



ARNOLD LODGE
4 - 18 yrs Co-educational Independent Day School

Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum Policy

Approved by the Headteacher: September 2018

Reviewed Annually

Next review date: September 2019

This policy is part of a portfolio of policies associated with 'Safeguarding' and must therefore, be read in conjunction with the other policies. All policies are available on the website or in school.



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Introduction

At Arnold Lodge, we believe that every child deserves the best possible start in life in order for them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age 5 have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. A strong parent partnership will provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.

As children join Arnold Lodge, we begin to develop and nurture strong positive attitudes where children become proud and respectful of themselves, others and their environment.

The Early Years Foundation Stage

The overall aims of the EYFS is to help young children achieve the five 'Every Child Matters' outcomes of staying safe, being healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and eventually achieving economic wellbeing.

The EYFS principles which guide the effective work of all practitioners are grouped into four distinct but complementary themes:

- A Unique Child - *every child is a competent learner.*
- Positive Relationships - *children learn to be strong and independent.*
- Enabling Environments - *supporting and extending a child's development.*
- Learning and Development - *3 prime and 4 specific areas of learning and development.*

The seven areas of learning and development are divided into three prime areas and four specific areas: the three prime areas, which are Foundations for Schools readiness and future progress linked with the National Curriculum areas. The three prime areas are:

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

These are then supported by specific areas that strengthen the prime areas. The specific areas are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design¹

The prime areas are time sensitive and need to be in place between 3 and 5 years of age these areas are universal and independent of specific areas. Children cannot master the skills within the specific areas without developing the prime areas. The characteristics of effective learning in the prime and specific areas of learning and development are interconnected. The way in which the child engages with other people and their environment- playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically – underpin learning and development across all areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner.

¹ More information on these areas can be found in Appendix I



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The Unique Child reaches out to relate to people and things through the Characteristics of Effective Learning, which move through all areas of learning.

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically

Learning and Development

We recognise that features of effective teaching and learning in the EYFS are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;
- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS;
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence;
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations;

Play

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They have the opportunity to express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations. We deliver learning for all of the areas through, purposeful play and learning experiences, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

Active Learning

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfactions as they take ownership of their learning.

Creativity and Critical Thinking Children should be given an opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.



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Provision

- We have a team of highly qualified, dedicated, professional and caring Early Years teachers and classroom assistants who plan and work closely together to provide a high quality curriculum.
- We value our parent partnership with an open door policy.
- We have small classes and generous ratios which ensure that the needs of each child are met both academically and emotionally, helping to develop each child's confidence and independence.
- Small classes enable the teacher to provide an individual education planned around the needs and experiences of each child, so that true potential can be nurtured and realized.
- We provide a rich variety of academic, social, artistic, musical and sporting experiences.
- We have welcoming, child friendly and stimulating indoor and outdoor areas.
- Routines are established so that children begin to anticipate and feel confident to take the next step. Pictorial timetables give children the security to know and understand their routines.
- Clearly labelled and easily accessible resources.
- Children feel confident to have a go without the worry of making mistakes.

Transitions between phases and year groups

Effective transitions can be achieved through the following ways:

- Each child has the opportunity to visit the school prior to starting.
- The transition between Nursery and Reception is calm, happy and successful. The move up days at the end of the summer term, encourage a gentle transition between the year groups and gives the Reception staff time to get to know the children, both from our Nursery and those coming from other settings.



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The Cycle of Observation, Planning and Assessment

At Arnold Lodge we hold the individual child at the centre of our planning. This is achieved through detailed observation and assessment. This observation and on-going formative assessment is at the heart of effective early years practise.

Staff achieve this through:

- Observing children as they act and interact in their play, everyday activities, child initiated activities and planned activities, and learning from and sharing with parents about what the child does at home.
- Considering the examples of development as stated in the unique theme: observing what children can do, and identifying the stage on their developmental pathway.
- Considering ways to support the child to strengthen and deepen their current learning and development.
- Considering the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care. This information is then effectively used to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all of the areas of learning and development.

The EYFS requires Arnold Lodge to undertake summative assessments in which staff review children's progress and share a summary with parents at these two stages at the journey in the Foundation Stage:

- In all areas between the ages of 24 and 60 months
- At the end of the EYFS in the EYFS Profile.

Arnold Lodge will carry out a progress check on all children entering the Nursery in all seven areas of learning.

In addition information is shared at parent teacher meeting and in an end of year report.

Progress Checks

The progress checks are a statutory requirement and offer staff, professionals and parents a clear picture of individual children's stage of development. This shared knowledge and understanding benefits all concerned but most importantly, the child. Parent's views and contributions are taken into account and added to the progress check. The progress check is taken from on-going assessment and observations from everyday practice. Arnold Lodge strives to listen to the voice of the child "the child has a right to be listened to and valued in the setting" (EYFS 2012)

Arnold Lodge will provide to all parents a short written summary of a child's development in all seven areas.

Assessment at the end of the EYFS

In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, Arnold Lodge completes the EYFS profile for each child. The profile provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a clear picture of a child's development, knowledge, understanding and abilities, as well as their progress against expected levels. It furthermore prepares Year 1 teachers for individual children's readiness, needs and next steps. The profile will reflect upon the school's on-going observation and relevant records.

The teacher will determine whether the child is meeting the expected levels, exceeding them or below expected levels of development. The child's level of development is assessed against the 17 early learning goals.

All reception children in Arnold Lodge complete a Baseline assessment.



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In compliance with Early Years regulations parents may have access to developmental records about their child e.g. Early Years Foundation Stage Profile, etc.

Equal Opportunities, Inclusion and Special Needs

The Early Years Foundation Stage is taught in accordance with the present policy for Equal Opportunities. Children are encouraged to develop a positive attitude towards people of different ethnic groups, cultures, beliefs, gender and ability. We support the belief that everyone is unique in their own right and act upon it.

- Our curriculum respects a child's ethnic faith and cultural heritage, and the special needs of each child, by ensuring that these areas are covered within our indoor and outdoor activities, circle time and assemblies, visitors, role play, books and positive images.
- We have on our staff an E.F.L teacher and SENCO.
- It is the responsibility of the school to ensure that we identify and help those children in our care with additional educational needs including gifted children.

For further details see Arnold Lodge's "Equality and Diversity" Policy.

Admissions

For further details see Arnold Lodge's "Admissions" Policy.

Further information regarding the EYFS may be found on the DfE website www.education.gov.uk



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Appendix I

The areas of learning and development support, foster, promote and develop children's development:

Prime Areas

1. **Personal, Social and Emotional Development:** crucial for all aspects of life which will give the children the best opportunity for success in all other areas of learning. Each child needs a positive sense of him/herself and respect for others. Involves making relationships, developing self-confidence and self-awareness and managing own feelings and behaviour.
2. **Physical Development:** developing skills involved with moving and handling. Will improve co-ordination, control, manipulation and movement. It helps children to gain confidence and feel positive about being healthy and active. This promotes a positive feeling of well-being, and knowledge of health and self-care.
3. **Communication and Language:** children will develop confidence in listening and attention, understanding and speaking in a variety of settings and purposes.

Specific Areas of Learning

1. **Literacy:** children hear the written word in a variety of contexts and are given a variety of mark making opportunities that start at exploratory mark making to writing recognisable letters. Children will learn to read, using different strategies. They will demonstrate understanding when talking with others about what they have read. Children will use their phonic knowledge to write words in ways which match their spoken sounds. They will then progress to writing simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others.
 2. **Mathematics:** children will develop confidence and competence in learning and using key skills. This includes counting, sorting, matching, seeking patterns, making connections, recognising relationships and working with numbers, shapes, space and measure.
 3. **Understanding the World:** knowledge of people and communities, skills, problem solving, exploring and understanding will help them to make sense of the world. Foundations are developed for Science, Design and Technology, History, Geography and I.C.T.
 4. **Expressive Arts and Design:** exploring and using media and materials is fundamental to successful learning. It enables children to make connections and extend their thoughts, feelings and understanding. It will include art, music, dance, role-play and imaginative activities.
- Planning will take place collaboratively between the teachers and other staff involved in E.Y.F.S. This describes the learning activities linked to objectives and assessment opportunities. The termly medium term plans include learning objectives from all areas of learning. Short term plans are decided on a weekly basis from observations and take into account the current needs of the children.
 - These are focussed on basic skills. Observations on focus children will also provide additional information for assessment purposes. There will also be a timetable showing the activities taking place each day which will be displayed for all staff concerned. The children will be given opportunities to explore and develop learning experiences, which help them to make sense of the world through structured play. They will practice and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They will have opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They will communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.
 - The learning environment is planned for both indoors and outdoors to encourage a positive attitude to learning. The children make their own selection of the activities on offer as this encourages independent learning.