children to ask questions through curiosity, developing a sense of awe and wonder. The learning environments must provide limitless opportunities for exploration, observation, problem solving, prediction, critical thinking, and discussion.

Aims

We aim to encourage all children to develop knowledge and understanding of the world in the areas of:

- Past and present
- People, culture, and community
- The natural world

Skills

- Exploration
- Observation
- Predict
- Investigate
- Discovery
- Explanation
- Record
- Solve problems
- Critical thinking
- Discussion
- Compare and contrast

Knowledge

- Know what makes them unique
- Knows about similarities and differences between themselves and others/places/objects/materials and living things
- Know about similarities and differences between cultures and religions
- Know about past and present experiences
- Know about features of their own environments and how they may be different to others
- Know about seasons and changing states of matter

Strategies to support Understanding the World

- Providing children with texts, maps, and books to support learning of the world around them
- Encouraging children to use their senses and opportunities for active exploration
- Allowing children to explore, investigate, test ideas and follow their own lines of enquiry
- Opportunities to discuss and explore new vocabulary
- Enabling children to enjoy and have first-hand experiences

Expressive Arts and Designs

We believe that allowing children to be creative gives them opportunities to express themselves in their chosen way and is an inclusive form of communication. Creativity is fundamental to successful learners as this enables the children to make connections between one area of learning and another, extending their understanding. Creativity is an inclusive form of communication and expression where language is not always necessary but can still offer possibilities for the development of the whole child.

Aims

We aim to encourage all children to develop knowledge and understanding of expressive arts and design in the areas of:

- Creating with materials
- Being imaginative and expressive

Skills

- Use of appropriate tools and techniques to assemble, join shape materials
- Manipulation of tools and materials
- Expressing ideas in different ways – music, art, design and technology, role-play, dance
- Adapting work when necessary
- Representations
- Experimentation

Knowledge

- Know that there are a range of ways to express ideas, thoughts, and feelings
- Know how to use tool and techniques safely
- Know how to mix colours and select appropriate colours
- Know different joining techniques
- Know a range of songs and dances
- Know how to make music
- Know a range of instruments and that they make different sounds
- Know stories and experiences can be expressed through role-play

Strategies to support Expressive Arts and Design

- Providing a variety of accessible materials and media for the children to explore independently
- Daily opportunities for children to express themselves in their chosen way
- Providing a range of construction materials and allowing them to display and share them
- Encouraging children to plan and design
- Modelling joining and cutting techniques which allow children to create and achieve what they have set out to do
- Allowing children opportunities to share their work and the processes they have used