



# AVANTI SCHOOLS TRUST

## **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy - AST**

**October 2020**

***Review date: October 2021***

## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Avanti Schools Trust Statement of Intent for promoting positive behaviour in all Avanti Schools. It supports the Trust's core purpose to help each person become a well – rounded human being through intellectual, moral and spiritual growth, and so make the world a better place.

### The Early Years Foundation Stage

The School believes that every child deserves the best possible start in life in order for them to achieve their full potential. Children develop quickly in the Early Years and their experiences at this stage can have significant impact on their future learning. We aim to create a safe, secure and happy learning environment, developing and nurturing strong positive attitudes for children to become active and engaged learners.

### Introduction

Using the 'Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)' as a building block for our curriculum we will cultivate learning experiences for children to become independent, collaborative and innovative learners.

We aim to provide teaching and learning experiences of the highest quality to help our children make good progress towards and, where appropriate, beyond the early learning goals. While following this curriculum we also aim to respond to the individual needs of our children, their families and the community to secure foundations on which future learning can be built.

The Early Years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- Education Excellence, spiritual insight, character formation (Avanti Way)
- It builds on what children already know and can do;
- It ensures that all children are included regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, special education needs, disability, gender or ability;
- It offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children, and provision that enhances opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
- It provides an equal balance of adult-led and child initiated learning.

The principles which guide the work of all Early Years practitioners are grouped into four themes:

**A Unique Child** - every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

**Positive Relationships** - children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and a key person.

**Enabling Environments** - the environment learnings a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning.

**Learning and Development** - children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates; all areas of learning and development are equally important and inter-connected.

We aim to ensure that children are provided with the knowledge and skills needed to become lifelong learners.

## Curriculum

The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum provides a range of activities and experiences through which children have opportunities to make choices and decisions, manipulate objects and materials and use language for a variety of purposes while receiving appropriate adult support and guidance. There are seven areas of learning and development of which three are 'prime areas' and four are 'specific areas'.

The prime areas are:

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

The specific areas are:

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

## Teaching and Learning

The need and interests of the children, the environment and the time of year are reflected in our planning. We organise the curriculum into topic areas and make connections to all seven areas of learning where possible and referring to long term, medium and short term plans, with the flexibility to change and adapt to children's interest.

The children feel listened to and valued because they contribute to the planning process, which gives them ownership and improves their learning experience. Through learning, children are encouraged to become independent learners as they access the different areas of learning. It is important at this early stage that children are provided with the skills necessary to identify and communicate their needs and wants, look after themselves and their belongings and make choices. This independence helps children to make sense of the world around them and provides them with opportunities to create, investigate and communicate.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage we recognise the features of quality teaching and learning:

- The presence of strong partnerships between teachers and parents
- Teachers understand how children develop and learn and how these variations affect their teaching
- A well planned curriculum which helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals
- Teachers give clear explanations and have clear expectations

- Teachers plan appropriate interventions with support from outside agencies if appropriate
- All practitioners facilitate progression in learning through effective scaffolding.
- A well thought out environment, which allows children to feel safe and confident to communicate/talk about their learning and to develop as independent learners.
- Consistent assessment for Learning
- An underlying ethos of high expectations, praise and encouragement
- Embed the ethos and values of Avanti Schools Trust

### The Learning Environment

The Early Years Foundation Stage classrooms are organised to enable children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, creative and quiet. Each classroom has got clearly defined learning areas where children are able to locate equipment and resources independently. We deliver learning experiences through purposeful learning with a balance of adult initiated and child initiated activities.

### Outdoor Learning

Children will have the opportunity to learn through play outside on a daily basis throughout the year in all kinds of weather. Provision outside should allow children to have the freedom of the outdoors and offer children the opportunity to move on a larger scale, to be active, noisy and messy and to use all their senses with their whole body. Therefore, carefully planned outdoor learning experiences will help all children to find out about themselves and their capabilities. Outdoor learning helps develop self- confidence, independence and lays the foundations for a healthy life. We will ensure that there is a balance of adult-led and child- initiated activities delivered through indoor and outdoor learning. We will monitor equipment so that outdoor and indoor spaces, furniture, equipment and toys, must be safe and suitable for their purpose with appropriate risk assessments carried out.

The role of the lead practitioner outside is crucial in:

- Supporting children's learning through outdoor planned learning activity.
- Extending and supporting children's spontaneous learning
- Planning and resourcing a challenging environment
- Developing children's language and communication in their learning
- Observing children and adapting provision
- Rotas/structures clearly show who is responsible for the setting up and clearing away of outdoor resources
- Practitioners should demonstrate an enjoyment of being outside with the children.
- The provisions outside should show clear links to the planned indoor curriculum and build on children's interests. Weather conditions should be viewed as an opportunity to develop children's learning.
- Children are encourage to assist in tidying up after the morning and afternoon session.
- The outdoor lead practitioners interacts imaginatively with children supporting their spontaneous talk and exploration.

## Observation and Assessment

Formative assessment is at the heart of our Early Years practice. All adults and children will learning a key role in the development of a Learning Journey that will record each child's personal learning story. The evidence collected will not only inform assessment and future planning but will be an invaluable keepsake for our families.

Observations are recorded in a variety of ways; photographs, written notes (short and long observations), children's learning, parent observations and are used to inform teacher assessment which will be shared with parents at different stages of the year. At the end of Reception, a child's Learning Journey will be used to provide evidence for the assessment of whether they are working at a stage which is emerging, expected or exceeding in the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) for the seven areas of learning and development.

Summative reports are given out to parents for their child in both Nursery and Reception at the end of the year to show progress in all seven areas of learning. Characteristics of learning are included in Reception children, which describes the processes of how a child learns in the three main areas: Playing and Exploring, Active Learning and Creating and Thinking Critically.

- Active Learning- children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and they enjoy achieving. 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 satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.
- Playing and Exploring- children investigate and experience in a variety of contexts and they are willing to 'have a go'. Children explore and develop play experiences through learning, which help them make sense of the world. They practice and build up ideas, learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules.
- Creating and thinking critically- children have and develop their own ideas, make links between those ideas and develop strategies for doing things independently. Children are given opportunities to be creative through all areas of learning.

## Monitoring and review

The Principal, Early Years Foundation Stage Progress Leader, and Subject leaders monitor through observations, learning walks and discussions as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

## Inclusion/ Special Educational Needs

All children and their families are valued at the School. Children are treated as individuals and they all have equal access to our daily provision. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best. The broad and differentiated nature of our planning means our plans are flexible enough to meet the needs of all children regardless of disability, ability, race, ethnicity, culture, language, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion or social background. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of that child. Concerns are always discussed with parents at an early stage and the school's Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) or Inclusion Manager is called upon for further information and advice from external agencies.

In order to accommodate the individual's particular learning style, lessons will be planned, wherever possible, in a multi-sensory way so that the various activities will cater for all pupils in the spirit of inclusion.

### Key Person System:

A key person is a member of staff in an Early Years Foundation Stage who has special responsibility for the education and welfare of a particular group of children during their time at the centre. Every child attending the School is assigned a key person. The primary aim of the key person system is to provide close relationships between the practitioner and the child for whom the key person is responsible for, and the parents of those children in order to assist the development of the children.

### Key person:

- Develop secure trusting relationships with key children and their parents/carers.
- Provide a secure base for your key children by supporting their interests and explorations away from you.
- Provide a secure base for your key children by being physically and emotionally available to them.
- Comfort distressed children by acknowledging their feelings, offering explanations and reassurances calmly and gently.
- Acknowledge and allow children to express a range of feelings.
- Settle new key children into the setting.
- Settle key children and where possible eat with them in small groups.

### Key person responsibilities include:

- Keeping records of key children's developmental progress, contributing observations to records kept by colleagues and sharing records with parents.
- Observing key children and analyzing the information gathered through observation.
- Planning and evaluating learning experiences for individual children based on observations of their interests and developmental stages.

- Contributing in writing individual education plans and reports for key children with special educational needs.
- Communicating with parents on a daily basis wherever possible.

### Safeguarding

The EYFS Leader must hold a Level 3 qualification with all other staff holding a Level 2 or equivalent qualification. All staff must adhere to Avanti School Trust Safeguarding Policy and refer all areas of concern to the named Designated Safeguarding Lead. We have clear procedures for assessing risk, which includes procedures for keeping children safe during outings and for many aspects of the environment, or provision that may require a further risk assessment. In addition to this, appropriate risk assessments are conducted in the Early Years Foundation Stage. (See Annex 1)

### Transition

Transitions are carefully planned for acknowledging the child's needs. We aim to establish effective partnerships with those involved with each child in order to provide the best support.

### Parents as Partners (Move to after teaching and learning)

Parents and carers have an important role to play in the education of their child. We strive to create and maintain partnerships with parents from the outset as we recognise that together we can have a significant impact on a child's learning. We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate in their child's education and care as parents are children's first and most enduring educators. At the School we develop longstanding caring, respectful, professional relationships with our children and their families.

There are many opportunities for parents to become involved in their child's learning. These include:-

- Talking to parents and carers about their child before their child starts
- Visits by the teacher to children in their home setting prior to them starting
- Opportunities are given to the children to spend time with their teacher before starting
- Inviting all parents and carers to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts
- Offering parents and carers regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our reception class
- Encouraging parents and carers to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns
- Offering a range of activities, throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, academy and parents/carers
- Providing various activities that involve parents and carers (e.g. regular communication with home through the child's academy diary/link books, and inviting parents and carers to curriculum evenings, in order to discuss the kind of work that the children are undertaking).

Individual schools may feel they need a Transition policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- EYFS Behavior Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- SEN Policy

## YEARS Risk Assessment Check list

	Week Starting        /        /				
	Please clearly initial every day				
	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
Electrical Sockets Covered					
No trailing wires/cables					
No hazardous substances/equipment					
Toilet area clean					
Boundaries/Gates secure					
Fire exits not obstructed					
Flooring has no slip/trip hazards					
Water/Sand play supervised					
Toys/equipment/furniture not damaged					
External Area free from animal excrement					
Outside play equipment secure/supervised					
Doors, windows, glass					
Knives/sharp equipment out of reach					
Paediatric first aider on premises					
Handling materials and equipment.					
Child collection good practice in place					
Climbing frame					