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Governing body

Early Years Policy



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**Our Vision**

*In God's likeness, we  
shine our light in all  
we say and do,  
through love, respect,  
courage and joy.*

*curious, confident, caring*



Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Astley we value the importance that the Early Years Foundation Stage plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. Our school vision and Christian values are at the heart of all we do in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children are given time and space to grow spiritually and demonstrate our key values of love, respect, courage and joy both independently and with guidance from practitioners. We ensure all children receive a high-quality and ambitious education, that fosters a love for learning that lasts, and encourages every child to develop a curiosity and thirst for knowledge. We believe that its vital that our pupils are equipped with the tools needed to become independent, inquisitive learners both in and out of the classroom.

Ratified by the Governing Body: Monday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2024

Date for review: March 2025

Signed by:

*L. Screen*

Chair of governors

Lisa Screen

*T. Langfield*

Headteacher

Tracie Langfield

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### Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework that applies from January 2024.

*All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives, so their experiences in early years 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 provide the foundation children need to fulfil their potential.*

*Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework 2024*

### Our Aims in the Early Years Foundation Stage:

At Astley CE Primary School, we aim to provide every child within the Early Years, with the skills to become a happy, independent and curious lifelong learner through a curriculum which nurtures, engages, motivates and captures children's interests.

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- High quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes at least good progress and no child gets left behind
- A close working partnership between staff, parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Astley, children may enter our nursery the term after their third birthday. Admission into our Reception class is in the Autumn Term of the academic year their fifth birthday falls into. Children joining our Reception class, join full-time, unless a phased entry has been agreed between the EYFS lead, parents, SENDCO and Headteacher, prior to admission.

### Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from January 2024.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the *prime areas* are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

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The prime areas are:

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

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

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

Astley staff have designed an ambitious curriculum that is bespoke to the pupils of Astley. It is led by a selection of high-quality texts each half term, promoting the importance we set from an early age for reading and literature. Our curriculum allows children in the Early Years to develop all 7 areas of learning through a combination of adult led sessions, child led interests and planning in the moment.

### Planning

Staff plan activities and experiences that enable children to develop and learn effectively. To do this, staff working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas. Staff also consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services and professionals from other agencies, where appropriate. In planning and guiding children's activities, staff reflect and respond on the different ways children learn ensuring the child's optimum learning practice.

### Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a range of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interactions.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning in year 1 where children learn through the National Curriculum.

### The Enabling Environment

At Astley CE Primary School we recognise that a rich and varied EYFS environment plays a key role in supporting and extending our children's development and learning. It gives them confidence to explore and learn in secure and safe, yet challenging, indoor and outdoor spaces. Staff work to ensure our environments give all children the opportunity to make independent choices; and this

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enables our practitioners to observe what interests each child and begin to develop the language that will support these activities.

Our classroom is strategically organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, quiet, creative, investigative and imaginative. Learning areas are clearly defined so children can find and locate equipment and resources independently.

Being outdoors offers the children opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. They can explore, use their senses, develop their language skills and be physically active. Staff plan activities and resources inside and outside enabling the children to develop in all learning areas. Staff also utilise our well-developed Forest School, school site and local area to promote learning within nature.

### Assessment

Ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to inform and shape future planning. Staff also consider observations shared by parents and/or carers to contribute towards their learning goals.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts in the reception year, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers within child's end of year report, published annually in July.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters guidance) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. The EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority annually each June.

### Working with parents

At Astley, we recognise that parents/carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value being partners with them in their child's education.

In our Nursery class, each child is assigned a key person who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. The class teacher also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

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Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. Termly face to face parent consultations, our open-door policy and EYFS profile and routine use of the Seesaw app helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

### Safeguarding and welfare procedures

As part of our EYFS curriculum and routine practice within the school environment, we promote good health, well-being and hygiene, which includes good oral health. Children learn how to keep themselves safe and welfare procedures are included in our school's safeguarding policy and practices.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Teaching and Learning
- Assessment
- Oral and Written Feedback
- Homework
- Religious Education
- Special Educational Needs
- Behaviour
- Safeguarding
- First Aid
- Medical
- Educational Visits
- Forest School
- Code of Conduct

### Relevant legislation or guidance

Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage January 2024

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Annually updated

Early Years Outcomes January 2024

### Glossary

EYFS - Early Years Foundation Stage

EYFSP - Early Years Foundation Stage Profile

ELG - Early Learning Goal

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