



Curriculum Policy

Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

What is the Early Years Foundation Stage?

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 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 prepares them for their future learning and successes. From when your child is born up until the age of 5, their early years experiences should be happy, active, exciting, fun and secure; and support their development, care and learning needs.

At Allsorts, we adhere to the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and accompanying non-statutory guidance, linked here:

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

Non-statutory guidance

In delivering the curriculum, the Allsorts approach will also be significantly informed by the following non-statutory curriculum guidance documents:

Birth to 5 Matters: <https://www.birthto5matters.org.uk/>

Birth to 5 Matters emphasises child-centred learning through play, focusing on personal, social, and emotional development; communication and language; and physical development. The guidance aims to help practitioners deliver rich, meaningful experiences for young children, promoting their rights and well-being. It also encourages practitioners to observe, reflect, and respond to each child's unique needs and development, rather than relying on rigid age-based assessments.

What to expect in the Early years Foundation stage (EYFS)

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) outlines what adults must do to help children learn and develop and to be healthy and safe.

From September 2021, the Early Years Foundation stage was revised and settings can now choose which guidance to follow. At Allsorts, we are following The Birth to Five matters.

The Birth to Five Matters includes seven areas of learning and development.

Seven areas of learning and development in the EYFS

The three prime areas are crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning:

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

The three prime areas are strengthened and applied through four specific areas.

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive Arts and Design

The seven areas are then split into ranges

Ranges	Age
Range 1	0-9 months
Range 2	9-18 months
Range 3	18-24 months
Range 4	24-36 months
Range 5	36-48 months
Range 6	48-70 months

In each range, there are suggestions about what your child may be doing, and how you can help them. It's important to remember that children develop in different ways and at different rates.

Purpose of the Policy

To outline Allsorts approach to delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. The policy is broadly divided into three sections:

- **Section 1: Intent** - Our aims and aspirations for the children
- **Section 2: Implementation** - Our established practices and procedures, through which we action our intent
- **Section 3: Impact** - The evaluation of our practices and procedures, to continually develop and sharpen them.

These elements have always been the fundamentals of quality first teaching and learning here at Allsorts. Along with this we consider three questions when looking at the children's learning and development at Allsorts they are as follows:

What is it like to be a child in our provision?

What skills and knowledge we want our children to leave us with?

How ready will children be for the next stage in their learning?

Allsorts Curriculum

Our Principles

- All children are entitled to high-quality learning and teaching. This will equip them with the skills, knowledge and understanding they need today and in the future.
- Children learn at different paces, and each child's development is unique
- Children learn best when they are happy, secure and actively involved in their own learning. Children's enjoyment is a priority
- Effective teaching and learning in the EYFS requires different approaches.
- Every child can progress well in their learning, regardless of their starting point, with the right support, all children can thrive.
- Children learn best when they have secure and solid relationships with the adults caring for them.

- We are open to new ideas supported by discussion and research; we discuss learning together and review our work as a team. We discuss learning with parents; this helps us to provide a curriculum that prepares children well for reception, so that they can manage transition and continue with their own learning journey with confidence and ability.
- Our curriculum development supports our practitioner development; what we do and how we do it matter equally.
- Children’s happiness and security underpin all teaching and learning experiences.

Section 1: Intent

Allsorts Statement of Intent

At Allsorts, we strive to help our Early Years children become resilient and imaginative learners who are eager to explore the world around them. We combine high aspirations with strong support to ensure the best possible progress and development for the children in our care. Our goal is to foster a love of learning within a happy, caring, and secure environment, allowing children to learn, grow, and become “school-ready” through a balanced mix of child-initiated and adult-led activities. We deeply respect each child’s individual interests, needs, and dispositions, and we highly value their voices. The educational experience of each child is tailored to them by adults who know them exceptionally well. The meaningful relationships they form with their peers and adults are important to ensure that children are encouraged to achieve their full potential and know that they are valued. We want children to know that their ambitions are limitless! Fundamental British Values are at the heart of our curriculum and everything we do. We endeavour to give the children the Cultural Capital they need for future success i.e. giving each child the best start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their full potential and achieve future success.

Allsorts curriculum design ensures all our children (regardless of backgrounds, circumstances or needs) learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe, and it is supported by the Four overarching principles that shape the practice in our early years settings. These are:

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**
- Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments with teaching and support from adults**, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioner and parents/carers.
- Importance of **learning and development**. Children develop and learn at different rates. The EYFS framework (and Allsorts curriculum) covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

School Readiness and the importance of prime areas of learning

We want children to leave Allsorts ready for their next stage in their learning journey as confident, independent, thoughtful, and resilient individuals who are communicative and highly competent learners. To this end, it is our responsibility to ensure that our pedagogy is research-backed and based on the child's development, allowing a robust and genuine foundation to be laid across the seven areas of learning.

One of the most important indicators of a child's future success in their education is their development in the Prime Areas during the Early Years. After children transition from the Early Years curriculum, schools have fewer opportunities to focus explicitly on these Prime Areas. Thus, it is crucial that we establish a strong foundation in these areas while the children are with us.

- Particular importance is given to the development of communication and language skills, as these underpin all aspects of concurrent and future learning.
- Children learn and develop through responsive and reciprocal relationships with people, places, and things, and our curriculum and pedagogy strongly reflect this.
- Fundamentally children being physically active does not just support their fitness and health but their overall well-being, cognitive skills and social-emotional development, preparing them for a healthy life.

At Allsorts, our education program emphasises the three prime areas of development, particularly for children under three and those who may be delayed in these areas. We typically begin to focus on the specific areas of learning within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) only when children turn three and show readiness for further development in their learning journey.

Our staff at Allsorts prioritise the three prime areas to ensure maximum progress and depth in each child's development. While we will incorporate the specific areas into learning activities, our primary focus will remain on the three prime areas. This approach helps provide a solid foundation for children, enabling them to excel when they enter reception.

The 'plan, provide, assess' cycle – Intent, implementation & impact

We recognise that assessing children is not a final step but an ongoing process. This process helps staff determine the next learning experiences that will support each child in making the best possible progress.

Staff members Plan (intent) experiences based on the developmental needs and interests of the children. They then provide (implementation) the appropriate learning experiences. Following their observations and reflections during and after these experiences, they Assess (impact) the outcomes. The cycle then begins anew, with new learning experiences planned based on the most recent observations and reflections. Assessment occurs through observation and interaction with each child on a weekly basis.

Section 2: Implementation

We have a clear pedagogical approach to the Early Years curriculum that is based on a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. The balance includes age-appropriate structured explicit teaching, which is adult-led alongside adult-guided learning activities, child-initiated provision and enhanced provision.

Staffing structure and the key person

The role of the adult is key to planning purposeful learning. New knowledge is taught, learning is embedded and reinforced through thoughtful and selective use of provision and adult interaction. The development of early language and communication is a priority and is recognised as the key to success in every area of the curriculum. Practitioners are trained to be able to intervene effectively, observe and facilitate children interacting and learning, and plan their next steps. They know how to model language and develop communication enabling children to secure knowledge and embed key skills.

Every child at Allsorts is allocated a Key Person who is responsible for:

- Knowing all of the children in their group exceptionally well
- Being aware of the children's individual needs, next steps, interests and personality.
- Being the first line of contact with parents and communicating with parents about their child's education and well-being.
- Completing all necessary record-keeping relating to their Key Children
- Informing other staff members of any information relating to the child's needs and interests
- Actively contributing to the environment and the setting of the room daily so that the needs of their Key Children are factored into the environment and the activities on offer.
- Delivering adult-led activities to their Key Group
- All of the practitioners teach all of the children in the class, not just their Key Children, and must work as a communicative and supportive team.

Pedagogy

The Allsorts curriculum is designed based on our educational pedagogy. We recognise each child's prior knowledge, offer hands-on learning experiences, and help children develop interpersonal skills, build resilience, and become creative, critical thinkers who can challenge themselves. We adapt the curriculum content to meet the needs of all learners and ensure it is taught in a logical progression, allowing children to build on what they have already learned. When a child enters an Allsorts setting, the practitioners identify what the child already knows and can do. From there, the practitioner will plan, adapt and scaffold a learning environment that ensures the curriculum is accessible for the child using the indoor and outdoor environment.

Practitioners at all times reflect on what is being provided for the children and WHY (the 'intent' of the activity). The appropriate consideration is given to how the children respond to what is provided and what this means for the child's individual next steps moving forward. Children's interests are paramount, along with providing the right amount of challenge at the right time. Activities should take into account what the child is already capable of so that their confidence is boosted and they develop a growth mindset and 'can-do' attitude to learning. However, these activities must also include elements that provide the correct level of genuine challenge so that the child moves on in their learning and development in a healthy way.

The balance between child-initiated and adult-led learning

Allsorts is a blend of planning-in-the-moment activities and adult-led activities that focus on communication and language, physical development, and personal, social, and emotional development (PSED). We plan for the development of skills, knowledge, and concepts using both our indoor classroom areas and our outdoor environment. We recognise that language and communication are vital to all aspects of a child's development.

We welcome children from culturally diverse backgrounds, many of whom are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language (EAL). Therefore, communication and language development are a consistent focus in our approach. We support children by providing a language-rich environment where conversations, singing, and storytelling are regular parts of their day.

Allsorts practitioners utilise Wellcomm, Letters and Sounds, and Stage One of Read Write Inc. to foster children's communication and language skills in preparation for school.

We recognise that certain aspects of a child's learning and development may not fully grow through independent play and exploration alone; they will require adult guidance to thrive. During their time at Allsorts, the amount of structured, adult-led learning is gradually increased based on each child's age and development. However, the majority of the learning is primarily initiated by the child. This approach is essential as it fosters independence, allowing children to develop, review, expand, and solidify their understanding. Additionally, it encourages free interaction with their peers and teachers, which further strengthens their communication and personal, social, and emotional development (PSED) skills.

Positive interactions

At Allsorts, we recognise that young children learn relationally, through shared interaction, which means that the way that staff interact with children is paramount.

- engage in meaningful dialogue with children
- watch, listen and respond to children
- allow children the time to respond
- provide excellent models of language
- read aloud and tell stories to children
- encourage children to sing songs, nursery rhymes and musical games
- encourage children to express their thoughts and use new words
- support independence and confidence
- encourage children to guess and test ideas through trial and error
- enable children to explore and solve problems
- behave as an excellent role model for children
- support children to recognise and respond to their own physical needs
- attend to children's personal needs

The Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning (CoETL)

The Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning (CoETL) are highly important in helping practitioners to understand how a child learns and provide them with learning experiences which will motivate and challenge them.

The CoETL are kept in mind by practitioners when interacting with children, when planning for their next steps and when assessing their progress.

The Characteristics of effective learning which underpin our curriculum design and teaching pedagogy are:

- Playing and exploring – through investigation, exploration and problem solving, 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

Self-regulation and positive behaviour for learning

At Allsorts, we recognise the crucial role that self-regulation plays in child development and the significant impact that it has on a child's ability to learn and relate positively to others.

Our approach to self-regulation and positive behaviour is outlined in our Positive Behaviour Policy.

Wellbeing, Equality and Representation

At Allsorts, we recognise that for children to learn effectively and progress well, positive levels of wellbeing and involvement must first be in place. This is kept at the forefront of practitioners' minds at all times, and staff must always respond to children in ways which will best promote the individual child's well-being and involvement.

At Allsorts, we are dedicated to ensuring that every child feels included, involved, valued, and recognised, regardless of their background, personal characteristics, or needs. We believe that equality of opportunity should be evident in everything we do. Allsorts is committed to anti-discriminatory practices, promoting equality of opportunity, and valuing diversity among our children, families, and staff.

For more detailed information, please refer to our Equal Opportunities and Inclusion Policy. In relation to our Curriculum Policy, it is essential that all learning resources and teaching practices reflect, include, and engage a diverse range of individuals and families. Every child should be able to see themselves represented in the resources and environment surrounding them.

The learning materials shared with children must portray a wide variety of people in diverse roles, and all resources should be free from stereotypes. Any instances of stereotyping that are observed or heard must be addressed and challenged by staff. It is crucial for all children to know that every resource in the setting is available for them to explore, and they should feel encouraged to engage with any resource they choose. Staff should support children in pursuing their own interests while being mindful of any unconscious biases.

An Enabling Learning Environment

At Allsorts, we understand the essential role of the environment in supporting children's development. Therefore, we are dedicated to creating:

- A stimulating yet calm atmosphere that is thoughtfully designed to prevent sensory overload, allowing children to make independent choices and explore their own lines of inquiry.
- Open-ended, appealing resources that spark children's natural curiosity.

- Consistent areas within the room where children can revisit and reinforce their learning. These areas, known as ‘Continuous Provision,’ are intentionally planned to provide challenges for all children and are enhanced with new experiences, such as seasonal activities, festivals, and cultural events, tailored to the interests and needs of the children.
- An environment that is continually assessed and adapted to meet the evolving needs of children, ensuring it promotes their progress to the fullest extent.
- A well-organised and curated space that visibly reflects the individuality of the children who learn there.

How we use the EYFs guidance

At Allsorts, we aim to provide a comprehensive curriculum that enables children to progress, develop their cognitive abilities, and consolidate their learning.

The curriculum guidance documents we use is Birth to 5 Matters. The staff are encouraged to use this document as guidance only; it is viewed as the ‘skeleton’ of the curriculum, with the bulk of the learning experiences that children have is planned by staff based upon children’s needs and interests over time.

The curriculum ranges and statements within these ranges are not intended to be an exhaustive checklist. Instead, they serve as a guide to where a child may be in terms of learning and development. Staff are empowered, as a collaborative team, to create a curriculum that best suits the needs and interests of the children in their care, ensuring that they make optimal progress over time.

The child’s voice: listening to the child and the importance of conversations and the importance of feedback

The child’s Voice

The importance of engaging in conversations with children, interacting with them, and actively listening to their thoughts cannot be overstated. By listening to children, we gain valuable insights into their perspectives on learning. This understanding enables us to know them better and to provide activities that will inspire and challenge them.

Staff should be mindful of when and how to interact with children, as well as when it is best to step back and observe. Whenever it is appropriate and beneficial, every opportunity to engage with children in their learning and play should be seized, fostering sustained, shared thinking. Through high-quality interactions, we can significantly influence their learning and development.

Feedback

Research shows that feedback is one of the most effective ways to help children of all ages progress in their learning and extend their thinking. In the context of Early Years education, feedback is best given informally, through direct conversation with the child.

For example, a practitioner might say to a child during play, “I wonder what would happen if we used these blocks like this instead?” or “You kept trying even when it was difficult, and you switched containers when you realised you needed a bigger one.”

Feedback can encourage children to consider different approaches or to recognise what they did well. Staff should be specific in their praise, such as saying, “Your tower is so tall, and I can see you kept trying when it fell down!” instead of giving generic praise like “Well done, what a fantastic tower.” This approach fosters a growth mindset by acknowledging effort and the Characteristics of Effective Learning (CoEL).

Planning in the moment and Cultural Capital

Planning in the moment

When planning learning experiences for children, it is important to consider those spontaneous moments of awe and wonder. These magical instances captivate children, provoking excitement and deep concentration, which leads to meaningful engagement. In such moments, adults must carefully think about how to extend the experience to further develop the child's learning and interest. When a child is deeply fascinated by an activity, adults should respect that interest, allowing ample time for exploration while also extending the experience in a way that keeps the child engaged and aligned with their interests.

Cultural Capital

By introducing Cultural Capital, it is hoped that children from all backgrounds receive the best possible start in life, irrespective of their home life or challenges. Each child arrives at the setting with many experiences, ideas, and pre-conceived knowledge based on what they have been taught and experienced so far. Our strong understanding of our community helps us understand our children's daily lives and experiences. We get to know children and families so that we can enhance and extend the opportunities and experiences available for children, building strong foundations that will make a real difference to our children's futures. We aim for all children to experience the awe and wonder of the natural world in which we live. We motivate and interest children by starting with real-life, first-hand activities and experiences so that they can improve their knowledge and skills across the EYFS curriculum.

Parents and carers as partners

We are dedicated to supporting parents in helping their children learn at home, as we recognize that a strong partnership between home and school greatly benefits the child. We regularly communicate with parents to help them understand how young children learn and provide various resources and information about their child's individual next steps.

To give parents regular insights into their child's learning, we host 'stay and play' sessions. These sessions allow parents to engage in activities with their children and experience preschool life alongside them.

We also have an 'open door' policy that encourages parents to reach out at any time. Parents are welcome to email or request a conversation with their child's Key Person, the Manager, or the Childcare Director whenever they wish.

Paperwork and Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) time

Paperwork and record-keeping should be limited to what genuinely benefits the children. It should not unnecessarily reduce the time practitioners can spend with them.

The childcare director and manager will determine the appropriate amount of Planning, Preparation, and Assessment (PPA) time to allocate to staff. This decision will be fair and take into account the time needed for staff to complete necessary tasks to the expected standard. PPA time will be allocated consistently across staff, unless specific roles require different arrangements. For example, a part-time practitioner will receive PPA time proportional to their working hours and the number of Key Children assigned to them.

PPA time will be scheduled within a keyworker's working day and is not to be taken home for completion.

Staff Development (CPD)

At Allsorts, we are dedicated to the ongoing professional development and upskilling of all our staff members. Each staff member has a termly supervision meeting, providing an opportunity to discuss overall performance, reflect on progress, and identify any current training needs and aspirations. These meetings are designed to be positive and supportive. During these sessions, previously established "next steps" for development are reviewed, and new next steps are mutually agreed upon.

When assigning staff to training, the Senior Leadership Team assesses the needs of Allsorts, taking into consideration any training requirements raised by staff members or identified through observations of practice. We source training from various providers, prioritising high-quality continuing professional development (CPD) for our staff.

Section 3: Impact

We take a holistic and thoughtful approach to teaching and learning, focusing on developing the 'whole child' and equipping them with the skills necessary for the next stage of their education. We recognise that each child has unique needs and provide support to help them progress from their starting points. The impact of our Early Years curriculum is measured by the confidence, competence, knowledge, and skills our children acquire across the seven areas of learning by the end of each stage.

We ensure that all children receive rich experiences both within and beyond the curriculum, helping them to develop the skills and knowledge needed to become confident, independent, and curious learners ready to succeed in their future educational endeavours. Children make significant progress in Early Years as our Allsorts staff effectively address the learning gaps that children commonly have upon entry, particularly in communication, language, and personal and social skills.

Our ambitious curriculum design allows all children to experience a broad, relevant, and challenging curriculum that meets their needs, leading to successful learning outcomes and good progress

Staff

It is essential for staff to continually reflect on their practices and the impact of those practices to ensure we provide the highest standard of education and care for the children. Every staff member has a responsibility to discuss what is working well for the children and identify areas for improvement.

When staff notice effective practices or areas that require enhancement, they should communicate with their Manager. The Manager will then consult with the Childcare Director to agree on any necessary changes. This consultation process also allows the Childcare Director to evaluate whether what is going well or any successful changes in one setting could be beneficial if implemented in the other two settings, and whether they align with the Allsorts development plan and objectives.

Assessment & Record Keeping

Assessment

Children's progress across all seven areas of learning is regularly monitored using the Family tracker. Staff fill out the tracker based on their professional knowledge and the evidence collected in each child's Learning Journey on Family. Assessment is an ongoing process that helps staff understand a child's current level, identify which learning experiences would benefit them next, and determine if a child requires additional support or further challenges.

Assessments must focus on what a child can do independently and consistently. When assessing, staff should prioritise accuracy and avoid being overly cautious or generous, especially if a child is performing above or below their age-related expectations

Pupil Progress Meetings

Each term, each Key Person will take part in a Pupil Progress Meeting. The meetings centre around a discussion of each individual Key Child's progress, focusing on the child as an individual, their learning and progress, and their agreed next steps.

Recording keeping

The physical evidence used for assessing children consists of a Learning Journal on Family, in which the Key Person compiles photographs, written observations, the child's voice, and examples of their work that showcase genuine progress. The focus of these observations is on quality and authentic development rather than quantity, although staff should contribute to each child's journal regularly.

The aim is for each item added to the journal to capture a moment of true progress for the child, creating a reflection of their unique learning journey and voice throughout their time at Allsorts. Consequently, each child's journal should be highly individualised, highlighting their personal interests and distinct learning paths. It is expected that 80% of the content in the journal represents independent, child-initiated learning

Written Reports

The duration of a child's time at Allsorts depends on the number of progress assessments they receive. Every child who is with us at the age of two will undergo a Two-Year Progress Check, which is shared with the Health Visiting Team. This assessment highlights the child's progress in the prime areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

Progress reports are then compiled around each child's birthday, detailing their progress depending on their age and development. These reports may focus on the prime areas or cover all seven areas of the EYFS. In addition to these reports, mini assessments are conducted periodically to indicate the developmental range the child is in and the specific learning focus the keyworker is addressing with that child.

All reports are sent to parents and discussed with them, providing parents with the opportunity to add their own written comments to their child's report.

Final statement

At Allsorts, we implement a carefully planned and sequenced, knowledge-rich curriculum. This curriculum serves as a progression model that begins in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), focusing on foundational knowledge that supports later learning. It is designed to cultivate resilience, ambition, and integrity in children. Progressively structured from early years onwards, the curriculum ensures that children have ample time to understand and master knowledge and basic skills that are developmentally appropriate, preparing them for future learning.