

## **Abbey Meads Community Primary School**

“Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives.”

A child’s introduction and early experiences in school are likely to be a powerful influence on his or her attitudes to learning and subsequent achievements. It is, therefore vitally important to ensure that we achieve the correct balance in the child’s first classes, not only for meeting their immediate educational needs but also for establishing a sound foundation from this to progress towards work on the early stages of the National Curriculum.

Children need to become confident in a school setting, and know how to function in a classroom. We aim to create a class climate that is interesting, challenging, enjoyable, promotes high self-esteem and is supported by professional, caring and enthusiastic adults.

At Abbey Meads, we are passionate about providing our youngest children with the best possible start, ensuring all Nursery and Reception children are happy and secure. We place importance on the relationship that we have with the children and their parents. We endeavour to provide a warm, welcoming atmosphere where children are valued and listened to. We value every child for who they are and prepare them for all they can be,  
**‘Nothing but the best’.**

We view each child as an individual. We have high expectations for all our children and encourage them to become independent learners, able to make choices and take on responsibilities.

When referring to the Early years foundation stage (EYFS) we at Abbey Meads mean those children between the ages of three and five, those children in our nursery class and reception classes.

Parents play a crucial part in their child’s school career and we therefore aim to work in close partnership with our parents and keep them well informed about their child’s education and in the ways they can help. We will report to parents through regular parent consultation evenings/parental workshops and yearly reports

### **Aims**

- To provide a well-planned and resourced curriculum that will take each child’s learning forward.
- To identify and build on what children already know and can do to provide a positive attitude to learning and build on success.
- To provide opportunities for children to engage in activities planned by adults and also that they plan and initiate themselves, to provide independence.
- To provide an environment which is safe and secure where they can **play**, explore, experiment, develop confidence, be curious and learn.

## **Organisation of The Curriculum**

The EYFS curriculum is integrated, full of first hand experiences and opportunities to explore the world in which they live. Through topics we aim to provide a wide range of activities that will provide a broad and balanced curriculum, providing a curriculum that is challenging within a learning environment that ensures children feel secure and confident.

We are early adopters of the new revised EYFS framework which is based upon four overarching principles:

These are:

- 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.
  - 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).

The curriculum is planned in line with the seven learning areas identified in the EYFS. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. This is our educational programme.

### **The prime areas of learning**

Three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving.

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

### **The specific areas of learning**

We support the children in the four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

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

The prime areas begin to develop quickly in response to relationships and experiences and support learning in all other areas. The specific areas include essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society. In each area there are Early Learning

Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS. Children whose achievements exceed the Early learning goals are provided with learning opportunities which extend their knowledge, skills and understanding. This curriculum is delivered through a wide range of activities based around half termly topics and themes.

Alongside this run the characteristics of effective learning. In planning and guiding what children learn, practitioners must reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and adjust their practice appropriately. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning 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

In our nursery and reception classrooms we use a range of teaching approaches. Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. Adults decide what they want children to learn, and the most effective ways to teach it. Adults stimulate children's interests, responding to each child's emerging needs and guiding their development through warm, positive interactions coupled with secure routines for play and learning. As our youngest children grow older and move into the reception year, there is a greater focus on teaching the essential skills and knowledge in the specific areas of learning. This helps the children to prepare for year 1.

## **Safeguarding and Welfare**

We all want better lives for children and young people. Every Child Matters (ECM) describes the sorts of outcomes that we would want all children and young people to achieve. Every young child/person has the opportunity to fulfil their potential. We share the Government's aim for every child, whatever their background or their circumstances to have the support they need to:

- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well-being

While this programme is no longer statutory, we do still subscribe to the principles, which underpin it. 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. We provide a setting which is welcoming, safe and stimulating, and where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence

## Planning and Assessment

Planning is informed using the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021. We have written our own progression of skills documents for several key areas we have identified to ensure continuity and progression throughout our foundation stage based on the guidance, our whole school approaches and the children's needs, which can be cohort specific. We follow Storytime phonics for our phonic planning in our reception class and we follow letters and sounds in nursery.

Planning is organised into a long term plan (yearly, considering progression and coverage) Medium term planning (half termly) and Short term planning (weekly and daily.) A topic based approach enables all 7 areas of the Foundation Stage to be covered with particular emphasis on the prime areas in the first term.

Assessment is an integral part of teaching, and will be carried out in a variety of formats and used to inform future planning and provision.

Most of the assessment will be through **observations**. Observations can help teachers and other adults working with the children to develop their knowledge of the child and of their developing competences, schemas and personal interests. It enables the teacher to gain knowledge, review provision, forward planning and summative reporting.

When planning and assessing children's activities practitioners are encouraged to reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect this in their practice, observing not only what children are learning but how they learn and the skills that they use that enable them to do so. They underpin learning and development across all areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner.

Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support. Ongoing formative assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process. It involves teacher's knowing children's level of achievement and interests, and then to shape teaching and learning experiences for each child building on prior knowledge. In their interactions with children, practitioners should respond to their own day-to-day observations about children's progress and observations that parents and carers share.

Each child has an individual learning journey using 'Tapestry' as a platform to collate these observations and share them with parents, where you can find their observations which show progress. We have whole class records which contain the above information. A judgement is made and this assessment is recorded on target tracker three times a year, following the initial baseline assessment in September (On entry) December, March, and July.

A Summary of all these assessments form the basis of our Parent/Teacher Interviews and end of year reports.

We invite the children into school for a visit in the summer term before they start in the September. We ask parents to complete a questionnaire about their child and use this information along with pre-school records and class observations to make a professional judgement for the on-entry level that the child is working at. We use this information to identify or confirm any particular issues and to inform future planning.

Alongside this we administer the government's baseline assessment and the data is submitted to the local authority.

We carefully monitor each child's progress throughout the foundation stage to ensure the curriculum is differentiated to meet a child's needs and achievements are recognised and celebrated. We use target tracker as a record keeping system which enables us to easily look at the progress made by specific groups of children and target any interventions which may be needed to ensure all children achieve the expected outcomes at the end of the year.

We use the evidence gathered through observation to assess the children in relation to the Early Learning Goals. The ELGs support teachers to make a holistic, best-fit judgement about a child's development, and their readiness for year 1. When forming a judgement about whether an individual child is at the expected level of development, teachers will draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgement. This is sufficient evidence to assess a child's individual level of development in relation to each of the ELGs. Multiple sources of written or photographic evidence are not required, and teachers should not record unnecessary evidence. This is then collated in the Early Years foundation stage profile. This clearly demonstrates the progress that the children have made.

### **Equal opportunities**

Teaching in the Foundation stage will be in accordance with the present policy for equal opportunities. We aim to provide equal access for those children with special educational needs and those pupils who are very able and require extension activities. All children are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or ability.

Children have equality of access and opportunity by ensuring that:

- The curriculum is monitored to ensure each child's development is supported by equality of access and opportunity regardless of gender, ethnicity or disability
- Children's special needs are identified and met
- Regard is given to the code of practice for children with special educational need
- Stereo-typical behaviours and language are challenged
- Resources reflect a range of positive images including male and female, cultures and languages
- Differentiated work is planned to meet the high levels of expectations staff have and the appropriate needs of the individual child in the class. Methods include grouping by ability, use of extension support materials, by task, by outcome, use of resources and T.A support.

### **Quality teaching and Learning**

All of our teachers and support staff are trained or experienced in the Foundation Stage.

In order to encourage quality teaching the following aspects are of importance:-

- An understanding that play is the work of young children.
- Play opportunities are available both indoors and outdoors.
- Staff working together as a team.
- Staff using a wide range of teaching strategies and providing opportunities for a child to work on his/her own, with others etc.
- Organisation of classroom environment (routines and resources) to support children's learning.
- Organising children in ways which are appropriate for the learning intentions.
- A relevant curriculum based on practical activities. Staff pay attention to planning and assessments to meet the diverse needs of the children in the group.
- Staff interacting with children to enable them to achieve outcomes identified in planning.

### **Behaviour Policy**

The Foundation Stage classes (1&2) follow the school Behaviour and Discipline policy. FS1 adapt the policy to match the needs of the specific age group and personalities of the children. For example- there may not be Golden Time in the Nursery sessions. Individual behaviour management plans will be put in place for any individuals of whom may present more challenging behaviour and risk assessments will be completed for these children.

### **S.E.N.**

If there are any concerns these are recorded on the class provision map. This information is shared with a Parent and may result in additional monitoring or support. The class provision maps are reviewed by the class teacher each term. These children, who are recognised as having special educational needs, will follow the same curriculum as peers however, the work will be differentiated to meet individual needs. If we identify any children with specific learning or behavior needs we will begin an Early Help Assessment with the parent to begin the support process and continue to support and monitor the needs of the children through TAC (Team around the child) meetings. If needed we will apply for an EHCP (Educational Health Care Plan) to ensure we are able to meet the needs of individual children with more complex needs. We work closely with other professionals through our outreach work.

### **Physical Environment, Resources and Health**

Foundation stage 1 is housed in a mobile classroom situated next to the reception classrooms. There is a secure entrance and exit next to the nursery classroom allowing access to and from the playground at the beginning and end of the school day. Foundation stage 1 have their own outside area next to the reception classes. Toilets and a changing area are provided solely for the children in Foundation stage 1 in the mobile/nursery classroom.

Foundation Stage 2 is housed in the Reception class in the main school building. The room is equipped to enable the children to experience a full range of learning opportunities appropriate to their developmental needs. Toilets are provided solely for the use of children in Foundation Stage 2. There is easy access to a secure outdoor environment. Within the Foundation stage classrooms the environment is organised into several areas to promote a full range of learning opportunities and enable children to find and locate resources and equipment independently.

In addition to this, the children have the opportunity to use the hall for P.E, lunch and assemblies as well as the computer suite once a week.

### **Health and safety within Foundation Stage 1**

#### **First Aid**

Nursery staff are pediatric level 3 first aid trained. Qualified first aiders treat injuries accordingly.

Staff will record any incidents on an incident form in the classroom and this will be signed by both staff and parents.

Staff will record any pre-existing injuries on a record sheet on arrival. This will be signed by both staff and parents.

Staff record any accidents on an accident form in the classroom to be signed by both staff and parents. This will then be transferred onto the school accident book if of a serious nature or a head injury.

A small first aid kit will be kept in the nursery classroom.

Any medication will be securely kept in the locked classroom cupboard. This will be signed in by parents and will be prescribed medicines only. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure medication is in date and replaced accordingly.

A list of any medication or allergies will be kept on the inside the classroom cupboard. A list of allergies will also be kept on the classroom fridge. Staff will record if they administer any medication and this will be signed by parents at the end of the session.

#### **Learning Environment**

- A risk assessment is carried out at the beginning of each session of the learning environment.
- Before admitting the children it is the teacher's responsibility to check that the classroom is free from visible hazards.
- The class teacher or Teaching Assistant ensures the playground door is securely locked each morning after parents leave and again after break and dinner times. The school gate is also locked as parents leave.
- The caretaker is responsible for checking the outdoor playground for broken glass, animal faeces etc.
- Staff check that the outdoor play equipment is safe and has been carefully erected. Any broken equipment is replaced.

### **Health and safety within Foundation Stage 2**

#### **First Aid**

-An accident book is kept in the office in which all accidents are recorded.

-Qualified first aiders treat any injuries accordingly.

### **Learning environment**

- Before admitting the children it is the teacher's responsibility to check that the classroom is free from visible hazards.
- The class teacher or Teaching Assistant ensures the playground door is securely locked each morning after parent's leave and again after break and dinner times. The school gate is also locked as parents leave.
- The caretaker is responsible for checking the outdoor playground for broken glass, animal faeces etc.
- Staff check that the outdoor play equipment is safe and has been carefully erected. Any broken equipment is replaced.

### **Relationships with parents**

Parents have a significant influence on their children's learning and the partnership between home and school is vital to enhance the development of the whole child.

We wish to establish a partnership with parents based on mutual respect and shared purposes. Links are encouraged in the following ways.

- Nursery or Reception, parents contribute to filling in paperwork to support the completion of our on entry data.
- Children have the opportunity to come into school to spend time in the environment and get to know the teacher.
- Homevisits are a valued part of our induction programme
- Induction meeting and workshop – to explain, reading, writing, maths, routines
- an open hour to come in and look at the children's work, stay and play sessions
- Parent Consultation Evenings
- Use of parental support in the classroom and during visits and outings
- Opportunities for learning provided in the setting are continued at home eg. sharing books, word games, number work
- Parents are given information about the school and topic webs about their child's learning
- Staff are available at the end of each day to see any parents.
- Tapestry is used to record observations and shared with Parents. Parents contribute to the assessment using this programme.