



A School Partnership In Rural England

Motto : ‘ **We Aspire to Inspire**’

Our Values – using the initials of the names of the schools.

K – Kindness

U – Understanding

P – Patience

H – Honesty

L – Love

B – Boldness

Early Years and Foundation Stage Policy

The term ‘school’ refers to the schools in the ASPIRE Federation: Kingswood Primary, Ulcombe CE Primary, Platts Heath Primary and Leeds and Broomfield CE Primary. The term may refer to them jointly or individually.

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At our two Church of England schools this policy will be delivered through strong links made to our Christian values:

Leeds & Broomfield Church of England Primary School

At Leeds & Broomfield we build strong foundations for all; to learn, flourish and fill their hearts with God's love. Everyone is important, valued and needed to make L&B grow. We give a quality all round nurturing education which develops the whole child; If the rain came we would not fall.

*"As many hands build a house, so many hearts make a school."
(Matthew Ch 7 24-27)*

RESPECT RESILIENCE EMPATHY CURIOSITY HONESTY

Our school Christian Values support the development of the children and all within the school and local community, giving the children and staff a positive outward looking view. The pupils and staff support and help each other and the local community enabling all to flourish.

We have explored the story of Matthew (Ch 7 24-27) showing curiosity, and the children felt empathy for the builder of the house on the sand, but said they must be resilient to try again. Jesus was honest with his followers and people followed and trusted him. The story continues showing how Jesus respected all and everyone who wanted to listen and learn could – no one was turned away. This high level of inclusion and respect is what makes Leeds and Broomfield a great school community to be part of 'many hearts make a school'.

Ulcombe Church of England Primary School

Ulcombe Church of England School is a nurturing, inclusive learning space, where our uniqueness inspires trust and welcomes diversity. Our children all flourish (for however long they are with us), in an environment where learning through making choices (good or bad) is not only embraced but discussed and, when needed, forgiven. This allows our learners to become positive role models in *their* wider communities. The whole school community works together in unity to ensure that our practice fully reflects the passage of Corinthians 12:12-14. The children and adults feel included and appreciated as one body with diverse cultures learning, working and flourishing together to accept everyone and nurture their aspirations for the future.

*"One body, many members, learning together surrounded by God's inclusive love."
(Corinthians 12:12-14)*

TRUST RESPECT HOPE ENDURANCE

Early Years and Foundation Stage Policy

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1. Introduction/ Rationale***EYFS Vision - 'Whole Child - Child Led'***

The Foundation Stage gives every child a firm foundation for successful learning including motivation, positive dispositions and an open approach to lifelong learning.

2. The Foundation Stage

'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. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.'

Quote from 'The Early adopter Foundation Stage Statutory Framework' July 2020

3. Aims

At ASPIRE Primary Schools we aim to:

- Foster positive attitudes to learning including confidence, curiosity, responsibility and independence.
- Promote an inclusive ethos and approach to learning for all our children to ensure that none are excluded or disadvantaged.
- Provide children with a well planned curriculum which fosters enthusiasm for learning and is challenging and progressive within a stimulating environment.
- Develop Children's knowledge, understanding and skills in all areas of learning through first hand experience.
- Provide equal opportunities for children to make choices and become independent in their learning in a variety of safe and stimulating environments both indoors and outdoors.
- Establish and maintain a close partnership with parents/carers, families and pre-school providers in our community.
- Use focussed observations with carefully planned next steps to ensure that pupils make progress towards the ELG assessed against at the end of the academic year.

4. Admission

Our school admission arrangements are set out by Kent County Council. Within the ASPIRE federation we offer one intake in the September each year, following the child's fourth birthday.

Arrangements for children settling into our school are flexible, so that children are given enough time to feel secure in their new environment. Parental involvement is valued and welcomed with plenty of opportunities for co-operation and collaboration. The class teacher meets with parents for an informal chat in the first few weeks of the term to discuss things that they like or dislike, or any problems that may have arisen. Where we have links with local pre-schools children are invited to join Year R activities, for example, Harvest, Christmas, or reception class assemblies. The Class teacher also visits Pre-Schools to meet and interact with the Pre-school children and teachers in their familiar setting.

5. Starting School

Parents and their children are welcome to make an appointment with the Headteacher, prior to admission to look around the school. The school holds open mornings where parents and children are welcome to visit the school and see the children learning. There are opportunities to meet with the Class Teacher and for children to spend time in their new class, either with or without their parents (for example during story time sessions). Children also have the opportunity to spend two mornings at school during Term 6 to familiarise themselves with their classroom, prior to commencing school in September. During term 6,

parents of children starting school in September are invited to school to a welcome to school meeting for new parents to meet the Head teacher and Class Teacher to discuss school life, routines, learning and teaching, and assessments, including the Foundation Stage Profile.

6. Environment

All reception year classrooms have a dedicated outdoor area for learning the early year's curriculum. The areas have canopy coverings which enables the children to make the most of the outside learning environment throughout the year. Sheds provide storage place for all the outside equipment. Classes are bright, attractive and stimulating spaces, providing different learning areas to match those in the EYFS. The environment is ever changing in line with the children's next steps and interests.

7. Resources

Across ASPIRE, we review our resources annually to ensure that they are:-

- Suitable to meet the needs of the children
- In a safe and clean condition for use
- Appropriate for the Early years curriculum

Our resources include the following:-

- A good range of quality books housed and displayed in an attractive, comfortable area
- Sand and water with a variety of equipment
- Mathematical and scientific equipment
- Materials for imaginative play including some equipment for different role play areas
- A variety of papers and tools/implements to make marks and write
- A variety of creative media such as paint, clay, wood and junk materials
- Small and large construction equipment
- Computers, digital cameras and ipad which are to be used in accordance with safe guarding procedures,
- Roamer, programmable toys such as the Bee Bot and Lazy daisy, mini metal detectors
- Cooking equipment
- Growing and living things
- Artefacts and interesting objects to handle
- A variety of outdoor play equipment, such as bikes and a climbing frame.

8. Staffing and Organisation

Teachers with an Early Years qualification and experience, teach our Reception children. In addition, the class has support assistants. We also welcome parental help in the classroom and on trips and visits which are planned regularly.

We believe strongly in the importance of keeping our practice up to date. We therefore ensure that all our staff working in the Foundation Stage attends courses and training on a regular basis as part of our school Professional Development Programme.

9. Curriculum

There are four key principles which shape our practice. These are:

1. Every child is a **unique child** – who is constantly learning, and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
2. **Positive Relationships** – children learn to be strong and independent
3. **Enabling Environments** – environment reflects the children's interest and needs
4. **Learning and development** – Children learn at different rates. Pupils should be given opportunities to make progress linked to where they are and working in partnerships with the adults to reach their next steps.

The Foundation stage curriculum is organised into Prime Areas and Specific Areas of learning:

<u>Prime Areas</u>	<u>Aspect</u>
Personal, Social and Emotional Development	Self-regulation
	Managing Self
	Building Relationships
Physical development	Gross Motor
	Fine Motor
Communication and Language	Listening, Attention and Understanding
	Speaking
<u>Specific Areas</u>	<u>Aspect</u>
Literacy	Comprehension
	Writing
	Word reading
Mathematics	Number
	Numerical Patterns
Understanding of the world	Past and present
	People, Culture and communities
	The natural world
Expressive Arts and Design	Creative with materials
	Being imaginative and expressive

Within the areas of learning, the early learning goals Which summarise the knowledge, skills and understanding that all young children should have gained by the end of the Reception year. All areas of learning are important and inter-connected.

The areas of learning form the framework for our planning, we know that children's learning is not divided into distinct areas. Often, one experience helps a child to develop a range of new skills and concepts across several areas of learning, and our planning reflects this.

We encourage parents to become actively involved in their children's learning by sharing curriculum information with them, and giving them plenty of opportunities to share information, experiences, thoughts, concerns and resources. This will be through the use of Tapestry.

10. Learning and Teaching

We believe that our children learn best by being actively involved in activities, through first hand experiences and their senses. We therefore provide a range of activities which are interesting, enjoyable, challenging and fun! Through these, we encourage our children to explore experiment, question, investigate, discover, create, practice and consolidate their developing understanding, knowledge and skills.

We firmly believe that if a child is excited and motivated by learning, especially in the early days at our school, then we are already helping that child to become a lifelong learner. We also provide time for children to make choices and explore ideas and interests in depth. This means that our timescales are flexible when necessary.

Our Year R children attend our whole school assemblies, and contribute weekly at sharing assembly to show work they may have done during week. Children in Year R have playtimes with the whole school,

encouraging integration and friendships throughout the school. At snack time, during the morning break, Year R children are entitled to free fruit, and milk is available upon arrangement.

11. Child initiated Play/Learning

'Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play that is guided by adults.' (Early years framework July 2020)

We therefore ensure that children have plenty of opportunities to play/learn in a secure environment with effective support from caring adults. We use the Classroom and outdoor area, to enable children to access both planned, structured play/learning activities and self-initiated, spontaneous play/learning activities.

12. Assessment

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. On-going 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.

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 in partnership with parents and/or carers, and any relevant professionals. As of October 2020 all Aspire schools now use Tapestry to log children's observations. Parents can also view this and add to their child's learning record. Within each classroom an environment poster should be visible with pupil's next steps. This will change regularly. Opportunities for the child to achieve their next step should be evident as to how this will be achieved within the environment. The next steps will then be logged on tapestry through the use of a #.

This information also will be reported to parents and the year 1 teacher along with a short commentary on characteristics of effective learning.

13. Meeting Individual Needs

We provide a safe and supporting learning environment at our school where the contribution of all children is valued. We also employ a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's experiences, interests, skills and learning needs.

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners 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.

We select our resources, equipment and materials thoughtfully, choosing those which positively reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping.

14. Partnership with Parents

Across the Aspire federation we work hard to promote a successful partnership with a two-way flow of knowledge, information and expertise. Parents are welcomed into the classroom for a weekly story time with their pre-school aged children, and they are able to stay in school with their child if necessary to help their child to settle down and feel secure in the new environment. They are also invited to look around the school by appointment with the Headteacher and also at the meeting for new parents during the summer prior to the September that their child is due to start school. New parents are given a prospectus, newsletters and are invited to sharing and class assemblies. Once their child has started school, parents are invited into class to support the children's learning, either as regular ongoing support or as part of stay and play where parents can come in and work with the children.

Learning support is encouraged from parents and other family members, through tapestry, school library, sharing reading books, home activities and tasks, class challenges, visits to assemblies and celebrations, and through weekly and monthly newsletters.

Kingswood school has close links with the local pre-school which is based at Kingswood Village Hall. Kingswood Pre-school are invited to our Harvest and Christmas assemblies, as well as Chestnut Class assemblies and our various fundraising events. All pre-school children are welcome to attend the story time on a weekly basis and children have two sessions in the classroom prior to the September Term. The pre-school teacher meets with the class teacher to discuss planning, transition and assessment, and regular class teacher visits, to meet with the children in their own familiar environment.

15. Universal Infant Free School Meals

From September 2014, all children in reception, year 1 and year 2 in state-funded schools in England will be eligible for free school meals. This includes infant pupils in maintained infant and primary schools, free schools, academies, schools for pupils with special educational needs and pupil referral units.

Free school meals will also continue to be available to pupils (including infants) whose parents receive certain benefits and who are registered to receive one. (Source: Children Food Trust 2014)

16. Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy is monitored on an annual basis by:

- Headteacher/Head of Schools
- Governor/s responsible for the Foundation Stage
- Federation Governing body