ALDER COPPICE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Achievement through Commitment

EYFS Policy

Policy for the Attention of			
Audience	***Key Audience***	***Optional Audience***	***Additional/Notes***
Senior Leadership Team	✔		
Teachers	✔		
Teaching Assistants	✔		
Administrative Staff	✔		
Curriculum Support	✔		
Lunchtime Supervisors	✔		
Site Manager	✔		
Cleaners	✔		
Governors	✔		
Parents	✔		
Website	✔		
Local Authority		✔	

Policy Updated – Spring 2026 ~ Review Date – Spring 2029

Introduction

This EYFS Policy for Alder Coppice Primary School provides a comprehensive view of the School's Early Years Foundation Stage provision, emphasizing the significance of early childhood education and care. As stated in the Government framework; "Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years, and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances." Meeting the individual needs of all children lies at the heart of the Early Years Foundation Stage. At Alder Coppice we deliver personalised learning, development and care to help children get the best possible start to life.

Principles

At Alder Coppice we are guided by the following principles:

- Every child is a unique individual, constantly learning and capable of resilience, confidence, and self-assuredness
- Positive relationships with caring adults foster children's independence
- Enabling environments tailored to individual needs, with strong practitioner-parent partnerships, support children's development
- Acknowledging that children learn and develop at varying rates, including those with special educational needs and disabilities

Implementation of EYFS Principles

At Alder Coppice we:

- Adopt a key person approach, promoting close relationships with individual children
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment, both indoors and outdoors
- Offer a balanced curriculum which reflects the School’s aims and ethos, providing a stimulating and enjoyable education that fosters curiosity, independent thinking, imagination and creativity
- Plan challenging and enjoyable learning experiences based on each child's unique needs, informed by observation, assessment, and the child's interests
- Encourage children to engage in activities initiated by both adults and children
- Work in partnership with parents and with the wider community
- Cultivate a thoughtful attitude in pupils towards their immediate and wider environment
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring the inclusion and support of all pupils

The Early Years Curriculum

We design an engaging and challenging curriculum by focusing on the Prime and Specific Areas of learning from the Statutory Framework for Early Years. This curriculum is continually reviewed and enhanced based on our observations of the children's needs, interests, and stages of development.

The statutory early learning goals are organised into seven areas of learning and establish expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

Prime Areas of Learning

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.

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.

Communication and Language 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.

Specific Areas of Learning

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

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

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 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.

The Characteristics of Effective Learning

The Characteristics of Effective Learning are an integral part of our approach, guiding us in our teaching methods to meet the unique needs and interests of each child. We believe that by nurturing these characteristics, we set our children on a path towards becoming enthusiastic, lifelong learners who are not afraid to explore, experiment, and think critically.

1.Playing and exploring

- Investigating and Discovering: Children are natural explorers from birth, driven by a profound curiosity about their world. We encourage them to investigate and experience, fostering an environment where their innate sense of wonder can thrive.
- Engaging with What They Know: Children love to play with what they know. We believe in building upon their existing knowledge and experiences to spark their enthusiasm for learning.
- Willingness to Experiment: At this stage, we embrace a culture of "having a go." We celebrate experimentation and understand that learning often involves making mistakes and learning from them.

2. Active Learning

- Persistence: We cultivate a mindset of persistence, teaching children to keep trying even when they encounter difficulties. Through this characteristic, we instil the value of resilience and determination.
- Engagement and Concentration: Active learning hinges on a child's motivation and their ability to concentrate on tasks. We create stimulating environments that keep children engaged, excited, and focused on their learning journey.
- Celebrating Achievements: In the EYFS, we believe in celebrating every achievement, both big and small. We understand that every step towards a goal is significant, and we encourage children to take pride in their accomplishments.

3. Creating and Thinking Critically

- Developing Unique Ideas: We promote the development of individual ideas and encourage children to express their creativity. Our children are empowered to think outside the box and innovate.
- Establishing Connections: We emphasize the importance of making connections between ideas and concepts. Children are encouraged to think critically and develop a deep understanding of the world by recognizing relationships and patterns.
- Exploring Diverse Approaches: We provide children with diverse opportunities to approach tasks and problems. Through various forms of play, including role-play, construction, and artistic activities, they can explore alternative approaches to different situations.

Play

Play underpins all development and learning for young children and at Alder Coppice we are proud that our EYFS curriculum is delivered through play. It is through play that our little learners develop intellectually, creatively, physically, socially and emotionally. The skills children develop through play help them to thrive long after their school days and empower them to become lifelong creative learners. Providing thoughtfully planned play experiences centred on children's spontaneous play, both indoors and outdoors, is an important way in which our staff support children to learn with enjoyment and challenge. Children independently access the continuous provision of our Early Years' environment, taking the lead in their learning. In addition, the Early Years team devise plans for 'Independent Play', enhanced provision linked to our projects or interest expressed by the children.

Our Learning Environments

We believe that a rich learning environment acts as the 'third teacher'. Children are active participants in their own learning, and their surroundings play a pivotal role in facilitating their growth and development. Our Nursery and Reception are organized to support the Prime and Specific Areas of learning and encourage independent and collaborative exploration. Children learn to care for their environment and manage their resources. The space is designed to be adaptable and to provide our children with a stimulating, engaging, and supportive space where they can develop their skills and understanding. Skilled adult interaction is a crucial component of our rich learning environments. Practitioners are responsive to children's interests and needs, supporting their learning through observation, scaffolding, and facilitating learning experiences.

Inclusion

At Alder Coppice we value all our pupils as individuals, irrespective of their backgrounds, abilities, or cultural diversity. We provide support and additional resources for those with special educational needs and create an inclusive, diverse learning environment. The Early Years team work closely with the School's SENDCo to facilitate early identification and intervention and ensure provision is appropriate. Children on our SEND register have a personalised support plan that it reviewed termly which works on children's individual targets.

Observation and Assessment

We use ongoing observational assessment to track pupils' progress, understand their needs, and tailor activities and targeted support. The children have a Learning Journey where observations and WOW moments are collated that build up a picture of a child's progress and time with us.

Pupils are assessed against the government baseline in September when they join us then at the end of the first half-term and every end of term after that against Development Matters to monitor progress and attainment. In the Summer Term children in Reception are assessed against the government's Early Learning Goals (ELG). Every 6 weeks children in Reception are also assessed using our Little Wandle Phonics programme to track progress, plan for intervention and identify barriers.

A formal report is provided at the end of the academic year covering the Prime and Specific Areas.

Transition
Transition is carefully planned for at Alder Coppice. We recognize the importance of a smooth transition into Nursery and are committed to providing a series of opportunities for new children and their parents to familiarize themselves with the Nursery team and setting before the children start with us. We offer induction sessions prior to a start date where children and families can join us in setting. We also understand that starting school is a significant step for both children and parents, we aim to establish a strong foundation of trust and communication from the outset. We do this through parent meetings and induction sessions. The transition to Year 1 where children move from the Early Years curriculum to National Curriculum is then planned carefully with liaison between teachers, visits and parents' meetings. Teaching staff meet to discuss each child and share their ELG outcomes to support planning for learning in Year 1. Year 1 teachers are familiar with the EYFS and likewise EYFS teachers are familiar with the KS1 curriculum.

Partnership
We value strong relationships with our families. We encourage parents to actively participate in their child's education at home and at school. Parents in Reception are asked to regularly read with their child during the school week and support their Phonics learning.

Throughout the Year
- A relaxed drop off and pick up that enables families to chat to staff
- Regular updates on children's progress through informal catch-ups at drop-off and pick-up times, and a amore formal opportunity during stay and play.
- Termly 'Stay and Play' sessions where families are invited to join us for a session to share their child's experience of Nursery and Reception.
- Workshops aimed at equipping parents with strategies to support their child's learning at home
- Regularly updated Teams page to share and celebrate life in Reception.

We also work with external services and organisations to meet the needs of our pupils. We regularly welcome community representatives into school (librarian, nurse, vet etc…) to enrich our curriculum.

Safeguarding and Welfare
The safeguarding and welfare of our pupils is paramount. The EYFS Phase Leader is the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, and we have stringent policies, procedures, and measures in place to ensure the children's safety and well-being. Pupils are taught and supported to make safe choices, assess risks, and protect themselves. (For further details please see the Health and Safety Policy and the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy).

Paediatric First Aid
Named EYFS staff hold recognized Paediatric First Aid certificates, renewing their training every three years, as required by the Statutory Framework.

Current holders: Miss M Woodward, Miss A Millinchip & Mrs L Flavell.

Ratios
We ensure that pupils are adequately supervised, and we meet the adult-to-child ratios specified in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (September 2026).

Nursery Governor Led Provision (per support staff)	1:8
Reception (per teacher)	1:30

Staff Supervision
EYFS staff receive supervision which provides support, coaching and training and promotes the interests of pupils. Supervision fosters a culture of mutual support, teamwork, and continuous improvement, which encourages the confidential discussion of sensitive issues. It also provides further opportunities for staff to discuss any issues particularly concerning pupil development and well-being.

EYFS Link Governor – Mrs D Johnson

Monitoring and Review
The EYFS priorities, staff training needs, and the School's EYFS part of the School Improvement Plan are regularly reviewed and monitored to ensure the effective implementation of the Early Years curriculum and principles. The EYFS Phase Leader carries out monitoring of the department as part of the whole School monitoring. Whole-school policies equally apply to the EYFS, as they incorporate the mandatory requirements.