Inspire, Enjoy, Achieve

AYLWARD PRIMARY SCHOOL

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

GB Committee Responsible:	**Quality and Standards**
Reviewed by:	**Sadie Moorhouse**
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Our Aim and Vision

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) states

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their full potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and five have a major impact on their future life chances. The term "Early Years" refers to children from birth until the end of the Reception Year.'

At Aylward, our Nursery provides places for up to 52 children aged 3–4 years, with a combination of full-time and part-time places available. Our Reception provision accommodates up to 90 children aged 4–5 years.

The EYFS Statutory Framework promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundations for good future progress through school and life. At Aylward preparing children for school readiness and ensuring they have secured the foundational skills they will need to progress is fundamental in everything that we do.

At Aylward, we provide a nurturing and inclusive environment where every child is inspired and motivated to explore, enjoy and achieve a good level of development. We are committed to building a wide range of skills that create a strong foundation in readiness for Year 1 and future success in school and life.

At Aylward, we aim to ensure that every child:

- Feels safe, secure, valued and cared for.
- Develops positive relationships with adults and peers and feels a strong sense of belonging.
- Is respected as an individual and treated fairly and with dignity.
- Develops confidence, independence and a growing sense of responsibility for their own learning.
- Is encouraged to be curious, enthusiastic and motivated to learn.
- Has access to a wide range of rich, engaging and meaningful experiences that encourage them to explore, investigate, create and problem-solve.
- Is appropriately challenged and supported to achieve their full potential.
- Has opportunities to follow and develop their individual interests within the curriculum and learning environment.
- Develops the knowledge, skills and dispositions needed to become a confident and successful learner.

- Feels happy, confident and excited about coming to Aylward each day.

Above all, the EYFS at Aylward aims to provide a happy, nurturing and secure start to school life, where children develop the confidence, curiosity, independence and skills they need to become successful lifelong learners.

The Four Principles

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is underpinned by four guiding principles, which shape our approach to children's learning, development and care at Aylward. These principles recognise that every child is unique and that children learn and develop best when they feel secure, valued and supported within positive relationships and enabling environments.

Together, these principles underpin our EYFS practice, ensuring that children receive the best possible start to their education and develop the skills, confidence and positive attitudes needed for future learning and life.

A Unique Child

Every child is a unique individual with their own strengths, interests, experiences and needs. At Aylward, we celebrate each child's individuality and support them to become resilient, capable, confident and self-assured learners. We recognise and respond to children's individual starting points and ensure that all children are given the support, challenge and opportunities they need to make progress and reach their full potential.

Positive Relationships

Children learn and develop best when they have warm, caring and consistent relationships with the adults around them. We work closely with children, parents and carers to build trusting relationships that enable children to feel safe, secure and valued. Through positive interactions and encouragement, we support children to develop independence, confidence, self-esteem and a strong sense of belonging.

At Aylward we promote positive relationships by:

- Building warm, trusting and consistent relationships with every child, ensuring they feel known, valued and respected.
- Creating a strong sense of belonging, helping children to feel that they are an important part of the Aylward community.
- Listening carefully to children and valuing their thoughts, ideas, feelings and opinions.

- Responding sensitively and appropriately to children's emotional and physical needs.
- Using positive language and encouragement to recognise children's efforts, achievements and progress.
- Celebrating children's successes, however small, to develop confidence and self-esteem.
- Supporting children to develop independence, while providing reassurance and guidance when needed.
- Encouraging children to form positive relationships with their peers, supporting them to share, take turns, cooperate and resolve disagreements.
- Modelling kindness, respect, empathy and positive communication in our interactions with children and adults.
- Helping children to recognise and manage their emotions, supporting them to develop emotional resilience and self-regulation.
- Providing consistent routines and expectations, helping children to feel secure and understand what is expected of them.
- Supporting children through transitions and changes, providing reassurance and helping them to develop confidence in new situations.
- Getting to know each child as an individual, including their interests, strengths, experiences, family background and individual needs.
- Following children's interests and joining their play to develop meaningful interactions and extend their learning.
- Using skillful interactions and questioning to encourage children to think, communicate and develop their understanding.
- Giving children time and attention, ensuring they have opportunities for meaningful conversations and interactions with familiar adults.
- Working closely with parents and carers, sharing information about children's learning, development, interests and wellbeing.
- Promoting an inclusive and respectful community, where differences are celebrated and every child and family feels valued.
- Supporting children to develop friendships, empathy and an understanding of the feelings and perspectives of others.
- Providing appropriate support and challenge, ensuring children feel both secure and confident enough to take risks in their learning.

Enabling Environments

Children's learning is enhanced by stimulating, safe and purposeful environments that encourage curiosity, exploration and discovery. At Aylward, we provide a rich range of

experiences and resources that reflect children's interests, needs and stages of development. Practitioners observe, assess and respond to children's learning, adapting the environment and provision to support individual progress. Strong partnerships between children, practitioners, parents and carers are central to creating an environment in which every child can thrive.

At Aylward, we provide:

- Welcoming and nurturing spaces where children feel safe, secure and a strong sense of belonging.
- Clearly organised and accessible resources so that children can independently select and return equipment.
- Resources at children's level to encourage independence, choice and self-directed learning.
- Continuous provision that allows children to revisit, practise and deepen their learning through purposeful play.
- Resources that reflect children's interests, experiences, cultures and backgrounds.
- Open-ended resources that encourage creativity, imagination, problem-solving and critical thinking.
- Opportunities for child-initiated learning, allowing children to follow their own interests and ideas.
- Opportunities for exploration and investigation, both indoors and outdoors.
- Purposeful enhancements to areas of provision that link to current learning, children's interests and identified next steps.
- A language-rich environment where adults model vocabulary, extend conversations and encourage children to communicate their ideas.
- Print-rich environments where children see and use meaningful examples of reading and writing in their play.
- Opportunities to develop mathematical thinking through everyday experiences, practical activities and play.
- Opportunities for physical development, including climbing, balancing, running, throwing and fine-motor activities.
- Spaces for quiet time and reflection, recognising that children may need opportunities to regulate their emotions and have time away from busy environments.
- Inclusive resources and displays that celebrate diversity and enable every child to see themselves and their families represented.

- Opportunities to develop independence, such as managing belongings, dressing themselves, preparing resources and caring for the environment.
- Outdoor learning opportunities that allow children to experience nature, develop physical skills and investigate the world around them.
- Opportunities to take appropriate risks and develop confidence, resilience and problem-solving skills in a safe and supportive environment.
- Adults who are actively involved in the environment, observing children's play, skillfully extending learning and knowing when to step back to allow children to explore independently.
- Adaptations and additional support where needed to ensure that all children can access the environment and participate fully.
- Links between the indoor and outdoor environments, enabling children to transfer and extend their learning across different contexts.

Learning and Development

We recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. Our EYFS curriculum provides a balance of adult-led teaching, purposeful play, exploration and child-initiated learning. Through the seven areas of learning and development, we provide children with opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to become confident and successful learners. Practitioners use their knowledge of each child to plan and adapt meaningful experiences, provide appropriate challenge and support children to build on what they already know and can do.

Characteristics of Effective Learning:

At Aylward, we support children in using the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning. These 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.

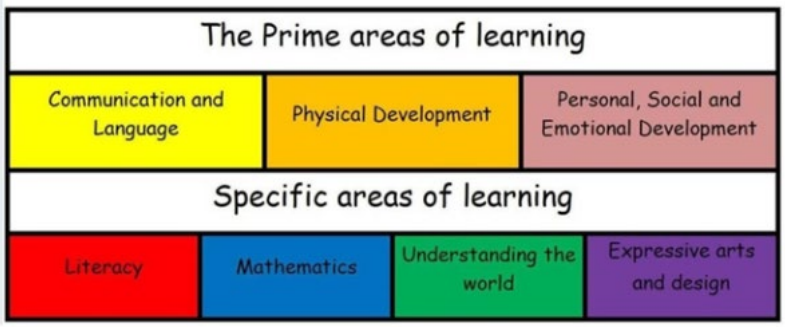
Our Curriculum:

At Aylward, our Nursery and Reception curriculum is carefully designed around the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework, with a clear focus on securing the essential knowledge, skills and understanding that children need for future success. Our curriculum has been thoughtfully developed to build on children's prior learning

and experiences in Nursery, ensuring a clear and progressive journey into Reception and beyond. Each theme, learning experience and area of provision is carefully planned to revisit, reinforce and extend key knowledge and foundational skills, enabling children to develop strong foundations for their future learning throughout school. Through a rich balance of adult-led teaching, purposeful play and child-initiated learning, we support children to develop confidence, independence, communication, concentration, listening skills, resilience and a genuine love of learning.

Areas of learning and development

The EYFS curriculum is organised into seven areas of learning, which are divided into three Prime Areas and four Specific Areas. The seven areas are closely interconnected, with learning in one area supporting and enhancing development in others. Through a balance of planned teaching, purposeful play and meaningful experiences, children develop the knowledge, skills and understanding needed for their next stage of learning.



The Prime Areas

The prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, for building their capacity to learn and form relationships, they support children's' learning in all other areas. They are:

- Communication and Language – Listening and Understanding and Speaking. At Aylward, we have a language rich curriculum, embedding spoken language, vocabulary development and listening into all aspects of children's work.
- Physical Development – Gross Motor Skills and Fine Motor Skills. Developing children's muscles so that they are able to move safely and with co-ordination and dexterity.
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development. – Self Regulation, Managing Self and Building Relationships. Developing children's social and emotional development through whole class and small group activities focusing on the importance of being kind to one another, appropriate behaviours, developing independence and how to make friends.

The Specific Areas

The specific areas of learning develop essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society. They are:

- Literacy – Comprehension, Word Reading and Writing. Children take part in regular story times where they can be taught to understand what they have heard, this helps children with their comprehension skills. Handwriting is taught

and practised daily. In addition, daily phonics is taught using the 'Read Write Inc' scheme, this includes learning letter sounds, daily reading and writing.

- Mathematics – Numbers and Numerical Patterns. Children learn maths through active learning in both the indoor and outdoor areas. Activities are planned to meet the needs of the children in; understanding what numbers are, using the correct mathematical vocabulary and being able to talk about 'why' something happens through reasoning.
- Understanding of the World – Past and Present, The Natural World and People, Culture and Communities. Children learn about the world around them through daily discussions and exploring their environment. They are encouraged to talk about their observations as well as link it to their daily lives.
- Expressive Arts and Design – Creating with Materials and Being Imaginative and Expressive. Children learn how to use tools and equipment safely to make a variety of structures, they explore how colours change and how to make things with a purpose. Children take part in lots of role play, singing and dancing. They are encouraged to explore a range of media.

Inclusion:

All children and their families are valued at Aylward School. Children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all provisions available. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. Assessments consider contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential special educational needs is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence.
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies and adapting learning based on children's learning needs.
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively.
- Offering a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued.
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping.
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills.
- Monitoring children's progress and acting to provide support as necessary.

- Working closely with parents, carers and other outside agencies to ensure all children's needs are met and we enable them to access the curriculum and make good progress.

Fundamental British Values in the EYFS:

The fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs are implicitly embedded in our EYFS curriculum. Below are some examples of what this means in practice within our setting:

- **Democracy** – children are encouraged to know that their views count and to value others thoughts and feelings. They take part in activities that involve turn taking, sharing and collaboration.
- **Rule of law** – children are taught to understand their own and others' behaviour and its consequences, and learn to distinguish between right and wrong.
- **Individual liberty** – staff provide opportunities for children to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem, and increase their confidence in their own abilities.
- **Mutual respect and tolerance** – children will acquire tolerance and appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures; know about similarities and differences between themselves and others and among families, faiths, communities, cultures and traditions and share and discuss practices, celebrations and experiences.

Please refer to Aylward's 'British Values' policy for further information.

Equal Opportunities:

All members of the school are treated as individuals. We aim to meet the needs of all, taking account of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, special educational needs, disability, and social circumstances. Therefore, the Early Years Foundation Stage learning environment will ensure that children's experiences, backgrounds and needs are equally valued through the provision, displays and experiences offered. Children, their parents and staff will be encouraged to use their home languages both at home and in the educational setting. All staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect cultural diversity and the need to prepare children for life in a diverse and multi-faith society.

Safeguarding and Welfare:

At Aylward, we recognise that children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, their individual needs are met, and they have positive relationships with the adults who care for them. We understand our legal responsibility to meet the welfare requirements set out in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

We follow the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection policies and procedures to ensure that all children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are protected from harm and supported to develop in a safe, secure and nurturing environment. All staff are familiar with these policies and understand their responsibilities for safeguarding children and promoting their health, wellbeing and welfare.

Children are supported to develop an understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe. Through age-appropriate discussions, routines and learning experiences, children are encouraged to recognise potential risks, make safe choices and seek help from a trusted adult when needed.

We work in partnership with parents and carers to promote children's health, safety and wellbeing. Parents and carers are informed about our arrangements and procedures through the 'Welcome to Aylward' parents' meetings and induction meetings.

Health and Safety

We follow the school's Health and Safety policies and procedures to ensure that the Early Years environment is safe, secure and appropriate for young children. All staff are familiar with these procedures and understand their responsibilities for maintaining a safe environment.

Designated members of staff are responsible for first aid within the school, with qualified paediatric first aiders available in both Nursery and Reception each day to ensure that appropriate first aid support is readily available when required.

Our learning environments are risk assessed, and daily safety checks are completed before children access the outdoor areas. Any hazards identified are addressed promptly to ensure that the environment remains safe and suitable for children to use.

Children are taught to use equipment and materials safely and appropriately and are encouraged to move carefully around the school. Staff provide appropriate supervision and guidance to support children in developing an awareness of safety and managing risks in an age-appropriate way.

Risk assessments are completed for school outings, visits, after-school activities and any other activities where additional risks may be present. Staff consider children's individual needs when assessing risks and put appropriate measures in place to enable all children to participate safely.

Through these procedures, we aim to provide a safe, secure and stimulating environment where children can learn, play and develop with confidence.

Allergies/Medical Needs/Accident and Injuries

In line with the EYFS statutory framework, at Aylward School we;

- Ensure that there are systems in place to ensure that medicines and the systems for obtaining information about a child's needs for medication are kept up to date. Medicines will not be administered unless they have been prescribed by a doctor or we have written consent from a parent.
- Provide training for staff where the administration of medicine requires medical or technical knowledge. Medicines are only administered to a child where written permission for that particular medicine has been obtained from the child's parent and/or carer.
- A written record is kept each time a medicine is administered to a child.

Accidents will be assessed by the first aider in the room/area. Should further treatment be required, the child will be taken to the Welfare Room for treatment. Accidents or injuries and treatment are recorded and shared with parents. Parents receive a phone call home for an injury to the head.

Safer eating

We are committed to ensuring that children are able to eat and drink in a safe, healthy and supportive environment. We follow the requirements set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework and the school's relevant health and safety, food hygiene and safeguarding procedures.

- Paediatric first aid: Whilst children are eating, there will always be a member of staff in the room who holds a valid paediatric first aid certificate that meets the requirements of the EYFS framework.
- Dietary requirements and allergies: Before a child starts at the setting, parents/carers are asked to provide information about any special dietary requirements, food preferences, allergies, intolerances or health requirements. This information is shared with all staff involved in preparing, serving or handling food.
- Checking food and drink: During lunch times the catering team are responsible for checking that the food and drink provided is suitable for each child's individual dietary requirements and allergies. During snack time in class the class teacher (or person leading the class) is responsible.
- Allergy action plans: We work closely with parents/carers and, where appropriate, health professionals to develop and maintain individual allergy action plans for children with known allergies or intolerances. These plans are kept up to date and shared with all relevant staff. Staff are made aware of the symptoms and appropriate treatment of allergies and anaphylaxis, as well as the difference between an allergy and an intolerance.
- Safe seating: Children are seated while eating.
- Supervision: Children are always within sight of a member of staff while eating. Staff remain alert to the possibility of choking, which can be silent, and supervise children closely throughout mealtimes and snack times. Where possible, staff sit facing the children so that they can monitor how children are eating, discourage food sharing and respond promptly to any unexpected allergic reactions.
- Choking incidents: If a child experiences a choking incident that requires intervention, the incident is recorded, including details of what happened and how the child choked. Parents/carers are informed.
- Food preparation and hygiene: Food and drink are prepared and handled hygienically.
- Healthy eating: We promote healthy eating and drinking habits and provide children with opportunities to develop positive attitudes towards food. Parents/carers are consulted about individual dietary requirements and preferences.
- Fresh drinking water: Is available in the classroom at all times

Parents as Partners

We believe that parents and carers are the child's first and most enduring educators. We aim to work with them as partners in their children's learning. We try to develop a

close working relationship between home and school involving parents in their child's development as much as possible.

Some of the ways we encourage this are:

- Talking to parents/carers their child starts school during stay and play sessions, welcome meetings and 1:1 induction meetings
- Holding a 'Welcome' meeting for new parents in the summer term where they receive information which helps them to prepare their children for school, highlights school start and finish times, uniform and informs the parents of the school's vision and aims, outlining the schools expectations
- Asking parents to complete an admissions form, a medical form and gather any other

  relevant information about the child.
- Asking parents to sign permission slips for visits out of school, photographs of their child for assessment purposes and using the internet at school.
- Encouraging parents to talk to their child's teacher if there are concerns.
- Ensuring children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school.
- Giving children the opportunity to spend time in their new setting before starting school, during 'Nursery and Reception Induction meetings and Stay and Play sessions.'
- Inviting parents to attend informal meetings and workshops, throughout the year, providing information about the Early Years curriculum, e.g. Early Reading and Phonics, developing Speaking and Listening skills and play skills.
- Organising a range of activities and events throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents / carers: open afternoons, class assemblies and performances, Sports Day, reading mornings etc;
- Setting formal meetings for parents at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress during each term.
- Offering parents / carers regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our Reception class through Learning Galleries
- Inviting parents to regular 'Stay & Play' sessions throughout the year, where they can see how their children learn through play.
- Setting a written contact through reading diaries as well as the acknowledgement that parents can ring the school to contact staff and the EYFS Leader.
- Keeping Parents / carers informed of the curriculum and ongoing activities through weekly and whole school newsletters that are posted on the school website
- An annual report to parents

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them.

Assessment

The EYFS states; 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. Assessment should not entail prolonged breaks from interaction with children, nor require excessive paperwork. When assessing whether an individual child is at the expected level of development, practitioners should draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgement and should not be required to prove this through collection of physical evidence.

As soon as possible after entry, we observe and assess the developmental age of the children in Nursery and Reception recording whether children are 'on track' or 'not on track' to meet their end of year goals. We use 'point in time' assessment descriptors to support termly judgements.

All staff make regular observations of children in their learning. Observations and assessments are used to inform staff in deciding possible activities and provision that would help the development of that child and to inform future planning. Observations are not recorded.

At Aylward we ensure children make good progress and no child gets left behind. We ensure progress is tracked. Children with complex needs have an additional assessment document, breaking down smaller steps. Children's attainment and progress is closely monitored by SLT who then discuss progress with teachers regularly. Pupil Progress Meetings are also held termly. During the meetings SLT and teachers discuss how to support children, looking at individual needs to ensure they make good or better progress. Interventions are put in place and adapted when necessary to close any gaps children may have. Focus children are identified and next steps identified.

Reception Baseline Assessment

The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is a short, statutory assessment, taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts reception.

Assessment at the end of the EYFS

- In the final term of the year a child reaches five, the EYFS profile will be completed.
- The child's progress will be assessed in line with the early learning goals, each child will be assessed as expected or emerging.
- Year 1 teachers will be given a copy of the profile along with the supporting evidence and a professional handover discussion.

- Parents will also receive the results of the profile. Parents will be given the opportunity to speak to the person who completed their child's profile if they need further explanation or wish to ask questions.

Please see the Assessment Policy for further information.

Transition

At Aylward, we recognise that a positive and well-planned transition into Nursery/Reception is essential in helping children feel safe, secure, confident and ready to learn. During the Summer Term and in September, we put a range of transition arrangements in place to ensure that children and their families are familiar with the school, staff, routines and expectations before they start Nursery/Reception.

- Parent meetings: Parents and carers are invited to meet with staff to share information about their child, discuss their needs and interests, and provide an opportunity to raise any questions or concerns. Children attend, meeting key adults and exploring the envrionment.
- Welcome meeting: A Welcome Meeting is held for parents and carers to introduce them to the Reception team, explain key school routines and procedures, share information about preparing their child for Reception, and provide information about class arrangements.
- Liaison with previous settings: We work closely with children's nurseries, preschools and other early years settings to gather important information about each child's development, learning, interests and individual needs. Relevant documentation and records are requested to support continuity of learning.
- Stay and Play sessions: Children are invited to spend time in their new Reception classroom, meet their teacher and familiarise themselves with the environment, helping to build confidence and reduce any anxieties about starting school.
- Summer activity packs: Children receive a range of enjoyable activities to complete over the summer. These include photographs and information about their new teachers and classroom to help children become familiar with their new setting before starting.
- Staggered start: Children have a carefully planned, staggered start to Reception in September. This allows them to become familiar with their new environment, routines and adults at a manageable pace and supports them to settle quickly, confidently and positively into school life.

Supervision of Staff

At Aylward, we recognise that effective supervision is essential in ensuring high-quality practice and positive outcomes for children. In line with the EYFS framework, staff are supported through regular supervision and professional dialogue to reflect on their practice, discuss children's learning and development, identify any concerns or additional needs, and consider their own wellbeing and professional development. Supervision provides an opportunity to review responsibilities, share good practice, identify training needs and ensure that staff have the knowledge, skills and confidence to provide safe, nurturing and high-quality provision for all children.

Behaviour

At Aylward, we promote positive behaviour through consistent, nurturing and age-appropriate approaches that support children to develop self-regulation, emotional resilience, positive relationships and an understanding of boundaries. We recognise that behaviour is a form of communication and respond sensitively to children's individual needs and circumstances. Children are encouraged to understand the impact of their actions, make positive choices and develop the skills needed to manage their emotions and behaviour.

For further information, please refer to the Behaviour Policy.

Key Person

Every child will be assigned a key person. A letter will be sent home to parents to introduce and name their child's key person. The key person will support and tailor the learning and development to suit the individual child's needs. The key person will also liaise with parents and support home/school learning. At our school, the EYFS teachers act as the 'Key Person' to all children, supported by the other practitioners.

Educational Visits and Trips

At Aylward, educational visits and trips provide valuable opportunities to enrich and extend children's learning beyond the classroom, bringing their learning to life through real-world experiences. All visits are carefully planned and risk assessed to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children and adults. Individual children's needs are considered in advance, with appropriate adjustments, additional support and resources put in place where required to ensure that every child can participate fully. Appropriate and enhanced staff-to-child ratios are maintained to provide close supervision and support throughout each visit. All educational visits follow the school's established procedures and guidance.

For further information, please refer to the Educational Visits Policy.