



Policy Approved and implemented by:	John Cockerill
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Review Cycle:	Annual
Next Review date:	March 2027

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE CURRICULUM POLICY

Aim

This policy outlines the purpose, principles, and practice of the Early Years Foundation Stage at Applebee Wood School, ensuring a high-quality, nurturing start to education for all children.

Purpose and Principles of EYFS

At Applebee Wood School, we believe every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support needed to reach their full potential. Early experiences lay the foundation for lifelong learning, development, and well-being.

Our EYFS provision follows the statutory framework, guided by four key principles:

A Unique Child – Recognising and supporting each child's individuality.

Positive Relationships – Building strong, caring relationships with children and families.

Enabling Environments – Providing rich, stimulating, and supportive surroundings.

Learning and Development – Encouraging growth across all areas of learning.

The EYFS aims to support children in achieving the five Every Child Matters outcomes: Staying Safe, Being Healthy, Enjoying and Achieving, making a Positive Contribution, and Achieving Economic Well-being.

Rationale

The Foundation Stage at Applebee Wood School:

- Supports smooth transitions from home or nursery to school.
- Provides a stimulating, engaging, and child-centred environment.
- Offers structured learning that meets each child's individual needs.
- Promotes both indoor and outdoor learning experiences.
- Builds on children's prior knowledge and experiences.
- It provides a stepping stone for a more formal and structured approach to teaching and learning.

Curriculum and Play

Play is central to the EYFS curriculum, enabling children to explore, interact, and learn naturally. Learning is delivered through Prime and Specific areas:

Prime Areas:

Personal, Social, and Emotional Development

Communication and Language

Physical Development

Specific Areas:

Key Skills

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the World

Expressive Arts and Design

We also emphasise the Characteristics of Effective Learning, which link across all areas.

Classroom Organisation

The Foundation classroom provides spaces for active and quiet learning, indoor and outdoor play, and independent exploration. Children can access resources independently, with staff support when needed. While the EYFS has its own timetable, children are fully included in whole-school activities such as themed weeks.

Roles and Responsibilities

The class teacher plans and develops engaging learning experiences, ensuring the environment reflects signs, symbols, and visual supports. They oversee observations, assessment, and curriculum implementation.

The Teaching Assistants (TAs) Support individual pupils in learning areas, personal care, medical needs, therapy programmes, and ensure adherence to health, safety, and hygiene protocols.

Effective relationships are developed through the professional qualities outlined in our **Image of the Practitioner**.

Staff are expected to demonstrate the following attributes:

- **Approachable** – welcoming, respectful and able to communicate effectively with children, families and colleagues.
- **Consistent** – reliable and consistent in their approach to supporting children.
- **Calm** – responsive and caring in their interactions with children.
- **Positive** – patient, encouraging and able to model fair and respectful behaviour.
- **Creative** – knowledgeable, reflective and able to adapt approaches to meet children's needs.
- **Empathetic** – able to listen, understand and respond sensitively to the individual needs of children.

Observation & Reporting: Staff document pupils' development through observation records, collated in summative reports to identify progress and areas for further support.

Teaching and Learning Approaches

Learning is topic-based, creative, and flexible, allowing for children's interests and spontaneous exploration.

All our learners have a Key Skills and Care Plan with daily opportunities to work on priority targets. Once achieved, pupils are encouraged to generalize these skills within the classroom and school environment, and new priority targets are set.

Communication is at the centre of our practice, and we promote a total communication environment. Using Makaton signing, symbols, Objects of Reference, Sensory based approaches AAC, PECs, Intensive Interaction and Communication Profiles we aim to foster and develop all our pupils' communication skills. Within the classroom children are 'surrounded' by language rich experiences, modelled continually by understanding and empathetic adults. Carefully structured direct teaching also ensures that pupils develop 'Learning to Learn' Skills which are integral to enable pupils to progress to a more formal and structured curriculum

Assessment and Target Setting

Children are assessed on entry against Early Learning Goals (ELGs). This assessment can take up to 4 weeks and will inform the target setting review to which parents and carers are invited to share their child's Key Skills and Care Plan. This document identifies priority targets for the coming year in the school using Medical Needs and Therapy Requirements.

Progress is tracked using Small Steps 2 Success alongside internal data, updated regularly throughout the child's time at Applebee Wood.

Observation, Planning, and Assessment

Observations guide weekly planning to meet individual needs.

Each child has a Primary Learning Journey documenting experiences and progress. The EYFS profile is completed annually using the eProfile system and moderated within local cluster groups.

Induction

We aim to ensure that each pupil's formal educational life begins positively, and we foster a respectful, professional and positive relationship with all new parents and carers. This relationship begins with a series of meetings and events from the non-prejudicial visit to the acceptance of the place at Applebee wood. We do this through:

- Meetings and liaison with parents/carers and previous settings.
- Taster sessions and phased school entry.
- Welcome meetings including staff and key professionals (Nurse, Speech & Language Therapist, Family Support Worker).
- Opportunities for parents to meet current families for guidance and support.
- Regular home-school communication via DOJO and meetings.

Reporting to Parents

Parent/School partnership continues when the child starts school through:

- Dojo – an online platform for information sharing

- Annual (Biannual until the child turns 5) EHCP reviews
- Phone calls home to keep parents up to date with their child's progress
- Class pages on the school website that inform parents of the topics for the year
- Regular photographs and evidence of learning sent home to parents, from 'Dojo' app.
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year
- Parents Evenings.
- Reports to Parents.

Annual progress reports are provided in the Summer Term.

Parents are invited to a Primary Presentation Afternoon.

Achievements are celebrated throughout the year at both department and whole-school events.

	Name/Initials:	Date:
Written By:	N Booth	March 2026
Reviewed:		