



**Ayesha
Community
School**

ACS Early Years Policy

May 25

2017

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child’s experience in the early years has 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 for children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.” “Early Years Foundation Stage Framework” Department for Education 2017

**Reviewed
by Mr. S.
Ahmed**

1.0 Aims

Ayesha Community School places high value on good Early Years Practice both in Early Years and across the school.

The curriculum for the Early Years should underpin all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children's:

- Personal, social and emotional well-being
- Positive attitudes and dispositions towards their learning
- Social skills
- Attention skills and persistence
- Language and communication
- Reading and writing skills
- Mathematical skills
- Knowledge and understanding of the world
- Physical development
- Creative development

The EYFS team believe that early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. Children learn in a complex way and are influenced by everything in their environment.

They use their senses to explore and make sense of the world around them.

They learn through play, hands on experiential learning, through conversation with adults and other children and through a variety of planned activities.

Staff will follow the Early Years Statutory Framework from Birth to Five and agree with and strive to implement in practice the principles stated for excellent early years education:

- Effective education requires both a relevant curriculum and practitioners who understand and are able to implement the curriculum requirements.
- Effective education requires practitioners who understand that children develop rapidly during the early years –physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially.
- Practitioners should ensure that all children feel included, secure and valued.
- Early years' experience should build on what children already know and can do.
- No child should be excluded or disadvantaged regardless of their need; inclusion is at the heart of this.
- Parents and practitioners should work together.
- To be effective the curriculum should be carefully structured.
- There should be opportunities for the children to engage in activities planned by adults and also those that they plan or initiate themselves.
- Practitioners must be able to observe and respond appropriately to children.

- Well-planned, purposeful activity and appropriate intervention by practitioners will engage children in the learning process.
- For children to have rich and stimulating experiences, the learning environment should be well planned and well organised.
- Above all, effective learning and development for young children requires high-quality care and education by practitioners.

2.0 Equal Opportunities

We believe that children should be treated as individuals and that they have equal access to the Early Years curriculum. All staff should have an awareness of what Equal Opportunities means in principle as well as in practice. Practitioners should plan to meet the needs of girls and boys, children with SEND, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children with EAL, children from disadvantaged backgrounds, children from all social and cultural backgrounds and children of different ethnic groups.

3.0 Learning and Teaching

Staff believe that learning for young children is a rewarding and enjoyable experience in which they explore, investigate, discover, create, practise, rehearse, repeat, revise and consolidate their developing knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes. During the Early Years many of these aspects are brought together effectively through playing and talking.

Effective learning involves:

- Children initiating activities that promote learning and enable them to learn from each other.
- Children learning through movement and their senses.
- Children having time to explore ideas and interests in depth.
- Children feeling secure which will help promote confident learners.
- Children learning in different ways and at different rates.
- Children making links in their learning.
- Creative and imaginative play activities that promote the development and use of language.

We believe that teaching is the process whereby children are systematically helped to make connections in their learning and are actively led forward to reflect and make use of what they have already learnt.

Teaching has many aspects, including planning and creating a learning environment, organising time and resources, interacting, questioning, responding to questions, working

with and observing children, assessing and recording children's progress and sharing knowledge gained with other practitioners and parents.

Effective teaching requires:

- Working in partnership with parents.
- Planning experiences and activities that are challenging but achievable.
- Practitioners who model a range of positive behaviour.
- Using language that is rich and grammatically correct. Teaching new vocabulary through modelling and explanation.
- Using conversation and carefully framed questions.
- Direct teaching of skills and knowledge.
- Promoting positive attitudes to learning through interaction and support.
- Planning both indoor and outdoor learning environments.
- Skilful and well-planned observations of children.
- Assessing children's development and progress.
- Identifying the next step in children's learning to plan for individual children's progress.

4.0 The Areas of Learning

There are seven areas of learning and development that shape educational programmes in our setting. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

These three areas, the prime areas, are:

• Communication and language

Communication and language development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

• Physical development

Physical development involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

- **Personal, social and emotional development**

Personal, social and emotional development involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

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

The specific areas are:

Literacy

Literacy development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.

Mathematics

Mathematics involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.

Understanding the world

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

Expressive arts and design

Expressive arts and design involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

5.0 The Value of Play

Well-planned play, both indoors and outdoors, is an important way in which young children learn. It is the process through which children explore, investigate, recreate and understand the world in which they live. It is a vital component of children's lives and is the medium through which skills can be developed and practised. The role of the practitioner is crucial in developing high quality play in the learning environment. This includes planning and resourcing a challenging environment, supporting children's learning through planned and spontaneous play, and extending and developing children's language and communication in their play. Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they

learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults.

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice. 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; and
- **Creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

6.0 Planning and Assessment

Nursery and Reception staff organise the curriculum through topics. These are topics that are relevant to needs of the children and are chosen to develop, and take account of their interests. They may be topics that have been successful and enjoyed by classes in the past. The staff will also ensure a balanced curriculum over the year. Assessment in the Early Years is constructive and always used to inform planning. Assessment is carried out through observations- both informal and planned.

7.0 The Role of Additional Adults in Early Years

The two EYFS classes (Nursery & Reception) are supported by their own Level Three Teaching Assistants who are valued for the special contribution that they make and are seen as 'practitioners' in the classroom. They are involved in planning, assessment, teaching and liaison with parents. They have a special role to fulfil and the following list is seen as some of the qualities and skills they bring:

- To assist in providing a full range of activities which meet the emotional, physical, social and intellectual needs of the children.
- To take groups of children for various activities in the different curriculum areas.
- To participate in the preparation of the learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, before the children arrive and with classroom management during the session.
- To make observations of the children and share these with other staff.

- To contribute to the planning of the curriculum to meet the needs of individual children.
- To contribute with regards to record keeping and reports as required by the teacher
- To provide first aid and comforting ill children if trained
- To help children acquire self-help skills including toileting and personal hygiene as necessary.
- To work closely with parents and carers, providing a welcoming environment.
- To assist with the tidying up of materials and organisation of resources used during the sessions.
- To help with the putting up of displays.
- To carry out lunchtime duties and attend staff meetings and courses when required.
- To attend Early Years meetings and contribute their knowledge and ideas.

7.1 Key Workers

We at ACS believe that children settle best when they have a key person to relate to, who knows them and their parents well, and who can meet their individual needs. Research shows that a key person approach benefits the child, the parents, the staff and the setting by providing secure relationships in which children thrive, parents have confidence and staff members are committed.

We at ACS want the children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in the setting and to feel secure and comfortable with the staff. We also want parents to have confidence in both their children's well-being and their role as active partners in the setting.

We aim to make the setting a welcoming place where children settle quickly and easily because consideration has been given to the individual needs and circumstances of children and their families.

At ACS the procedures are:

- We allocate a key person before the child starts.
- The key person is responsible for the induction of the family and for settling the child into our setting.
- The key person works with the parent to plan and deliver a personalised plan for the child's well being and care.
- The key person acts as a key contact for the parents in day to day matters.
- We judge a child to be settled when they have formed a relationship with the key worker.

8.0 Methods of Assessment

EYFS staff use a range of methods for assessing pupils' learning and achievements:

- Practitioners' knowledge of children
- Written observations (can be long or short as appropriate)
- Information obtained from discussion with parents
- Photographs, videos and audio recordings
- Other samples of children's work
- Some formal testing (if and when needed)

9.0 Learning Journeys

An electronic 'Learning Journey' folder containing photographs/written observations of pupils' achievements is created for each EYFS pupil using the facility provided by Target Tracker, which is our newly purchased assessment tool. These observations are securely published on Target Tracker website and are made accessible to parents via providing them a link to set up their own passwords.

10.0 EYFS Profiles

- The observations described above help teachers to assess each child's level of development against the early learning goals and to indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are exceeding expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). This is the EYFS Profile. EYFS Profiles are completed in the final term of the year in which the Reception child reaches age five, and no later than 30 June in that term.
- EYFS Profile results are shared with parents and carers.
- The Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning (see paragraph 1.9). These inform a dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assist with the planning of activities in Year 1.
- The School reports EYFS Profile results to the Local Authority upon request.

11.0 Transition

Staggered intake is used to help children settling into Nursery and Reception classes at the beginning of the academic year. EYFS Staff communicate with parents for the settling in needs of individual children and arrangements such as parents staying in with the child for the part of the session to settle them can be made. Similar policy is used for those new children that start later in the year.

Staff use the information provided by the parents through completing parents' questionnaire and pupils' survey of interests to make the settling in process as smooth as possible.

Reception teachers develop the fair knowledge of pupils coming up from Nursery to Reception as they have the opportunity to observe them during the free activities, especially in the shared outdoor learning area. Nursery children are normally quite familiar with the Reception staff which helps them to settle in quickly in Reception Year.

Arrangements are also made for children in Reception to become acquainted with the Year 1 teachers and the Year 1 classroom.

At the end of the school year teachers will meet and discuss the children going from Nursery to Reception and Reception to Year 1. This transition time is extremely important and it is essential that the children are well prepared and parents have an understanding of the next step. Our whole school 'Meet the Teacher Day' at the end of the academic year include the Reception and Nursery classes.

12.0 Role of Parents

The EYFS Team is keen to develop an effective partnership with parents. We recognise that parents are the children's first and most enduring educators and that in order to have a positive impact on a child's development and learning it is essential to develop a close working relationship with Parents, based on mutual respect. The EYFS team are always happy to talk to parents about any issues as they arise. There are also meetings each term to discuss progress for each child.

Parents are encouraged to inform the EYFS team about their child's interests and needs, and their child's achievements outside the school. They are requested to complete surveys of interests, wow moment cards etc.

At the end of the third term, we provide parents with a written progress report in relation to the Development Matters/ Early Learning Goals (as appropriate).

13.0 Safeguarding and Child Protection

Please read our school policy which provides all the relevant information regarding our Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures.

13.1 Safeguarding and Welfare

The School ensures that policies and procedures are in place for the whole school that also meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation framework to keep all children safe and well. In addition, there are a few EYFS-specific policies and procedures; for example daily risk assessments of the indoor and outdoor premises and equipment.

Staff qualifications and ratios

The School is mindful that the EYFS should be staffed by appropriately qualified staff. It notes changes made in April 2017 that require that to count in the ratios at level 3, staff holding an EYE (early years educator) qualification must also have achieved a suitable level 2 qualification in English and mathematics as defined by the Department for Education on the Early Years Qualifications List published on GOV.UK .

First Aid qualifications

The School will also ensure that the new paediatric first aid training requirements will be met, and that ‘all newly qualified entrants to the early years workforce with full and relevant level 2 and/or level 3 qualifications completed on or after 30 June 2016 must also have a PFA certificate before they can be included in the statutory staff:child ratios in early years settings (EYFS framework April 2017).’

This policy must be read in conjunction with other school policies, including: safeguarding and child protection, safe recruitment, behaviour, anti-bullying, health and safety, first aid, fire safety, curriculum, special educational needs and disability (SEND), English as an Additional Language (EAL), assessment and equal opportunities.

14.0 Promoting Health & Hygiene (Food and Drink Policy)

At ACS, snacks and meal times are important part of the setting’s day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy eating and Islamic manners including supplications before eating and thanking Allah SWT after eating.

At snack time, we encourage fruits and healthy snacks from home.

We encourage parents to prepare healthy lunches for their children and give them ideas.

Procedures:

We follow these procedures to promote healthy eating in our setting:

- Before a child starts to attend our setting, we find out from parents their children’s dietary needs including any allergies.
- We display any allergies that a child may have so all staff and volunteers are fully informed about them.
- We take care not to provide food containing nuts or nut products and are especially vigilant where we have a child who has known allergy to nuts.
- We require staff to show sensitivity to children’s dietary needs and allergies.

- We organise fruit times and lunch times so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate.
- We use meal times to encourage independence.
- We encourage drinking plain water. Children have access to fresh drinking water to fill their bottle waters when needed.
- We inform parents about healthy eating.
- We discourage sweet drinks, crisps, cakes, biscuits and juices. We reserve the right to return this food to the parent as a last resort.

15.0 Monitoring and evaluation

The responsibility for implementing this policy is shared among the EYFS staff under the leadership and management of the EYFS leader.

The Principal is responsible for checking that the EYFS learning and welfare requirements are met.

The School takes into account the views of parents, staff and outside agencies such as the Local Authority to evaluate the effectiveness of this policy and further improve the education and welfare provision.

Next review date: March 2018 or sooner if required by changes in legislation.