

Agate Momentum Trust EYFS Policy



Chair of Trustee	Trust Leader Head teachers
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Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS.

Across the Agate Momentum Trust, we believe that every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to reach their full 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 in its own right. 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 (Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage 2021).

1.Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad, rich and balanced curriculum that gives them the range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life. Reception has a specialist music teacher and a specialist sports coach. Nursery has a specialist sports coach. The curriculum is further enhanced by visitors and visits linked to our learning
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- That practitioners understand the particular strengths and needs of the local community and the children we serve and shape the curriculum to build on those strengths and address those needs
- Close partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- Outline how every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice
- Outline the importance we place on developing early language through high quality adult child interactions and targeted interventions

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) that applies from September 2021.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

3. Structure of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Agate Momentum Trust has an Early Years provision that includes a Nursery and Reception cohort.

Agate Momentum Trust offers flexible care in the Nursery setting including:

3- and 4-year olds = 15 hours a week

Children of parents that are eligible = 30 hours a week

2-year-old provision for eligible parents.

If the setting has space parents can buy additional care costing £5 an hour. This offer is for 3 + only.

Our Reception provision has the capacity to accommodate 60 children who are split into two classes. Each class of 30 children are supported by a class teacher and a teaching assistant.

4. Seven Key features of effective practice

- **The best for every child**
We believe all children deserve to have an equal chance of success
We provide high quality inclusive education. Children's special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are identified quickly. All children promptly receive any extra help they need, so they can progress well in their learning. In addition to a SENCO, we have a speech and language therapist who trains staff and supports children with communication difficulties.
- **High-quality care**
Our early years practitioners enjoy spending time with young children.
Practitioners understand that starting school, and all the other transitions in the early years, are big steps for small children.
We provide consistently high quality care.
We encourage children to be independent.

- **The curriculum: what we want children to learn**

Our curriculum is planned to help every child develop their language. It is sequenced to ensure that it helps children to build their learning over time. It is driven by children's interests. It is designed for building a depth of knowledge.

- **Pedagogy: helping children to learn**

Our nursery and reception classes have planned enabling environments to foster high quality play. Children are given the time and space to invent their own play. Mixed approaches to learning are used, play, teacher modelling, guided learning and direct teaching.

- **Assessment: checking what children have learnt**

(See 8. Assessment)

- **Self-regulation and executive function**

Zones of regulation are used to teach children how to self regulate and manage their feelings. Our environments and curriculum provide opportunities for children to concentrate their thinking, plan what to do next, adapt their ideas and to persevere when faced with challenges (CoETL). These abilities also contribute to a child's ability to self-regulate.

Executive function includes a child's ability to hold information in their mind. Our curriculum is research based and is designed and delivered to enable children to retain information into their long term memory.

- **Partnership with parents**

(See 9. Working with Parents)

5. Enabling Environments

Across our early years settings we have well resourced enabling indoor and outdoor learning environments which are planned for weekly. Our enabling environments play a key role in supporting children's learning across all seven areas of the curriculum. They are based on current topics and children's interests. They enable children to make independent choices whilst leading their own learning through play. They encourage collaboration and foster language development. They also provide children with the opportunity to apply what they have learnt.

Children are given the opportunity to plan, test out their ideas and adapt them, to solve problems and to think critically. They are encouraged to persevere when presented with challenge.

6. Curriculum

Our Early Years setting has a curriculum which is informed by the 2021 Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

The EYFS framework outlines the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning (CoETL) and the 7 areas of Development.

The CoETL are organised into three primary strands and are essential components towards children becoming self-regulated learners.

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

- **Creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

There are 17 aspect areas (early learning goals) within 7 curriculum areas of development. These are divided into Prime and Specific areas of learning.

The 3 Prime areas of learning:

1. Communication and Language
2. Physical Development
3. Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Communication and language underpin all areas of learning within our early years curriculum and continues to be developed within our provision, teaching, learning and planning methods.

The prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. Planned learning supports the progress and development of listening and speaking, enabling children to process information into thinking and understanding. Children practise their physical skills alongside developing social skills, which supports greater independence and higher levels of confidence.

The 4 Specific Areas of learning:

- Literacy
- Maths
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

The 4 specific areas of learning provide a context for development and reflect cultural knowledge and accumulated understanding. They are dependent on learning in the Prime areas. Our continuous provision demonstrates a strong emphasis upon supporting children's understanding of the world along with enabling them to express themselves imaginatively and creatively, using art and design. New learning and topics are adapted to reflect the needs of the children and their interests.

Our programme for learning is driven by an emphasis upon prioritising the development of communication and language. The interventions we use to support this and to which links are made throughout all areas of learning are:

- Talk for writing – which emphasises the development of talk which underpins writing
- Helicopter Stories – which supports children in creating and telling their own stories
- 5 stories a day and focus Nursery Rhymes – to ensure children are exposed to a wide range of vocabulary
- Box Clever – a targeted intervention focused upon developing language through play
- ACIs – a targeted 1-1 intervention which supports language development through play
- Talk through stories (Reception) – which places an emphasis upon vocabulary development
- NELI (Reception) – a targeted intervention which scaffolds support for language development
- RWI (Reception and Nursery Summer term) – development of reading through phonics

In Reception, we also use Maths No Problem, which is based upon the Singapore approach to teaching mathematics. It is a programme focused on ensuring children develop a deep understanding of number.

7.1 Planning

The 3 prime areas are at the core of early years planning. Staff carefully plan activities which enable children to link personal experiences with new learning, providing a wide range of contexts to revisit, practise, apply, and develop transferable skills and understanding. Emphasis is placed upon the importance of using sensory play and learning through concrete experiences in the development of language skills, alongside enhancing provision for identified groups of children.

Staff take into account the individual needs, interests, and stages of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan challenging and enjoyable experiences. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

Staff are reflective in their practice and systematically observe and evaluate the effectiveness and value of planned provision within the inside and outside learning spaces. They respond to children's levels of interest and engagement, ensuring accurate pitch and pace for developing cognition and learning. Planning and interactions are supported by progressive sequences of questioning to develop thinking, understanding and language for reasoning. Staff plan collaboratively in order to share and develop expertise throughout the foundation stage and to support consistency of practice. We work with the rest of the school to ensure that our provision and practice is informed by the latest research into effective learning. For instance, we ensure that our curriculum experiences are broken down into small achievable steps and that there are repeated opportunities to revisit and deepen understanding transferring learning into long term memory informed by Rosenshine's principles.

7.2 Teaching

Early Years practice demonstrates a balance between play and formal teaching. Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult led and child-initiated activities. As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1. Staff interactions with children during planned and child-initiated play, provides rich opportunities for communicating, and modelling language, showing, explaining, demonstrating, exploring ideas, encouraging, questioning, recalling, providing a narrative for what they are doing, facilitating and setting challenges.

Staff understand that play is about much more than content, but helps to build flexible minds and an enquiring spirit. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. They consider the equipment provided and the attention to the physical environment as well as the structure and routines of the day that establish expectations. Staff understand that teaching is in every activity provided within all of the learning environments. Opportunities to develop the sophistication of children's understanding are capitalised upon through adults responding to children's language, building upon and extending thinking through high quality back and forth interactions. There are no activities that occur in the setting which adults do not consider to be opportunities for teaching. While staff do not always know where these opportunities will present themselves, it is the skill of the adults that enable them to readily recognise the 'teachable moments' when they arise and respond to them appropriately.

8. Assessment

Ongoing assessment is an integral part of teaching, learning and development processes. Staff observe children to identify their level of achievement, next steps in learning, interests and learning styles. Most assessment and that which results in the greatest progress is formative, immediate and 'in the moment.' Staff follow the observe, assess, plan and teach cycle.

Staff collaborate in developing their expertise around observing and listening and to children and using this to inform developmental feedback and interaction. Observations are used to identify

developmental gaps, support differentiation, inform children's next steps in learning and monitor their progress. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

When a child is aged between 2 and 3, Nursery practitioners review their progress and provide parents and/or carers with a written summary of the child's development in the 3 prime areas. This 'progress check' highlights the areas in which a child is progressing well and the areas in which additional support is needed. At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing teacher assessment, observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers and inform the child's transition process into year one.

9. Working with parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between Nursery practitioners, Class teachers, Teaching assistants and parents and/or carers. In Nursery, each child is assigned a key person who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home and also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate. Nursery Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. The progress check and EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities. Nursery practitioners and Reception staff conduct parent/carer meetings twice a year. Parents are also invited to share and celebrate their child's learning through sessions like 'Stay and play' and 'Stay and create,' and to accompany their child on school trips. We also welcome parent volunteers.

Weekly homework is set which always includes children being given books for parents to read to their child. In Reception, as children learn to read, each child will be given a book to read to their parents. Other homework might include 'talk tasks,' curiosity projects, basic skills and practical maths. Homework will also be set weekly on Google Classroom.

10. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

<https://hallsville.newham.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/MODEL-CHILD-PROTECTION-AND-SAFEGUARDING-POLICY-FOR-SCHOOLS-SEPTEMBER-2020.docx.pdf>

11. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years