



Ash Grove Academy

Policy for

Early Years

Prepared by:	Adopted by Board of Directors
CEO	Autumn 2023

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Statement of intent

All AET policies are written to support our schools and communities. We do this by ensuring they are always in line with our Colleague Values:



Applying these values to everything we do means always acting with integrity, in the interests of others, being honest, open and transparent and putting the safety of our children first.

At The Aspire Educational Trust we greatly value the importance of the EYFS in providing a secure foundation for future learning and development.

This policy has been developed in conjunction with the relevant guidance and legislation to ensure that each child has a happy and positive start to their school life in which they can build a foundation for a love of learning.

We ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. We promote teaching and learning to ensure children's readiness for the next stage of their education and give children a broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

We seek to provide:

- **Quality and consistency**, 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 child and are assessed and reviewed regularly.
- **Partnership working** between practitioners and parents.
- **Equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

1. Aims

Through the implementation of this policy, we will aim to:

- Give each child a happy and positive start to their school life in which they can establish a solid foundation for a love of learning.
- Enable each child to develop socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally.
- Encourage children to develop independence within a secure and friendly atmosphere.
- Support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing.
- Work alongside parents to meet each child's individual needs to ensure they reach their full potential.

Four overarching principles shape will our practice:

- 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 the school and parents.
- **Learning and development** is important. Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

To put these principles into practice, the school will:

- Provide a balanced curriculum which takes children's different stages of development into account.
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- Work in partnership with parents.
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on individual needs, which are informed by observation and assessment.
- Assign each child with a key person to ensure that each child's learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs.
- Provide a safe and secure learning environment.

2. Learning and development

In partnership with parents, the school will promote the learning and development of children to ensure they learn and develop well, are kept healthy and safe and have the knowledge and skills they need to start school.

Curriculum planning

Provision and practice within the early years will be centred around the requirements of the DfE's 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'.

The EYFS framework outlines seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in the early years. These are categorised as 'prime areas' and 'specific areas'.

Prime areas – defined as the areas that are particularly important for building a curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships, and thriving:

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

Specific areas – defined as the areas through which the prime areas are strengthened and applied:

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

The school will plan and provide educational programmes that involve activities and experiences for children as set out under each of the seven areas of learning.

When planning the early years curriculum, practitioners will:

- Consider the individual needs, interests, and development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all areas of learning and development.
- 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.
- Reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and adjust their practice appropriately.

If a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, practitioners will discuss this with the child's parents and agree how to support the child. Staff will also consider whether a child may have a special educational need or disability which requires specialist support.

For children whose home language is not English, practitioners will:

- Take reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning, supporting their language development at home.
- Ensure that children have sufficient opportunities to learn and reach a good standard in English language during the EYFS, ensuring children are ready to benefit from the opportunities available to them when they begin Year 1.

When organising and implementing educational programmes, the school will ensure that a broad range of activities and experiences are planned, having regard to the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning in the EYFS:

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning

- Creating and thinking critically

Each child will be assigned a key person who will help to ensure their learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs.

3. Assessment

Assessment plays an important part in helping the school to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, plan activities, and assess the need for support.

In line with statutory requirements, the school will undertake a summative assessment of each child's development at certain stages. These are:

- Progress check at age two – a short written summary of children's development in the prime areas.
- Reception Baseline Assessment – a short assessment which is taken within the first six weeks of a child starting Reception.
- The EYFS Profile – a comprehensive assessment completed at the end of the EYFS to provide a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, attainment against the early learning goals (ELGs), and their readiness for Year 1.

Ongoing formative assessments will be used to assess the day-to-day learning and development of children in the EYFS. Practitioners will interact and observe children to understand their interests and learning needs and will use this information to inform practice and provision for each child.

Parents will be kept up to date with their child's progress and development, and the EYFS lead will address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents.

The school will ensure that teachers actively engage children, their parents and other adults who have significant interaction with specific children in the assessment processes to provide a well-rounded picture of their development and attainment.

4. Inclusion

All children will be valued as individuals irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender.

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy will ensure all children receive the support they need and are given the best learning experience possible. SEND in the EYFS setting will be monitored and managed by the school's SENCO.

The EYFS curriculum will be planned in order to meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace.

5. The learning environment and outdoor spaces

The learning environment will be organised in such a way that children can explore and learn independently in a safe and interactive environment.

Children will have access to an enclosed outdoor environment, and daily access to the outdoor environment is planned, unless circumstances, such as the weather, would make outdoor activity inappropriate and unsafe.

There will be toilet facilities available to the EYFS, and there will be hygienic changing facilities containing a supply of towels and spare clothes. Nappy changing facilities will also be available.

6. Safeguarding and welfare

The school will take all necessary steps to keep children safe and well and comply with the requirements of the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage' to:

- Safeguard children.
- Ensure the suitability of adults who have contact with children.
- Promote good health.
- Manage behaviour.
- Maintain records, policies, and procedures.

Child protection

Staff will be alert to any issues of concern in the child's life at home or elsewhere. Any safeguarding or welfare issues will be dealt with in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, and all members of staff in the EYFS will be required to read this policy as part of their induction training.

The DSL is Judith Ceuppens The deputy DSL's are Sally Veale, Amanda Thompson, Katy Ghorbanian.

The DSL will be responsible for safeguarding children and liaising with local children's services as appropriate. The deputy DSL will undertake the duties of the DSL in their absence, but overall responsibility for safeguarding will remain with the DSL. The DSL and deputy DSL will undertake child protection training as required.

Staff will receive safeguarding training that enables them to understand the safeguarding policy and procedures, have up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues, and recognise signs of potential abuse and neglect.

The school will inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse of children by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made.

7. Mobile Phones

All necessary steps will be taken to keep the children in our care safe and well. Any safeguarding Mobile phones and devices

For the purposes of this policy, the term "**mobile phone**" refers to any electronic device that can be used to take images or record videos, including tablets.

Use of personal mobile phones by staff members

Staff members will not use personal mobile phones or cameras when children are present. Staff may use mobile phones on school premises outside of working hours when no children are present. Staff may use mobile phones in the staffroom during breaks and non-contact time. Mobile phones will be safely stored and in silent mode whilst children are present.

Staff may take mobile phones on trips, but they will only be used in emergencies and should not be used when children are present. Mobile phones will not be used to take images or videos at any time during trips.

Staff who do not adhere to this policy will face disciplinary action. Staff will report any concerns about another staff member's use of mobile phones to the DSL, following the procedures outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy.

Staff may use their professional judgement in emergency situations.

Use of mobile phones by parents, visitors and contractors

Parents, visitors and contractors will not be permitted to take photographs or record videos without prior permission. Parents may take photographs and videos only containing their own child during school events. Parents may take group photographs at school events but only with the informed consent of the parents of the children involved.

The school strongly advises against the publication of any photographs or videos taken at the school or school events on social media. Staff will report all concerns about parents, visitors and contractors to the DSL, following the procedures outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Use of the school's mobile phones and cameras

Staff will be provided with a school device to ensure that only school devices are used to take photographs and videos. School devices will have passcode protection.

School devices will only be used for work related matters, e.g. recording and documenting a child's learning. School devices will only be used to take photographs in the presence of another staff member and only with the consent of the child's parent.

School devices will not be taken off school premises without prior written permission from the headteacher/principal. Where staff members have concerns over material on a school device, they will report all concerns to the DSL, following the procedures outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

8. Staffing

Suitable people

The school will ensure that it:

- Has effective systems in place to ensure that practitioners and those in regular contact with children within the setting are suitable to fulfil the requirements of their roles.

- Obtains an enhanced criminal records check in respect of every person aged 16 and over who works directly with children or works on the premises – additional criminal records checks will also be made for anyone who has lived or worked abroad.
- Tells staff that they are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings that may affect their suitability to work with children.
- Does not allow people, whose suitability has not been checked, including through a criminal records check, to have unsupervised contact with children.
- Records information about staff qualifications and the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed.
- Meets its responsibilities under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, which includes a duty to make a referral to the DBS where a member of staff is dismissed, or would have been, had the person not left the setting first, because they have harmed a child or put a child at risk of harm.
- Ensures that no disqualified person is employed to work in connection with early years provision.
- Takes appropriate action to ensure the safety of children if they become aware of any information about staff that may lead to their disqualification.
- Notifies Ofsted of any significant event which is likely to affect the suitability of any person who is in regular contact with children in their setting and provide specific details of any order made.

Staff taking medication or other substances.

The school will:

- Ensure that staff members are not under the influence of alcohol or any other substance which may affect their ability to care for children.
- Ensure that staff taking medication that may affect their ability to care for children seek medical advice.
- Ensure that staff members only work directly with children if medical advice confirms that the medication is unlikely to impair that staff member's ability to look after children properly.
- Always keep medication on the premises securely stored, and out of reach of children.
- Implement a zero-tolerance approach to drugs and alcohol misuse.

Any medication used by staff will be securely stored in a locked fridge or cabinet.

Staff qualifications, training, support, and skills

The school will ensure that:

- It follows its legal responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010.
- All staff receive induction training to help them understand their roles and responsibilities. This will include information about emergency evacuation procedures, safeguarding, child protection, and health and safety issues.
- Support staff undertake appropriate training and professional development opportunities to ensure they offer quality learning and development experiences for children that continually improves.

- It puts appropriate arrangements in place for the supervision of staff who have contact with children and families.
- At least one person who has a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate is always on the premises and available when children are present and accompanies them on any outings - the certificate must be for a full course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex A of the EYFS framework.
- Any member of staff who has sole responsibility for looking after a group of children will hold a PFA certificate.
- All newly qualified entrants to the early years workforce who have completed a level 2 or level 3 qualification on or after 30 June 2016, have either a full paediatric first-aid (PFA) or an emergency PFA certificate within three months of starting work in order to be included in the required staff: child ratios. The school will organise PFA training to be renewed every three years. The list of staff who hold PFA certificates can be found in the school office.
- Staff have sufficient understanding and use of English to ensure the wellbeing of children in their care.

All members of staff who have contact with children and families will be supervised by the EYFS lead. The supervision will provide opportunities for staff to:

- Discuss any issues, particularly concerning the development or wellbeing of children, including any child protection concerns.
- Identify solutions to address issues.
- Receive coaching to improve their effectiveness.

Staff: child ratios

The school is aware that there are a range of contextual factors that will affect staff: child ratios, and that these can change depending upon a variety of issues. The school will continue to monitor the ratios and ensure that:

- The EYFS manager holds an approved level 3 qualification or above and should have at least two years' experience of working in an early year setting or other suitable experience.
- There is a named deputy who is capable and qualified to take charge in the managers absence. The deputy will provide cover for the EYFS lead in their absence and is deemed fully qualified to do so by the EYFS lead and the headteacher/principal.
- Staffing arrangements meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety.
- Children are adequately supervised, including whilst eating, and decide how to deploy staff to ensure children's needs are met.
- They inform parents about staff deployment, and, when relevant and practical, aim to involve them in these decisions.
- Children are always within sight or hearing of staff.
- Only those aged 17 and over are included in ratios if they are suitable, and that staff under 17 are always supervised. Suitable students on long term placements and volunteers aged 17 or over, and staff working as apprentices in early education aged 16 or over may be included in the ratios if the school is satisfied that they are competent and responsible.

The school will adopt the following staffing ratios:

- For children under two:
 - There will be at least one member of staff for every three children.
 - At least one staff member will hold an approved level 3 qualification and will be suitably experienced to work with children under two.
 - At least half of other staff will hold an approved level 2 qualification.
 - At least half of all the members of staff will be trained in the care of babies.
 - Where there is a room for under two-year-olds, the member of staff in charge of that room will have suitable experience of working with under twos.
- For children aged two:
 - There will be one member of staff for every five children.
 - At least one staff member will hold an approved level 3 qualification.
 - At least half of the other staff members will hold an approved level 2 qualification.
- For children aged three and over:
 - Where a staff member with qualified teacher status (QTS), early years professional status, or another suitable level 6 qualification **is working directly with the children**, there will be one member of staff for every 13 children, and at least one other member of staff will hold an approved level 3 qualification.
 - Where a staff member with qualified teacher status (QTS), early years professional status, or another suitable level 6 qualification **is not working directly with the children**, there will be one member of staff for every 8 children, and at least one other member of staff will hold an approved level 3 qualification, with at least half of all other staff holding an approved level 2 qualification.
- For children in Reception classes:
 - Class sizes will be limited to 30 children per school teacher.

Only under exceptional circumstances, and where the quality of care and safety of children is maintained, will changes be made to the ratios. Parents will be informed about staffing arrangements and, when relevant and practical, will be involved in staffing arrangement decisions.

Key person

Each child will be assigned a key person whose role will be to:

- Meet their individual needs.
- Help the child become familiar with the setting.
- Offer a settled relationship for the child.
- Build a relationship with their parents.

The EYFS lead will inform parents of whom their child's key person is and will explain the role of the key person when their child begins attending the school.

9. ICT lessons

ICT lessons will be used to give children the opportunity to use technology, equip them for the demands of the developing digital world, and prepare them for the next step in their education. When teaching ICT and utilising technology, e.g. laptops and tablets, the school will have due regard for the '[Education for a Connected World](#)' framework when shaping what children are taught. The school aims to:

- Help children work more independently.
- Enable children to develop and enhance their work.
- Encourage children to collaborate on projects.
- Give children the skills and tools to access a wide range of information, ideas and cultures.
- Help children develop skills that can be used in other areas of the curriculum.
- Help children develop good control and coordination through using ICT equipment.
- Encourage children to represent their ideas, thoughts and feelings through technology.

In accordance with the DfE's '[Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage](#)', all educational programmes offered by the setting, including ICT, will work towards the early learning goals (ELGs). This will include:

- **Communication and language:** ICT helps children to develop their self-expression confidence and skills, and allows them to speak and listen in a range of situations.
- **Physical development:** using interactive programmes, computer mice, keyboards and touch screens helps children develop their coordination, control and movement.
- **Personal, social and emotional development:** technology gives children access to new ways to express their emotions and interact with others.
- **Literacy:** the internet gives children to access a vast range of media and materials.
- **Mathematics:** ICT enhances children's experiences of learning mathematics and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems, and describing shapes, spaces and measure.
- **Understanding the world:** children will be taught to use the internet to enhance their knowledge of people, places, technology and their physical environment.
- **Expressive arts and design:** interactive games, activities and materials will be used to encourage children to share their creativity and ideas.

Teachers will not use formative assessments for ICT, but will use summative assessments to help track children's progress. Resources will be shared fairly between children and, where needed, tasks and equipment will be adjusted to suit children's needs and abilities.

The EYFS lead will be responsible for ensuring all staff and parents are aware of the setting's policy on using technology and teaching ICT. The EYFS lead will hold the ICT technician, teachers and support staff to account for their delivery and support of the ICT curriculum and offer support where needed.

The ICT technician will be responsible for:

- Staying aware of new ICT developments and communicating these to staff, including through bespoke training where necessary.
- Attending appropriate in-service training, including safeguarding training.
- Maintaining the upkeep and use of ICT resources.

- Working with the EYFS lead to establish an annual budget to secure the procurement of the required ICT software and hardware.
- Keeping appropriate records of ICT expenditure to review costs and make suggestions for the future.
- Securing and maintaining ICT resources.
- Ensuring ICT resources are up-to-date, fit for purpose and safe for children to use.
- Advising staff on the correct and safe use of digital technologies.

Staff delivering the ICT curriculum will be responsible for:

- Encouraging children to apply their knowledge, skills and understanding of ICT in other areas of learning.
- Tailoring lesson delivery according to children's age and respective abilities.
- Working with the ICT technician to put reasonable adjustments in place to ensure all children can make use of the school's ICT equipment.
- Undertaking summative assessments to ensure the aims set out in this policy are being met.
- Keeping the EYFS lead informed about how the aims of the setting's ICT curriculum are being achieved.
- Supporting children through play and teaching to recognise how technology is used across their lives, such as in their home and school.

The Online Safety Policy will be always adhered to. This includes installing internet filters and antivirus software on all devices and ensuring children are supervised appropriately when using the internet. In the event of children accessing inappropriate content online, safeguarding procedures will be followed in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

10. Health and safety

Medicines

The school will:

- Promote the good health of children, including their oral health.
- Have an agreed procedure, discussed with parents for responding to children who are ill or infectious, take necessary steps to prevent the spread of infection, and take appropriate action if children are ill.
- Have policies and procedures for administering medicines, which includes systems for obtaining information about a child's medicinal needs and keeping this information up to date.
- Ensure that adequate training is provided for staff where medicinal administration requires medical or technical knowledge.
- Ensure that medicines are not administered unless they have been prescribed for a child by a doctor, dentist, nurse, or pharmacist - medicines containing aspirin should only be given if prescribed by a doctor.
- Only administer medicine, both prescription and non-prescription, where written permission for that particular medicine has been obtained from the child's parent.
- Keep a written record of each time medicine is administered, and inform parents on that day, or as soon as is reasonably practicable.

Food and drink

The school will:

- Ensure that, where provided, meals, snacks and drinks are healthy, balanced, and nutritious.
- Obtain information about a child's special dietary requirements, preferences, food allergies and any special health requirements prior to them attending the setting.
- Ensure that fresh drinking water is always available and accessible to children.
- Record and act on information from parents about a child's dietary needs.
- Ensure there is an area which is adequately equipped to provide healthy meals, snacks and drinks for children.
- Ensure there are suitable facilities for the hygienic preparation of food for children, including, where necessary, suitable sterilisation equipment for babies' food.
- Ensure that those responsible for preparing and handling food are competent to do so, with all staff involved in preparing and handling food receive training in food and hygiene.
- Inform Ofsted if two or more pupils are affected by food poisoning within 14 days of the incident – note, failure to do constitutes an offence.

Accident or injury

The school will:

- Ensure that there is a first aid box containing appropriate content for use with children which is always accessible. This will be kept in the classroom.
- Keep a written record of any accidents, injuries and first aid treatment. An accident book will be located in the classroom.
- Inform parents of any accident or injury involving a child and inform parents on the same day, or as soon as is reasonably practicable after, including details of any first aid treatment given.
- Notify Ofsted of any serious incident, illness or injury to, or death of, any child while in their care, and the action taken as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at least within 14 days of the incident occurring – note, failure to do constitutes an offence.
- Notify local child protection agencies of any serious accident or injury to, or death of, any child while in their care, and act on any advice given from these agencies.

11. Managing children's behaviour

The school will:

- Take full responsibility for managing children's behaviour in an appropriate way.
- Not give or threaten corporal punishment to a child.
- Not use or threaten any punishment which could adversely affect a child's wellbeing.
- Take all reasonable steps to ensure that corporal punishment is not given by any person who cares for or is in regular contact with a child – failure to meet the above requirement constitutes an offence.
- Keep a record of any occasion where physical intervention is used and inform parents on the same day, or as soon as is reasonably practicable.

Note: Physical intervention is defined in the EYFS framework as practitioners using reasonable force to prevent children from injuring themselves or others or damaging property. A person will not be taken to have used corporal punishment where physical intervention was taken for the purposes of averting immediate danger of personal injury to any person, including the child, or to manage a child's behaviour if absolutely necessary, and therefore that person will not have committed an offence.

Parental involvement

We firmly believe that the EYFS cannot function without the enduring support of parents.

Parents will be invited to termly parents' meetings; however, the school has an open-door policy and parents are welcome to talk to teachers at the start and end of the school day. A room will be utilised for confidential discussions between staff and parents.

Parents will be asked to sign permission slips for any visits out of school, use of photographs of their child and using the internet at school.

Parents will be asked to complete admission forms, a medical form and to write a brief synopsis about their child to help the school to understand their character and personality.

12. Information and records

Information will be stored in line with the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018, and with regard to the school's Data Protection Policy.

The school will:

- Maintain records and obtain and share information, as appropriate, to ensure the safe and efficient management of the setting and ensure the needs of all children are met.
- Enable a regular two-way flow of information with parents and between providers in cases where more than one setting is attended.
- Ensure that records are easily accessible and available.
- Ensure that confidential information and records about staff and children are held securely and only accessible and available to those with the right or professional need.
- Be aware of their responsibilities under data protection legislation and, where relevant, the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- Ensure that staff understand their responsibility to protect and respect the privacy of children and the legal requirements requiring confidentiality of information and records.
- Allow parents access to all records about their child, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018.
- Retain records relating to individual children for a reasonable amount of time after they have left the setting.

The following information about the school will be recorded:

- The school's name, address, and telephone number
- The school's certificate of registration

- The name, address, and telephone number of anyone who will regularly be in unsupervised contact with the children.
- A daily record of the names of the children being cared for in the school, their hours of attendance, and the names of each child's key person.

Information about the child

The following information will be recorded for each child:

- The child's full name and date of birth
- The name and address of every parent or carer who is known to the school, including information about all persons who have parental responsibility for the child and which parent the child normally lives with.
- The emergency contact details of the child's parent.

Information for parents and carers

The following information will be made available to parents:

- The school's privacy notice for parents and children
- How the school delivers the EYFS and how parents can access more information
- The daily routine and the activities offered in the school's EYFS and how parents can assist their child's learning at home.
- How the school's EYFS supports children with SEND
- Details of the food and drink provided to the children.
- Details of the policies and procedures in place in the school's EYFS
- Staffing details, including the name of their child's key person and their role and a telephone number for parents to contact in an emergency.

Ofsted will be notified if there are any changes to the following:

- The address of the school
- The school's contact details.
- The hours during which care is provided.
- Any significant event which is likely to affect the suitability of the school or any person who cares for, or is in regular contact with, children to look after children.

13. Transition

The following process will be in place to ensure children's successful transition to Year

- In the Summer term, the children will spend time in their new class with their new teacher.
- In the Summer term, Reception and Year 1 staff will meet to discuss each child's development in order to support a smooth transition to Year 1.

