

Alumwell Nursery School



Parents' Guide to the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework

Exciting times ahead for you and your child

What is the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)?

Welcome to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which is how the Government and early years professionals describe the time in your child's life between birth and age 5.

This is a very important stage as it helps your child get ready for school as well as preparing them for their future learning and successes. From when your child is born up until the age of 5, their early years experience should be happy, active, exciting, fun and secure; and support their development, care and learning needs.

What is the EYFS Framework - why do we have one?

The EYFS Framework exists to support all professionals working in the EYFS to help your child, and was developed with a number of early years experts and parents. In July 2021 the framework was revised to make it clearer and easier to use, with more focus on the things that matter most. This new framework also has a greater emphasis on your role in helping your child develop. The framework has been revised again with changes to the statutory guidance in effect in September 2021:

- The legal welfare requirements that everyone registered to look after children must follow to keep your child safe and promote their welfare
- The 7 areas of learning and development which guide professionals' engagement with your child's play and activities as they learn new skills and knowledge

- Assessments that will tell you about your child's progress through the EYFS
- Expected levels that your child should reach at age 5, usually the end of the reception year; these expectations are called the "Early Learning Goals (ELGs)"

There is also guidance for the professionals supporting your child on planning the learning activities, and observing and assessing what and how your child is learning and developing.

- Reduced staff workload and well-being is promoted within the nursery

How my child will be learning.

The EYFS Framework explains how and what your child will be learning to support their healthy development.

Your child will be learning skills, acquiring new knowledge and demonstrating their understanding through 7 areas of learning and development.

Children should mostly develop the **3 prime areas** first. These are:

- **Communication and Language;**
- **Physical Development; and**
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development.**

These prime areas are those most essential for your child's healthy development and future learning.

As children grow, the prime areas will help them to develop skills in **4 specific areas.**

These are:

- **Literacy;**
- **Mathematics;**
- **Understanding the world; and**
- **Expressive arts and design.**

These 7 areas are used to plan your child's learning and activities. The professionals teaching and supporting your child will make sure that the

activities are suited to your child's unique needs. It's designed to be flexible so that staff can follow your child's unique needs and interests.

Children in the EYFS learn by playing and exploring, being active, and through creative and critical thinking which takes place both indoors and outside

As a mum or dad, how can I help with my child's learning?

All the fun activities that you do with your child at home are important in supporting their learning and development, and have a long lasting effect on your child's learning as they progress through school. Even when your child is very young and is not yet able to talk, talking to them helps them to learn and understand new words and ideas. If you make the time every day to do some of the following things with your child it will make a real difference to your child's confidence as a young learner.

How can I find out how my child is getting on?

It is important that you and the key workers caring for your child work together. You need to feel comfortable about exchanging information and discussing things that will benefit your child. These conversations will need to be with your child's "key person". This is the person who:

- Is your main point of contact within the setting
- Helps your child to become settled, happy and safe
- Is responsible for your child's care, development and learning
- Takes a careful note of your child's progress, sharing this with you and giving you ideas as to how to help your child at home.

You should be able to get information about your child's development at any time and there are two stages (at age 2, and again at age 5) when the teacher caring for your child must give you written information about how he or she is doing.

When your child is 2

At some point after your child turns 2, the professionals working with your child must give you a written summary of how your child is progressing against the 3 prime areas of learning:

- communication and language;
- physical development; and
- personal, social and emotional development.

This is called the **progress check at age 2**.

This check will highlight areas where your child is progressing well and anywhere they might need some extra help or support - and how mums and dads and other family members or carers can work with the key person to help. You might find it useful to share the information from the check with other professionals such as health visitors (who can use it as part of the health and development review).

When your child is in nursery

We have termly open days for parents to discuss your child's progress. At these meetings we will give you ideas on supporting your child at home to accelerate their learning.

We also hold workshops for parents and invite consultants to talk to parents during the academic year.

Toy Library

We have a newly launched Toy Library at nursery for our children. This will be a weekly exchange of toys that will meet different areas of development for children to explore. This will be a great way for parents, siblings and families to join in play with their child and have a great exchange of interaction with them, whilst building your child's learning.

Each toy can be individually chosen and popped into our tote bags to take home and returned every Friday after your child's session.

We ask for you to sign up for using the Toy Library and you are able to start as soon as your child begins to attend our nursery.

Where can I go for further information?

The most important place to find out more is from our nursery. Do ask as many questions as you need to. We really do welcome speaking with you. You may want to find out what is on offer. You can find the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) which includes the early learning goals (ELGs) at www.foundationyears.org.uk. The foundation years' website also includes a range of resources and contacts.