



ARAGON PRIMARY SCHOOL **EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY**

PURPOSE OF STUDY

Aragon provides the highest quality care and education for all our children, thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning. We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent. We value the individual child and work alongside parents and others to meet their needs and help every child to reach their full potential.

As outlined in the Early Years Statutory Framework (2017), "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 the age of five have a major impact on their future life chances."

AIMS

We adhere to the Statutory Framework of the EYFS and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings.

- **A Unique Child;** every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- **Positive Relationships;** children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships
- **Enabling Environments;** children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners, parents and carers
- **Learning and Development;** children develop and learn in different ways. The framework covers education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities

TEACHING AND LEARNING

At Aragon we provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven areas of learning, using play as the vehicle for learning. We also provide early intervention for those children who require additional support. We create and plan for challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment. We believe an education in EYFS means a child centred education; as a result of this we provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are both child-initiated and adult-initiated.

At Aragon we value the importance of outdoor play and we are extremely lucky to have a new Early Years Outside Area, where we provide a safe, secure and challenging learning environment. Our outside area is richly resourced with purposefully planned play experiences, allowing children to explore new concepts, develop a range of new skills and take calculated risks. Children have access to this outside area on a daily basis, regardless of the weather as we believe that being outdoors supports the development of children's social, emotional and physical wellbeing.

Foundation Stage Curriculum

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve and exceed the early learning goals.

All the seven 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 are the **prime** areas:

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

Children are also supported through the 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

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which children explore, think creatively and are active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

As a team, we write long term and medium term plans using the EYFS based on a series of topics each of which offers experiences in all seven areas. These plans then inform our short-term weekly planning, alongside our observations, which remains flexible for unplanned circumstances or children's responses.

Practitioners working with the youngest children in Nursery will focus strongly on the three prime areas, which are the basis for successful learning in the other four specific areas. The three prime areas reflect the key skills and capacities all children need to develop and learn effectively, and become ready for school. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as the children move through the Early Years at Aragon and grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

Children have whole group and small group times which increase as they progress through the EYFS with times for a daily phonics session, teaching aspects of Mathematics and Literacy, including shared reading and writing.

We firmly believe that every child should develop a love of reading through an engaging and broad curriculum. Reading is prioritised in Early Years through the delivery of our daily phonics lessons following the Letters and Sounds document starting in Nursery and continuing through to Reception, but also through the ample opportunities given to our children to reinforce and apply key phonic skills across the curriculum. Phonics is taught in short, briskly paced sessions that are multi-sensory, encompassing simultaneous visual, auditory and kinaesthetic activities to enliven core learning.

The curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the EYFS.

'Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities'

We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are planned by the adults. During children's play, Early Years practitioners interact to stretch and challenge children further.

In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice.

We create a stimulating environment to encourage children to free-flow between inside and out.

OBSERVATION AND ASSESSMENT

As part of our daily practice we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform our future plans. We record our observations in a variety of ways. Everyone is encouraged to contribute and discussions take place. Significant observations of children's achievements are collated in their own online personal learning journey.

Within the final term of Reception, we provide the parent's with a report based on their child's development against each of the Early Learning Goals and the characteristics of their learning. The parents are then given the opportunity to discuss these judgements with the Reception teacher in preparation for Year 1.

INCLUSION

We value all our children as individuals at Aragon, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meets the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace so that most of our children achieve and even exceed the Early Learning Goals. We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so, work closely with parents and outside agencies.

Date: 5th February 2020