



BrightTribe
learn grow prosper

ALAT and Bright Tribe Trust Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

September 2018





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1. Mission Statement

Adventure Learning Academy Trust (ALAT) and Bright Tribe Trust (Bright Tribe) brings a new energy and approach to providing the best education for our students. Through proven practices, ALAT / Bright Tribe will transform the learning of students, raise standards and provide the highest quality learning environments, enabling students and teaching staff to thrive and be the best. ALAT / Bright Tribe's aim is to break down the barriers that limit educational progress. We do this through adopting a personal learning pathway for every child – one that takes account of individual needs, aspirations and talents.

ALAT / Bright Tribe's values:

Learn

Provide the best education for every student.

Ensure the highest quality teaching and learning.

Work with the family, parent or carer.

Grow

Grow our students' futures.

Develop the best teaching staff.

Provide the best learning environment and supporting technology.

Prosper

Lead the way in education.

Realise the opportunities.

Be connected to the community.

2. Policy Overview

This policy has been prepared in accordance with the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (effective from September 2014) (Statutory Framework). This policy should be read together with the statutory framework.

Castle Hill School policies and procedures in relation to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are also reflected elsewhere within the Castle Hill School general policy framework, included (but not limited to) within the following policies:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Equality for Pupils Policy
- Pupil Behaviour Policy

3. Aim

At Castle Hill School we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning. We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent. We value the

individual child and work alongside parents and others to meet their needs and help every child to reach their full potential.

As outlined in the Statutory Framework “**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 births and age five have a major impact on their future life chances.**’

We adhere to the Statutory Framework and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings.

Unique Child:

- Child Development: Skilful Communicator, competent learner.
- Inclusive practice: Equality and diversity, children’s entitlements, early support.
- Keeping Safe: Being safe and protected, discovering boundaries, making choices.
- Health and Well-being: Growth and developing, physical and emotional well-being.

Positive Relationships:

- Respecting each other: Understanding feelings, friendships, professional relationships.
- Parents as Partners: Respecting diversity, communication, learning together
- Supporting Learning: Positive interactions, listening to children, effective teaching.
- Key person: Secure attachments, shared care, and independence.

Enabling Environments;

- Observation, Assessment and Planning: Starting with the child planning and assessment.
- Supporting Every Child: Children’s needs, the learning journey, working together.
- The Learning Environment: The emotional environment, the outdoor environment, the indoor environment.
- The Wider Context: Transitions and continuity, multi-agency working, the community.

Learning and Development:

- Play and Exploration: Learning through experience, adult involvement, contexts through learning.
- Active Learning: Mental and physical involvement, decision making, personalised learning.
- Creativity and Physical Thinking: Making connections, transforming and understanding, sustained shared thinking.

4. Principles into Practice

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven areas of learning, using play as the vehicle for learning
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support
- Work in partnership with parents and within the wider context
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-initiated and child-initiated, supported by the adult
- Have a key person approach to develop close relationships with individual children
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and out

5. Foundation Stage Curriculum

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve and exceed the early learning goals.

All the seven 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 are the **prime** areas:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Children are also supported through the four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied

The specific areas are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics

- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

We put language and literacy at the heart of our curriculum with an emphasis on listening to stories, poems and rhymes in order to feed children's imagination, enhance their vocabulary and develop their comprehension. We recognise the importance of teaching both reading and fluency in number during the Reception year. Sufficient time within each school day is given to the direct teaching of reading, writing and mathematics including frequent opportunities for children to practise and consolidate their skills through both adult led and child-initiated activities. We also ensure that when children are learning to write, resources are suitable for their stage of development and that they are taught correct pencil grip and how to sit at a table correctly.

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which they explore, think creatively and are active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

As a team, we write long term and medium-term plans using the EYFS based on a series of topics each of which offers experiences in all seven areas. These plans then inform our short-term weekly planning, alongside our observations, which remain flexible for unplanned circumstances, children's responses and the needs and interests of a particular cohort'

Practitioners working with the youngest children in Nursery will focus strongly on the three prime areas, which are the basis for successful learning in the other four specific areas. The three prime areas reflect the key skills and capacities all children need to develop and learn effectively and become ready for school. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as the children move through the Early Years and grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

The curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the EYFS.

Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play;

We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are planned by the adults. During children's play, early years practitioners interact to stretch and challenge children further.

In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice.

We create a stimulating environment to encourage children to free-flow between inside and out.

The learning environment

We describe our learning environment as the spaces both inside and outside. Children learn well when the environment in which they find themselves is ordered, well managed and planned. In order to maximise the learning environment in the school the environment will:

- Be welcoming and well organised.
- Be safe
- Reflect the children's interests
- Encourage independence ensuring well labelled and organised resources
- Provide resources and stimulation which will enable children to develop their learning
- Enable children to 'practise' and 'rehearse' their learning at their own pace
- Enable children to make choices about their own learning
- Enable children to select their own resources for their learning
- Enable children to follow routines easily
- Include resources which are of good educational quality
- Ensure ICT is available for use as an aid to learning
- Be varied to encourage and inspire
- Have distinct areas such as reading, or role play areas to encourage and inspire whilst being flexible enough that learning in one area can be taken elsewhere if the child chooses to do so.
- Encourage everyone to take pride in the school

Mixed Age Classes

Due to fluctuating school pupil numbers and associated school funding it is necessary to have flexibility in the structure of registration classes and this can include mixed age classes in Reception/Year One/Year 2. Where appropriate parents will be invited to discuss the school's decision to reassure that the developmental nature of the Early Years Curriculum is prioritised for every child. As is normal practice, children will be taught the relevant curriculum in each Key Stage and for each year group and work will be adapted and pitched to the appropriate level. Class grouping is always given careful consideration and we make a whole-hearted attempt to do what is best for every child within our care.

6. Observation and Assessment

As part of our daily practice we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform our future plans. We record our observations in a variety of ways. Everyone is encouraged to contribute, and discussions take place. Significant observations of children's achievements are collated in their own personal learning journey, which are shared with parents. Parents are invited to attend a parent's evening on at least 2 occasions during the year. Within the final term we provide the parents with a report based on their child's development against each of the Early Learning Goals. The parents are then given the opportunity to discuss these judgements with the teacher in preparation for Year 1.

We assess the children against 'Development Matters' within the first three weeks of the Autumn term to baseline the children on entry and subsequently at the end of every half term. In the final term teachers make a judgment about each child's development against each of the Early Learning Goals where a best fit judgement is made to indicate whether the children are meeting the expected level of development, exceeding expected levels or not yet reaching the expected levels. *Our assessments are based on what children do consistently and independently and evidence is*

drawn mainly from observation of children engaged in activities they have initiated or within a playful and meaningful context. Any 'exceeding' judgements are moderated with the Year 1 team.

In addition to what the children are learning our ongoing assessment of children will also assess how they are learning. This is assessed against the Characteristics of Effective Learning and reported to parents at the end of the year.

Playing and exploring

*Engagement
Finding out and exploring
Playing with what they know
Being willing to "have a go"*

Active learning

*Motivation
Being involved and concentrating
Keeping trying
Enjoying achieving what they set out to do*

Creating and thinking critically

*Thinking
Having their own ideas
Making links
Choosing ways to do things*

7. Safeguarding and Welfare

Children's safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. As part of the Academy policy framework referenced at the beginning of this policy, we have stringent policies, procedures and documents in place to ensure children's safety.

Members of staff may not take photographs in EYFS using their own mobile phones or cameras.

We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious food, following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident.

8. Inclusion and Equality

We value all our children as individuals. We plan a curriculum that meets the needs of the individual child and supports them at their own pace so that most of our children achieve and even exceed the Early Learning Goals.

We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so, work closely with parents and outside agencies.

Castle Hill School's approach to equality, inclusion and meeting pupil needs is set out in more detail as part of the general Academy policy framework referenced at the beginning of this policy.

9. Parents as Partners and the Wider Context

We strive to create and maintain partnership with parents and carers as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child's learning. We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child's education and care in numerous ways.

Working with other services and organisations is integral to our practice in order to meet the needs of our children. At times we may need to share information with other professionals to provide the best support possible.

We draw on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on outings and inviting members of the community into our setting.

10. Transitions

Transitions are carefully planned for and time given to ensure continuity of learning. At any transition, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child and other settings, including nurseries and child minders. Children attend introductory sessions to Foundation 1 to develop familiarity with the setting and practitioners.

In the final term of EYFS, the Year 1 teacher will meet with the Early Years staff and discuss each child's development against the Early Learning Goals in order to support a smooth transition to Year 1. This discussion helps the Year 1 teacher to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children.

Where possible EYFS staff will meet with feeder Nurseries in the Summer Term to discuss any individual children who will be moving from Nursery to school in the following term as this is deemed to be best practice and helps to ensure a smooth transition



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