



Ark John Keats Academy

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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1. NURSERY AND RECEPTION

The Early Years at Ark John Keats Academy provides the foundation for all future learning. We aim to give children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provides the right foundation for excellent future progress through the academy and life. To ensure this, learning and development opportunities are planned around the needs and interests of each child and are assessed and reviewed regularly. Ark Nursery and Reception classes are defined by the structured teaching that occurs within the contexts of whole class, small group and 1:1 teaching and within opportunities for adult and child directed learning in stimulating, well-resourced indoor and outdoor environments. With a focus on the prime areas of learning within Nursery, we ensure that pupils move into Reception with a sound basis for continued learning and are ready to develop the specific areas more fully.

In Early Years at Ark John Keats we put a great emphasis on the Characteristics of Effective Learners. We believe that children will develop independence, resilience and perseverance through playing and exploring, being active learners, creating and thinking critically. Therefore, enabling children to problem solve and develop their own strategies for doing things.

It is the adult's role to teach, support, stimulate and extend children's learning through initiating and extending experiences and interacting skillfully and sensitively with children to scaffold, support and enhance learning.

We have developed a specific Early Years curriculum taking full account of the requirement of the statutory Early Years Statutory Framework (2017), which combines the development of personal, social and emotional skills, physical development and opportunities for enriching communication and language. This is done through child-initiated learning and a broad and exciting curriculum with daily phonics, mathematics and literacy sessions.

At Ark John Keats we have made the exciting decision to become Early Adopters of the New Framework for the Early Years Foundation stage. This will be mandatory for all schools from September 2021, and we are seizing the opportunity to be ahead of the game and begin this year. This New development Matters has been updated to include areas more relevant to the children of our times such as learning about people and our community, oral health, self-care and healthy eating, self-regulation, understanding our world, placing a greater emphasis on reading for pleasure and developing a love of books, learning about number and shape at a greater depth, and exploring a wider variety of ways that children can develop their creative skills.

We feel that by beginning this new framework this year, we will be fully prepared when it becomes statutory and will have created environments and curriculums that inspire and

motivate children to succeed in these areas.

2. AIMS

We aim to meet each child's needs by:

- a. Developing the whole child - their health, both physical and mental, their feelings, thinking and spiritual development.
- b. Ensuring each child has the opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding to achieve success and to build a thirst for, and commitment to, lifelong learning.
- c. Teaching the foundations of reading, writing and maths that will develop core skills and also enable access to the wider curriculum.
- d. Providing a stimulating environment, indoors and out, providing many opportunities for children to be curious, ask questions and to be eager to discover and learn.
- e. Providing opportunities and time for children to pursue their own interests and time to interact, take turns, negotiate, compromise and share with others.
- f. Providing opportunities for each child to make choices and decisions to develop their independence.
- g. Providing multi-cultural experiences including resources and stories which reflect different cultures and values.
- h. Creating a highly purposeful atmosphere, where teachers can focus on teaching and high quality interactions, and pupils on learning.

3. WHAT CHILDREN LEARN

Curriculum content is planned in seven areas of learning and development.

3.1. Three **Prime** Areasⁱⁱ:

- a. **Communication and Language** – The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children develop skills and confidence in speaking, understanding and listening in a range of situations.
- b. **Physical Development** – Physical activity is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives. Gross and fine motor experiences develop incrementally throughout early childhood. Children develop their co-ordination, control, and movement through being active.
- c. **Personal, Social and Emotional Development** – PSED is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Within clear boundaries children form positive relationships, develop social skills and respect for others and understand appropriate behaviour.

3.2. Four **Specific** Areas:

- a. **Literacy** – through the daily phonics lesson (Read, Write Inc.) children link sounds and letters and begin to read and write. In addition there is a daily literacy lesson as well as regular opportunities for story telling, through well-loved books, story sacks and Helicopter stories. Fine motor skills development and handwriting are also continually taught and practised.
- b. **Mathematics** – through the daily maths lesson (Maths Mastery?), this includes short chunks of whole class teaching and focused maths experiences, and Maths Meetings which include conversations about numbers, ‘everyday’ maths, shape awareness and oral rehearsal of number sequences and patterns.
- c. **Understanding the World** – finding out about people, places, our own locality, cultures and the environment. We also love to develop an awareness and understanding of various beliefs and traditions throughout the school year, celebrating ourselves, our families and our community.
- d. **Expressive Arts and Design** – exploring a wide range of media and sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology. Weekly music sessions take place and singing and movement occurs regularly throughout the school day in EYFS.

4. HOW CHILDREN LEARN

4.1. Children learn throughⁱⁱⁱ:

- a. Playing and exploring.
- b. Learning actively.
- c. Creating and thinking critically.

4.2. Teachers make professional judgments about the balance between activities led or guided by adults and those led by children. At ARK John Keats Academy we emphasise rigour and structure in all activities to ensure meaningful educational and developmental outcomes for every child.

4.3. **Adult directed activities** are those which are directed by the adult and can be useful in the teaching of specific knowledge or skills such as introducing a new topic, new skill or demonstrating how to use tools or equipment. In Ark John Keats Academy Reception classes, daily teaching of literacy and maths is from the outset and is a key part of our curriculum.

4.4. **Child-initiated experiences**^{iv} take place within an enabling and well thought through environment but will be wholly decided upon by the child, based on the child’s own motivation and where child initiated activities are deeply encouraged Children have opportunities every day to explore their environment, both indoor and outdoor, in an unstructured way. Providing them with time to seek out and use the resources in an imaginative and independent way, collaborating with their peers and following their

interests.

5. ENVIRONMENTS

- 5.1. Children have daily access to well-planned stimulating learning environments, indoors and outdoors. These environments give children opportunities to be active and physical and also quiet and reflective. Each classroom has sufficient chairs and tables for each child to be seated at the same time, when appropriate, and also carpeted areas for children to engage in activities. There will be periods of time each day when the whole class will be engaged in learning activities at their tables thus class teaching is gradually introduced and developed throughout the Reception year.
- 5.2. The Early Years environment - inside and outside - is viewed as a whole, providing different areas where resources, materials and activities are freely and easily accessible.
- 5.3. The areas of learning in the environment should include:
 - a. Role play area.
 - b. Book area.
 - c. Graphics or mark making area.
 - d. Mathematical area.
 - e. Construction area.
 - f. Small world area.
 - g. Music area.
 - h. Creative area.
 - i. Malleable area.
 - j. ICT area.
 - k. Sand/water areas (currently restricted due to Covid 19).
- 5.4. It is important to develop learning opportunities outside because outdoor learning provides opportunities for: the acquisition of gross motor skills, taking risks, fostering a love of nature and the environment, large play which is not possible indoors, learning experiences suited to the outdoor environment and physical fitness. It also helps to develop a greater understanding of the world and enables children to actively learn with their peers, challenge themselves and develop their play.

6. ASSESSMENTS

- 6.1. Assessment plays an important part in helping teachers recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and plan activities and support. Ongoing assessment (formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process.
- 6.2. Assessment is based on ongoing observation and 1:1 assessment which records the progress each child is making from a baseline on entry. All staff contribute to the

observations and an individual profile is built up over the year to inform the EYFS Profile which is the statutory assessment at the end of the reception year.

- 6.3. The class teacher makes regular summative assessments throughout the Nursery and Reception Year across all aspects of learning and development and tracks children's progress in each aspect of the three prime areas and each aspect of the specific areas (17 aspects in all)
- a. **On entry teacher Baseline assessment (CEM assessment**– completed during the first week). Every child of Reception age (4-5 years) should complete a standardised baseline assessment within his/her first 6 weeks of education in the UK. In order to support the objectiveness of our assessment we use EExAT. Ark schools repeat the assessment at the end of the Reception year to review progress.
 - b. **Term one** – end of Autumn Term summary.
 - c. **Term two** – end of Spring Term summary.
 - d. **Term three** – Early Years Foundation Stage Profile^v to be completed in June.
- 6.4. Data for on entry and termly summative assessments is analysed by Ark central office, using judgments made using the agreed formula^{vi} (See table 1).

Months	Level	Numerical Conversion
22-36	Emerging	Em
	Expected	Exp
	Exceeding	Exc
30-50	Emerging	Em
	Expected	Exp
	Exceeding	Exc
40-60	Emerging	Em
	Expected	Exp
	Exceeding	Exc

Table 1 – Formula for entry and termly summative assessment data

7. EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE PROFILE

- 7.1. The level of progress children are expected to attain by the end of the Reception Year is defined by 17 early learning goals.^{vii}
- 7.2. By the end of June, each child’s level of development is assessed against the 17 early learning goals (ELG). Teachers indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development (or if they are exceeding expected levels), or not yet reaching expected levels (‘emerging’). (See table 2)

Assessment Rating	EYFS Judgement
1	Emerging
2	Expected
A	Not assessed <i>Long absence, late arrival in summer term etc.</i>

Table 2 – EYFS judgement and scores to assess the child’s level of development

- 7.3. There are 17 ELGs. A child can therefore score a **minimum** of 17 points, or a **maximum** of 51 points. The national measure will be the average of every child’s total point score.

7.4. **Proposed measure for ‘good level of development’ (GLD):**

- 7.4.1. Children will be defined as having reached a good level of development at the end of the EYFS if they achieve at least the ‘expected’ (i.e. a score of ‘2’) in the ELGs for both the Prime areas (PSED, PD and CL) and the 2 Specific areas (Literacy and Maths)

The final 17 Early Learning Goals (ELGs) are:

Communication and Language

Listening, Attention and Understanding ELG

Speaking ELG

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Self-Regulation ELG

Managing Self ELG
Building Relationships ELG
Physical Development
Gross Motor Skills ELG
Fine Motor Skills ELG
Literacy
Comprehension ELG
Word Reading ELG
Writing ELG
Mathematics
Number ELG
Numerical Patterns ELG

These ELGs are not part of the final GLD:

Understanding the World
Past and Present ELG
People, Culture and Communities ELG
The Natural World ELG
Expressive Arts and Design
Creating with Materials ELG
Being Imaginative and Expressive ELG

- 7.5. This is the EYFS Profile. Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. These inform a dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs to assist with the planning of lessons in Year 1.

8. EQUALITY IMPACT STATEMENT

We will do all we can to ensure that this policy does not discriminate, directly or indirectly. We shall do this through regular monitoring and evaluation of our policies. On review we shall assess and consult relevant stakeholders on the likely impact of our policies on the promotion of all aspects of equality, as laid down in the Equality Act (2010). This will include, but not necessarily be limited to: race; gender; sexual orientation; disability; ethnicity; religion; cultural beliefs and pregnancy/maternity. We will use an appropriate Equality Impact Assessment to monitor the impact of all our policies and the policy may be amended as a result of this assessment.

9. REFERENCE

ⁱ Positive relationships Statutory Framework P6 1.9

Practitioners **must** respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

ⁱⁱ Prime and Specific Areas Statutory Framework P4 1.4 and 1.5:

The areas of learning and development

There are seven areas of learning and development that **must** shape educational programmes in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These three areas, the **prime** areas, are:

- communication and language;
- physical development; and
- personal, social and emotional development.

Providers **must** also support children in four **specific** areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

- literacy;
- mathematics;
- understanding the world;
- expressive arts and design.

ⁱⁱⁱ Characteristics of effective teaching and learning Statutory Framework P6 1.11:

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners **must** reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- **playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- **active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements; and
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

A full definition from Draft STA EYFSP handbook 2013, P28

Child initiated learning is defined as^{iv}: The action of a child choosing to extend, repeat or explore an activity. This activity may or may not have been introduced or prompted by an adult. It is the child's innovation within or of the activity which is important and relevant to child initiation. An adult may be present and may be supportive but not directive. For example an adult may be supporting the child to realise an idea by providing necessary resources, or by engaging in thought provoking conversation. Child initiated activity and exploration provides an important insight into the depth of a child's learning. When learning is fully mastered the child is able to and is motivated to employ that learning unprompted.

^v Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Statutory Framework P11 2.6 – 2.11

2.6 In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, and no later than 30 June in that term, the EYFS Profile must be completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year The Profile must reflect:

ongoing observation; all relevant records held by the setting; discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

2.7 Each child's level of development must be assessed against the early learning goals (see Section 1). Practitioners must indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are exceeding expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). This is the EYFS Profile.

2.8 Year 1 teachers must be given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning (see 1.10). These should inform a dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assist with the planning of activities in Year 1.

Progress tracked across 11 aspects (baseline). Each child's data will look like this:

Prime Areas			Specific Areas		
PSED	PD	C & L	L	M	
Building Relationships	Self-Regulation	Managing self	Gross Motor Skills	Fine Motor Skills	
Listening, Attention & Understanding	Reading Writing	Numbers	Speaking	Comprehension	Word
				Numerical Patterns	

^{vi} **Progress tracked across 17 aspects (end of autumn term onwards). Each child's data will look like this:**

Prime Areas			Specific Areas			
PSED	PD	C & L	L	M	UTW	EA & D
Building Relationships	Self-Regulation	Managing self	Gross Motor Skills	Fine Motor Skills		
Listening, Attention & Understanding	Reading Writing	Numbers	Speaking	Comprehension	Word	
				Numerical Patterns		
People, Culture & Communities	The Natural World	Past & Present	Creating with Materials	Being Imaginative & Expressive		

^{vii} **Early Learning Goals Statutory Framework 2020 P11**