



# Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

## PURPOSE

This Policy outlines Ark's approach to education and delivery in the early years foundation stage.

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Type of policy:	<input type="checkbox"/> Network-wide <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tailored by school	Approval:	Management Team
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## POSITIONING WITHIN ARK OPERATIONAL MODEL

Component	Element
<input type="checkbox"/> Strategic Leadership & Planning <input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring, Reporting & Data <input type="checkbox"/> Governance & Accountabilities <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching & Learning <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Curriculum & Assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Culture, Ethos & Wellbeing <input type="checkbox"/> Pathways & Enrichment <input type="checkbox"/> Parents & Community <input type="checkbox"/> Finance, IT & Estates <input type="checkbox"/> Our People	Curriculum Model

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## 1 THE RECEPTION YEAR

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The Reception Year in Ark schools provides the foundation for all future learning. We aim to give children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for excellent future progress through school 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. Adults respond to each child's needs and interests, guiding development through warm, positive interactions in stimulating, well-resourced indoor and outdoor environments.<sup>1</sup>

In the Reception Year 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 which combines the development of personal, social and emotional skills, opportunities for child initiated learning and a broad curriculum with daily mathematics and literacy sessions.

## 2 AIMS

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We aim to meet each child's needs by:

- caring for the whole child, their health, both physical and mental, their feelings, thinking and spiritual development
- ensuring each child has the opportunity to develop the skills, knowledge and understanding to achieve success and to build a thirst for lifelong learning
- teaching the foundations of reading, writing and maths that will develop basic skills and also enable access to the wider curriculum
- 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
- providing opportunities and time for children to pursue their own interests and time to interact and share with others
- providing opportunities for each child to make choices and decisions to develop their independence
- providing multi-cultural experiences including resources and stories which reflect different cultures and values
- creating a purposeful atmosphere, where teachers can focus on teaching and pupils on learning

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

### 3.1 Three **Prime** Areas<sup>2</sup>:

- a **Communication and Language** – children develop skills and confidence in speaking and listening in a range of situations.
- b **Physical Development** – children develop their co-ordination, control, and movement through being active.
- c **Personal, Social and Emotional Development** – within clear boundaries children form positive relationships, develop social skills and respect for others and understand appropriate behaviour.

### Four **Specific** Areas

- **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 and planned opportunities for guided reading. Fine motor skills development and handwriting are also formally taught and practised.
- **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 number, ‘everyday’ maths and oral rehearsal of number sequences and patterns.
- **Understanding the World** – finding out about people, places, technology and the environment.
- **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.

## 4 HOW CHILDREN LEARN

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- 4.1 Children learn through<sup>3</sup>:
- 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. This balance shifts towards more activities led by adults as children move towards Year 1.<sup>4</sup>
- a. **Adult directed activities** are those which are directed by the adult and can be useful in the teaching of specific skills such as demonstrating how to use tools or equipment. In Ark Reception classes, daily teaching of literacy and maths starts from the outset and is a key part of our curriculum.
  - b. **Adult guided activities** are those which the adult initiates. These activities are often playful or experiential. They are open ended and should motivate a keen interest in learning.
  - c. **Child-initiated experiences<sup>5</sup>** take place within an environment the adult has set up and planned but will be wholly decided upon by the child, based on the child's own motivation and remains under the child's control.

## 5 ENVIRONMENTS

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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.

- 5.1 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.
- 5.2 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. Investigation area linked to our world
  - f. Construction area
  - g. Small world area
  - h. Music area
  - i. Creative area
  - j. Malleable area
  - k. ICT area
  - l. Sand/water areas

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.

## 6 PROGRESSION AND ATTAINMENT MODEL

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### Attainment

#### Reception

<b>% of pupils achieving a 'Good' level of development</b> <i>(i.e. pupils achieving expected level in the ELGs in prime areas + mathematics and literacy)</i>		
<b>Total average point score</b> <i>(i.e. all 17 ELGs)</i>		
	<b>Expected +</b>	<b>Exceeding</b>
Reading		
Writing		
Numbers		
Shape, Space & Measures		

#### Nursery

	<b>Emerging at 40-60+ Months</b> <i>(i.e. 5e on Ark EY Scale)</i>
All Prime Areas of Learning (CLL, PD, PSED), Literacy & Mathematics	

## Progress

On-entry attainment		Expected progress	Expected attainment: end of Reception
<i>Below expectation</i>	<40-60 Months		
<i>At expectation</i>	40-60 Months		
<i>Above expectation</i>	40-60 Months/ELG		

## 7 RECORDING AND REPORTING

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Assessment recording includes Learning Journey books to which adults in the academy, parents and children contribute.

Parents receive a written report twice a year to provide information on progress and attainment in relation to Outcomes and the Early Learning Goals.

## 8 ASSESSMENT<sup>6</sup>

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- 8.1 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.
- 8.2 Assessment is based on ongoing observation which records the progress each child is making from a baseline on entry. All staff contribute to the observations and an individual child profile is built up over the year which informs the EYFS Profile which is the statutory assessment at the end of the reception year.
- 8.3 The class teacher (key person)<sup>7</sup> makes regular summative assessments throughout the 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)
- On entry assessment** – completed during the first week.  
*For baseline assessment all 17 ELGs are assessed*
  - Term one** – end of Autumn Term summary.
  - Term two** – end of Spring Term summary.
  - Term three** – Early Years Foundation Stage Profile<sup>8</sup> to be completed by 30<sup>th</sup> June.
- 8.4 Data for on entry and termly summative assessments is analysed by Ark central office, using judgments made using the agreed formula<sup>9</sup> (See table 2).

Months	Level	Numerical Conversion
8-20	Emerging	1e
	Secure	1s
16-26	Emerging	2e
	Secure	2s
22-36	Emerging	3e
	Secure	3s
30-50	Emerging	4e
	Secure	4s
40-60+	Emerging	5e
	Secure	5s
ELG	Secure	6s
	Exceeding	6x

*Table 2 – Formula for entry and termly summative assessment data*

## 9 EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE PROFILE

- 9.1 The level of progress children are expected to attain by the end of the Reception Year is defined by 17 early learning goals.<sup>10</sup>
- 9.2 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 3)

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

*Table 3 – EYFS judgement and scores to assess the child's level of development*



- 9.3 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.
- 9.4 **Proposed measure for 'good level of development':**
- 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:
- a All three prime areas (PSED, PD and Communication and Language) – there are eight ELGs across the three prime areas.
  - b The specific areas of Literacy and Mathematics – there are four ELGs across these two areas: reading, writing, numbers and shape, space and measures.
- 9.5 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 activities in Year 1.

## 10 EQUALITY IMPACT STATEMENT

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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.

## 11 REFERENCES

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**1 - 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.

### **2 - 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; and
  - expressive arts and design.

### **3 - 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.

#### **4 - Balance between activities led or guided by adults and those led by children Statutory Framework P6 1.9:**

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Each area of learning and development **must** be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play, which is guided by adults. There is an ongoing judgement to be made by practitioners about the balance between activities led by children, and activities led or guided by adults.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1.

### **5 - A full definition from Draft STA EYFSP handbook 2013, P28**

Child initiated learning is defined as<sup>5</sup>: 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.

### **6 - Assessment Statutory Framework P10 2.1 and 2.2**

2.1 Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support. Ongoing assessment (also known as formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process. It involves practitioners observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations. In their interactions with children, practitioners should respond to their own day-to-day observations about children's progress, and observations that parents and carers share.

2.2 Assessment should not entail prolonged breaks from interaction with children, nor require excessive paperwork. Paperwork should be limited to that which is absolutely necessary to promote children's successful learning and development. Parents and/or carers should be kept up-to-date with their child's progress and development. Practitioners should address any learning and development needs.

## **7 - Key Person Statutory Framework P7 1.11**

1.11 Each child **must** be assigned a key person (also a safeguarding and welfare requirement – P18, 3.26). Providers must inform parents and/or carers of the name of the key person, and explain their role, when a child starts attending a setting. The key person must help ensure that every child's learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs. The key person must seek to engage and support parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. They should also help families engage with more specialist support if appropriate.

## **8 - Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Statutory Framework P11 2.6 – 2.11**

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

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.

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.