



LOCATION: CURRICULUM HANDBOOK, DOCUMENT 28

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

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Reviewed By: Claire Wilson

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Statement of Intent

Abbey Court School aims to provide pupils with knowledge, skills and experiences with all learning highly differentiated to meet individual need. We provide a personalised, flexible curriculum that both engages and motivates. It covers all seven areas of learning and supports the children's learning characteristics.

Abbey Court School promotes the themes and principles outlined in the EYFS guidance, to support pupils to have a positive self-image, develop independence and enjoyment within a supportive environment and to encourage a smooth transition by gradual introduction to school. We provide an ethos and atmosphere which helps each child to settle into Nursery or full-time schooling and develop individual abilities in an environment that is secure, supportive, positive and child-centred.

We develop each pupil's thirst for knowledge and curiosity about the world around them and provide experiences which offer relevant and meaningful opportunities taking account of their sensory, physical and learning needs. These experiences extend and develop pupil interests providing a foundation for future learning.

We offer and encourage the involvement of parents/carers as their child begins their education and work to create a relationship of trust which we hope will enhance pupil progress by working together.

I. Introduction

- 1.1. Most Abbey Court pupils start their education in the Nursery during the term of their third birthday.
- 1.2. Early Years education is approached holistically encompassing the physical, social, emotional and intellectual development of the child. The EYFS curriculum aims to provide quality learning experiences; that are balanced and relevant to all pupils, allowing them to make progress related to their starting points.

I.3. The curriculum in the Nursery and Reception at Abbey Court is based on the Development Matters Criteria and differentiated Early Learning goals set for the Foundation Stage accommodating differentiated activities which meet the wide range of levels of learning of our pupils. The Development Matters criteria have been used to create a coverage plan for the seven areas of learning which offers breadth and depth through a variety of topics and consistent assessment which creates a personalised curriculum in line with the pupil's strengths and areas of development.

I.4. The curriculum follows that outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from 4 September 2023.

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development that are equally important and interconnected. Three areas known as 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.

The prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through four specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Progress is reviewed and observations are used to inform weekly short-term planning, which is pupil-specific and focuses on the next steps for pupils in each of the prime areas of learning. Individual Education Plan (IEP) and Annual Review targets support development and progression.

Specific areas are developed through child-initiated activities, IEP and annual review targets and through teacher input.

The Importance of Play in the Early Years

Through play children explore and develop learning experiences which help them to make sense of their world. They can practice and develop ideas, concepts and skills and learn how to control themselves and begin to understand rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively and imaginatively as they play alone, alongside or cooperatively. Through exploration and play, they communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They can express fears, rehearse feelings and take risks in controlled and safe situations.

Through the planning and guiding of activities, the different ways that children learn are reflected in practice. Through opportunities to support and extend playing and exploring, active learning and creating and thinking critically.

Staff take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding children's activities, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

I.5. The maximum free entitlement for three and four year olds in the Nursery is 15 hours a week over 38 weeks. Pupils are entitled to five, three-hour government funded sessions per week.

- 1.6. This policy ensures that all pupils have their entitlement to an Early Years Education in line with Department for Education guidance (Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage-Setting the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five 4th September 2023)

2. SMSC

Abbey Court School makes effective provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) aspects of learning and thus promotes the development of the whole child. Abbey Court School values highly its work in personal, social, health, sex and relationship education and citizenship. We want pupils to become responsible adults and supportive citizens and seek to create an ethos and climate in the school which will help them to flourish as young people; therefore, we actively promote and evaluate pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The four SMSC aspects are connected and the school's provision for one area will often make an impact on another, e.g. when pupils listen to music from different cultures this may also make an impact on their spiritual development. Activities to promote moral development are also likely to have an impact on social development. The school provides opportunities to promote these aspects of pupils' development, within the curriculum. Each subject policy therefore enables staff to be clear about what it means to promote development in these four areas, within each subject. This is further supported through the subject schemes of work and the SMSC Exemplar.

3. Rights Respecting School

Abbey Court School is a Rights Respecting School and puts the 54 articles of the UNICEF Children's Charter at the heart of all school policy. This policy reflects that we believe that as a school we must do everything possible to ensure that, through their learning, our pupils grow as healthy as possible, learn at school, receive protection, have their views listened to, and be treated fairly.

4. Partnership with Parents

- 4.1 Parental involvement in school is encouraged and we recognise that parents/carers are important in their child's education. We aim to develop a partnership with parents/carers to enhance the progress of each child.
- 4.2 Ongoing support and sharing of information and discussions about progress are offered in a variety of ways. Some examples of these are: initial home visits, telephone contact, notes in the home/school contact book, parent's evenings, and informal meetings arranged as needed for each individual child. Additionally, the first parents meeting is held within the child's first term in the nursery, thereafter there are regular termly meetings with parents to talk about progress and areas of development, as well as annual reviews.

5. Curriculum Planning

- 5.1 The planning of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum is based on the Development Matters criteria and the Early Learning Goals. Generally, there will be a topic for each of the six terms but flexibility is built in to allow for special learning opportunities and to seize learning opportunities that are presented through pupils' interests. Each term a curriculum activity plan of activities for the continuous provision is written. This will be changed and added to in accordance with the needs of each new group and altered to reflect the strengths and interests of individuals.

- 5.2 An overview of planned learning activities for the half term will be shown on the Continuous Provision Plans, with details of possible learning that may be encountered and guides those supporting pupils in the next steps for each of the areas of Learning and Development.
- 5.3 They cater for the areas of learning and state possible activities and learning objectives, and outcomes, the Development Matters criteria that may be encountered, vocabulary and resources to be used. The class team regularly annotate these plans in line with the pupil's areas of interest and possible activities which may maximise learning in a motivating way. The progress of individual pupils is evaluated during the term. Where applicable these may then form part of Pupils' individual progress files.

6. Styles of teaching

- 6.1 For young children planned, purposeful play is an essential and rich part of the learning process. Play is a powerful motivator, encouraging children to be creative and to develop ideas, language and understanding.
- 6.2 For our pupils who are at a very early stage of development and have sensory and physical difficulties, teaching using sensory play and practical activities is even more crucial.
- 6.3 The majority of activities are initially teacher-planned to provide the children with opportunities for play, exploration and investigation. Child-initiated activities are encouraged and supported and a free-flow theme is adopted for parts of the day to enhance pupil choice and decision making.
- 6.4 The class teacher's role is developed according to the pupil's needs to include: consultant, assessor, monitor, and participant.
- 6.5 The class teacher uses a variety of teaching styles to meet the pupils' educational needs and the differing demands of all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. This will be reflected in the diversity of styles of learning.
- 6.6 The delivery of Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum education will relate to the full range of strategies as detailed in the Abbey Court Whole School Curriculum Policy.

7. Styles of learning

- 7.1 Pupils will be working at times, individually, in pairs, small groups or whole class groups.
- 7.2 Pupils will be involved in a range of practical and semi-structured activities appropriate to the particular area of learning that is being covered and the needs of specific pupils will be differentiated to support individual needs.
- 7.3 Pupils are encouraged to be independent and investigative, begin to be in control of some elements of their own learning and make sense of the world around them through semi-structured activities, play and self-initiated activities.
- 7.4 Published materials, teacher-generated tasks and practical everyday situations and equipment are used to support pupil development. Teachers will use materials in a differentiated and age-appropriate manner.
- 7.5 All of the above will be used to provide a programme of learning suitable to the individual or group.

8. Assessment

- 8.1 Day-to-day assessment is via observation, discussion, recording and evaluation of sessions with staff and pupils. All these elements are used to inform the next stage of planning.
- 8.2 Planning, recording and evaluating work in the Early Years Foundation Stage is in accordance with the principles and procedures set out in Abbey Court School's Planning Assessment Recording and Reporting Policy.
- 8.3 Whenever possible pupils are encouraged to be involved in the assessment of their own work and each other's.
- 8.4 Moderation of judgements is undertaken internally and with special schools in Medway to ensure that teacher assessment is consistent with those made in other settings. In addition to this, peer moderation takes place amongst teachers and staff within the foundation stage.
- 8.5 Progress towards Development Matters criteria is divided into Emerging, Developing and Secure skills, with judgements recorded alongside observations on Tapestry and termly onto the whole school progress tracker.
- 8.6 When annotating Individual Education Plan targets, the engagement model of assessment is used to measure involvement.
- 8.7 Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts reception, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

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 observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters guidance) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

9. Cross-curricular links

- 9.1 The topic aspect of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum develops cross-curricular teaching through a range of structured, semi-structured activities and free-flow opportunities including an emphasis on play.
- 9.2 For pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties particular emphasis is given to planned sensory support to encourage the development of expressive and receptive language (See Abbey Court School Sensory Room Policy).

10. Special Educational Needs and Differentiation

- 10.1 All activities and opportunities are planned with reference to each individual child's specific needs, interests and areas of strength and development.

10.2 A differentiated approach to curriculum planning is essential to ensure that all pupil needs are met. Focus areas are individually planned to meet the abilities of each pupil, in accordance with Abbey Court Schools S.E.N policy.

11. Staffing (including support staff) and resources

11.1 EYFS teachers are responsible for planning and setting activities and opportunities in the areas of learning, whether as a discrete area of learning on the activity plan or as part of a free-flow, child-initiated approach.

11.2 All staff working in the EYFS have regular training to support their development and fully understand their roles and responsibilities. Yearly Performance Management meetings are in place, during which targets to support their growth are set and reviewed. Specific training for teachers and support staff is facilitated by the Senior Leadership Team advised by the Early Years Leader.

11.3 All staff in the EYFS have up-to-date Safeguarding Training, which includes coverage of Working Together to Safeguard Children, The Prevent Duty Guidance, and Keeping Children Safe in Education.

11.4 A list of available staff who have a current paediatric first aid certificate is displayed around the school and a trained member of staff accompanies children during off-site activities. All staff have up-to-date Emergency first aid training.

11.5 The Early Years/Key stage 1 Leader is responsible for the overview of Early Years resources and will bid for new resources annually in accordance with the requirements identified on the Department action plan and current pupil cohort. This bid is submitted to the Senior Management Team prior to the new financial year.

11.6 The class teacher is the assigned key person for all pupils, in line with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Teaching assistants then support the key worker with individual pupils, support the teacher to deliver targeted teaching, communicate achievements and observe learning. Regular team meetings, ensure opportunities to discuss pupils' learning styles, interests and possible lines of development.

12. Equal Opportunities

12.1 All pupils at Abbey Court School are given appropriate opportunities to access all areas of the curriculum in line with Abbey Court School's Equal Opportunities Policy.

13. Health and Safety

13.1 Teaching and learning is subject to the Abbey Court School's Health and Safety Policy. All staff are responsible for becoming familiar with and adhering to this policy requirement. Each class has a risk assessment specific to that room, which is updated regularly.

13.2 Staff should make a risk assessment whenever new resources or visits off the premises are being planned.

14. Integration including community links

- 14.1 Integration opportunities into a variety of educational settings are developed when appropriate for the needs and entitlements of specific individuals.
- 14.2 Opportunities for pupils to be involved in activities as part of a range of multicultural events are offered and stated alongside outlined topics, as special events. This will be in line with the Abbey Court Multi-Cultural policy.
- 14.3 Opportunities exist and are encouraged for the Early Years children to attend and or be involved in a variety of activities and events with local mainstream settings.
- 14.4 Visits to a wide range of venues within the locality are planned and regarded as an important and enriching experience to support the development of language skills, personal and social development as well as specific subject enrichment.

15. Evaluation and review

- 15.1 The Early years policy will be reviewed regularly in line with the School Development Plan and in light of:
 - Department for Education requirements
 - OFSTED requirements
 - monitoring of its effectiveness after its implementation
 - changes in Abbey Court School's organisation

Appendices of Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

- 1 – Entry Assessment
- 2 – Home Visit Proforma
- 3 – Transition Procedure
- 4 – Transition Protocol
- 5 – Assessment Protocol
- 6 - Key People Rationale

Appendix I

Entry Assessment

1. Initial home visit in the term prior to entry by Department Leader, School Nurse and teacher to gain necessary information and to arrange transition visits (See Transition Procedure)

Agreed proforma used during a visit to gain the following information: -

- Pupil's personal details including relevant family information
- Medical / Physical Needs
- Interests, likes and dislikes
- Self-Help Needs - Toileting, Feeding, Dressing, Social Skills
- Priorities for Learning
- Mobility and equipment needed in school

2. Visit to the Pre-School Playgroup if needed. Discussion with staff and access to documentation at pre-school placement.

3. Disseminate implications of information and documents to school/class staff and any professional agencies involved in order to prepare for any particular needs of the child.

4. Once the child is at school the Entry Profile commences: -

- Observations - by all staff discussed at class team meetings
- Speech and Language Therapist carries out a language assessment including feeding skills and writing of Dysphagia risk assessment if needed
- Social skills, Self - Help assessments carried out
- Physiotherapy programmes and Occupational therapy assessment if appropriate
- Medical procedures are planned and are acted upon if needed. A care plan is written.
- Within 3-4 weeks after observations in the nursery, the levels in each area of the EYFS Curriculum and P levels are set, completing the Baseline, on entry assessment.

5. Close links are kept with the child's parents through the Home/School contact book, meetings and telephone conversations.

6. Parents are invited into school to support with transition and within the first term of their child's first IEP being written to discuss the targets set, to ask for input into the next steps from the pupil's parents. This is also to discuss any particular issues with the team.

7. A brief pen picture of the pupil will be drawn up which consists of; an outline of the pupil, the support plan and implications for teaching and learning. The first IEP will be discussed and agreed with parents at the end of the process

In Addition:

Language and Communication Programme by the Speech and Language Therapist. (All pupils)

Physiotherapy Programme by the Physiotherapist if applicable

Occupational Therapy Programme if applicable

Health Care Plan by the School Nurse if applicable

8. Agreement of proposed IEP targets with the parents at School Parents Evening.

Appendix 2

**ABBEY COURT SCHOOL
PUPIL PERSONAL DETAILS**

Where possible the wishes and views of the parents will be taken be in consideration when writing the health care and dysphagia risk assessment (if applicable) but medical advice is sought to confirm recommendations and must always be followed.

Date and time of home visit:

Carried out by:

Name:

DoB:

Other Input:

Start date:

Sessions Agreed:

Case Worker:

Transport Required:

Address:

Telephone No:

Name of Parents/Guardians/significant persons:

Pertinent Family Information:
(e.g. Siblings, pets)

Pertinent Medical Information: (e.g. Epilepsy, etc)

- Regular medication
- Rescue medication
- Allergies

*The writing of the Health Care Plan will be completed by the nursing team if applicable.

Eating and Drinking:

- How is food usually prepared for your child?
- What self-feeding skills do they have?
- Do they have any specialist feeding equipment?
- Have they ever had any difficulty swallowing or eating?

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Personal Care Needs:

Mobility and equipment:

Communication:

Favourite Toys/Activities:

Likes/Dislikes:

Other Pertinent information:

Signed:

Date:

Appendix 3

Abbey Court School

Transition Procedure into the Nursery

1. Referral for placement is made by the Special Educational Needs Department (caseworker) from the Local Authority.
2. The pupil visits the school with parents and has a meeting with the Headteacher.
3. Following the agreement of a place, the Key Stage Leader contacts parents/carers to set up a home visit.
3. At the home visit informal discussion and observation of the pupil.
Proforma used to gather information in the following areas:-

Pupil's personal details including relevant family information
Medical / Physical Needs
Interests, likes and dislikes
Self-Help Needs - Toileting, Feeding, Dressing, Social Skills
Priorities for Learning
Mobility and equipment needed in school

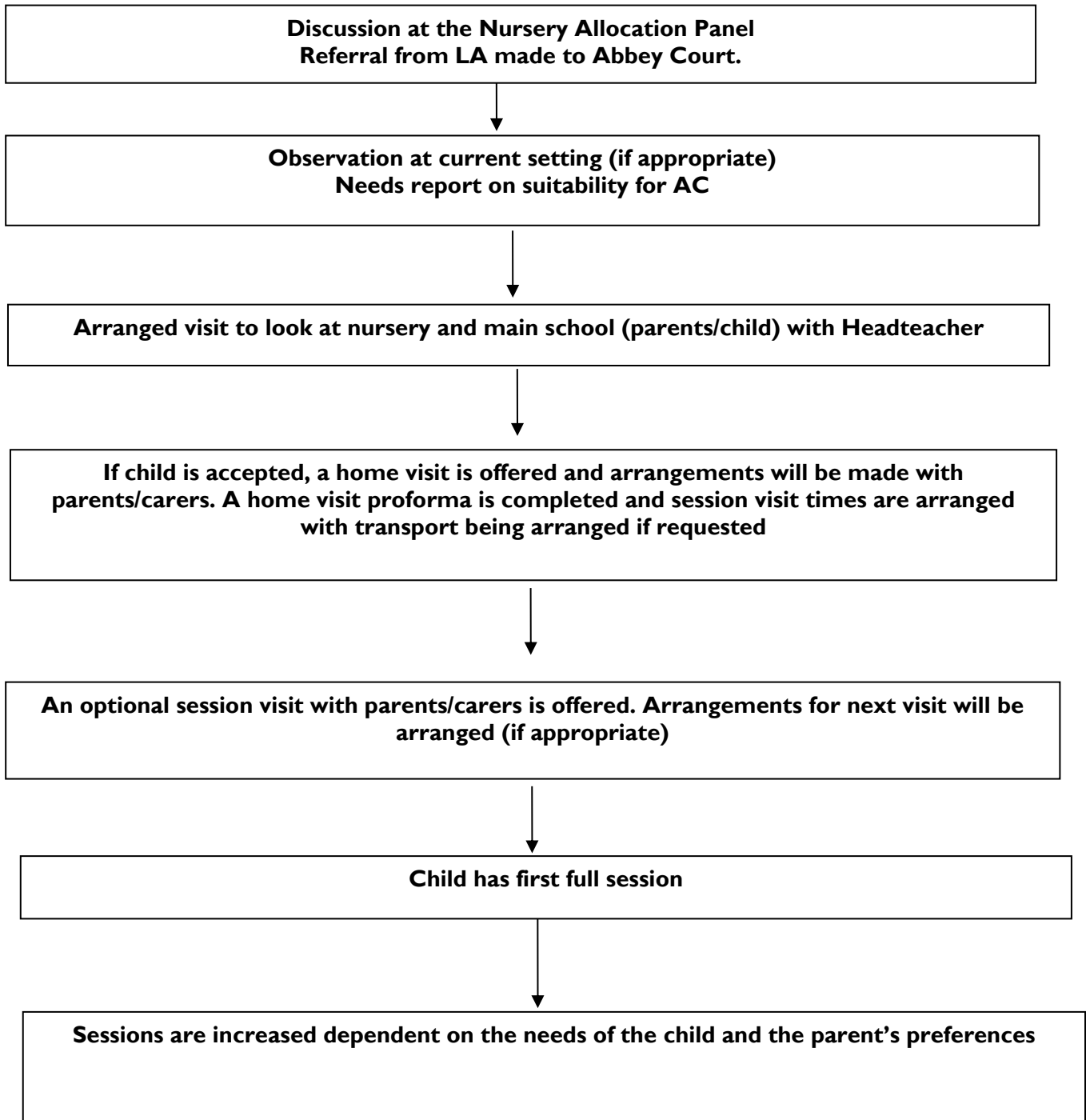
Following the home visit, transition arrangements are agreed after discussion with the parents.

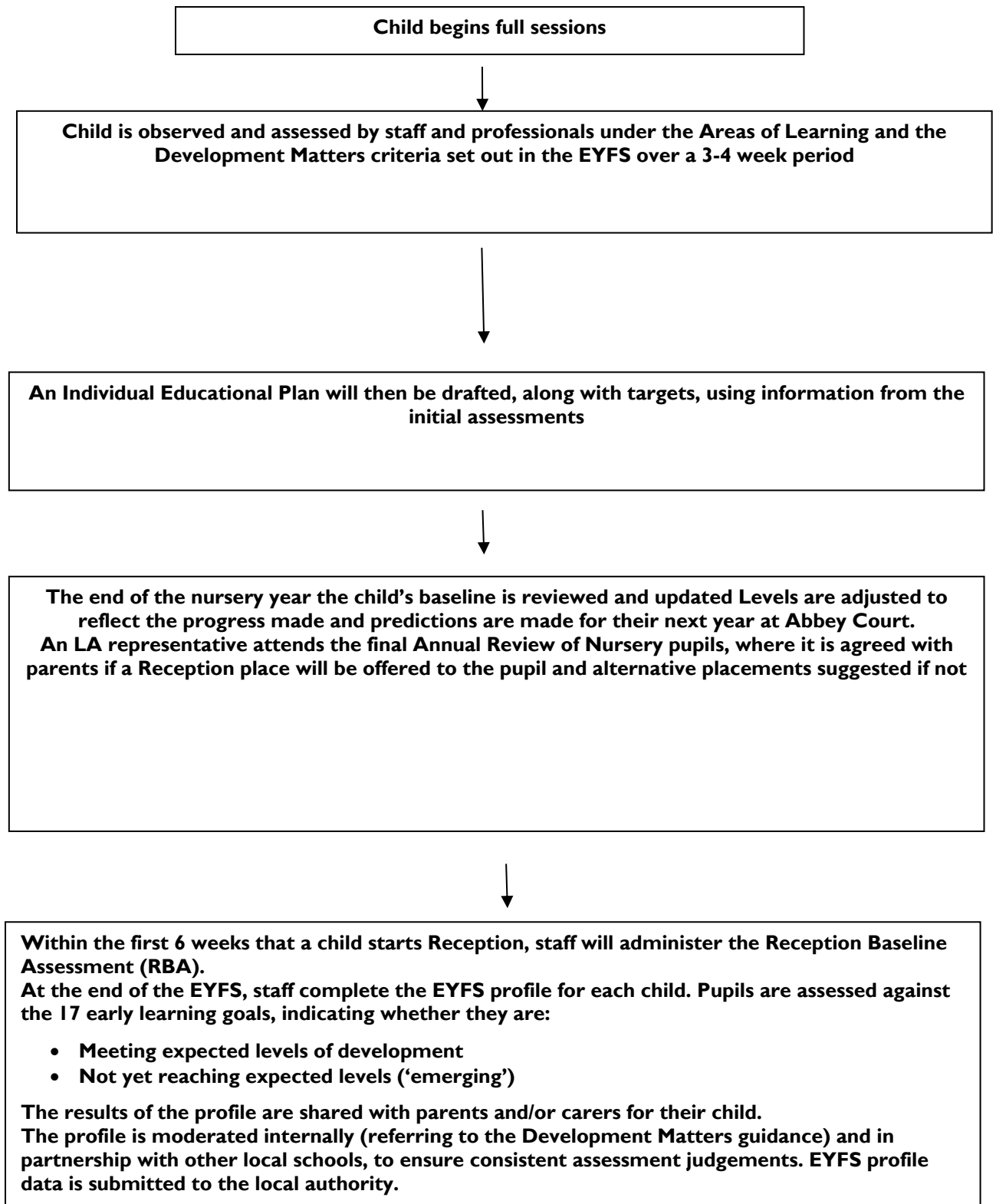
N.B. The Transition programme is normally for an agreed number of short sessions which may be accompanied by a parent/ carer to begin with to enable the child to settle. Then the child increases sessions gradually. This is flexible according to the child's needs

4. The Key Stage Leader informs the Headteacher of arrangements.
5. Details of transition placement is finalised with all parties.
6. Regular reviews of the pupil's attendance are undertaken and the Nursery teacher will regularly discuss with parents increases in levels of attendance.

Appendix 4

Transition Protocol





Appendix 6

The Use of Key People in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Pupils in the Nursery and Reception are assigned a key person, in line with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. The key person helps to ensure that every child's learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs and evidences progress made and helps the child to become familiar with the setting. They will seek to engage pupils in their learning and feedback on this information to the family and seek to support parents in the development of their child's learning at home and help them to engage in specialist support where appropriate. This is done through regular progress updates in the home/school contact book, telephone conversations and meetings.

Due to the specific needs of the pupils, the key person for each child is the class teacher with support from the teaching assistants. This ensures that pupils build good relationships with all members of staff without over-dependence developing. Teaching Assistants have a dialogue about the pupils they have supported, they discuss the pupil's individual learning needs and styles. This allows all staff to understand and fully support pupils when working with them and enables maximum progress.