



New Brancepeth Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Updated: September 2018

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Introduction

1 This policy document reflects the aims and vision of our teaching and learning within the Early Years Foundation Stage. It provides a framework within which all staff work and gives guidance on planning, teaching and assessment. It is in line with current EYFS structure.

1.1 The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from three years of age to the end of the Reception year. The Nursery children are able to start as soon as they have had their 3rd birthday. In our school, we have one intake in September for children joining the Reception year group. (Compulsory schooling begins at the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday.) Key Stage 1 starts for our children at the beginning of Year 1. We also now accept 2 year olds whose parents are in receipt of a Golden Ticket. 2 year olds may start the term after their 2nd birthday i.e. if they are born in December, they are able to start with us in the Spring Term.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is vital in ensuring children receive the best start in life, leaving confident learners that are prepared for later schooling and adulthood. The Early Learning Goals outline developmental steps typically achieved within each age bracket for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

1.2 The Early Years Education we provide is based on the following themes and the principles that inform them:

A Unique Child, Positive Relationships, Enabling Environments

- it builds on prior learning, knowing our learners and what they already know and can do;
- it ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged;
- it offers a structure for learning from a range of starting points
- content that matches the needs of young children attending our setting
- activity that provides opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
- it provides a rich and stimulating environment.

2 Aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage

2.1 The curriculum of the Early Years Foundation Stage underpins all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children's:

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

- Literacy;
- Mathematics;
- Understanding of the World;
- Expressive Arts and Design

3 Teaching and Learning Style

3.1 Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning across all of the Key Stages in our school.

3.2 Important features of practice in our school that relate to the Early Years Foundation Stage are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, to ensure that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- having a clear understanding of children and their development and how different styles of teaching support learning of individuals;
- providing a range of first-hand experiences, offering clear explanations, making appropriate interventions and extending and developing play and talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children progress throughout their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage;
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- opportunities created for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- enabling learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are regularly shared with parents;
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school;
- the clear aims for our work, and the regular monitoring to evaluate and improve what we do;
- regular identification of training needs of all adults working within the Early Years Foundation Stage.

4 Play in the Early Years Foundation Stage

- 4.1** Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them to make sense of the world and develop ideas for self initiated activities. The environment and expectations within the setting encourage the children to learn how to control themselves and develop an understanding of the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

5 Inclusion in the Early Years Foundation Stage

- 5.1** In our school we believe that every child matters. We give our children every opportunity to achieve to their full potential. We plan to ensure that each individual's needs and requirements are met and take into consideration life experiences of all learners (see our policy on school inclusion).
- 5.2** In the Early Years Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, and enable them to achieve to their full potential. Children that progress beyond the expectation of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum are extended and challenged according to the criteria of the Key Stage 1 framework. We plan to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with Special Educational Needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.
- 5.3** We meet the needs of all our children through:
- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
 - using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
 - providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate, scaffold and extend learning;
 - providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
 - using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
 - planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
 - monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary. This involves speech therapy, speaking and

listening groups, and fine and gross motor development sessions for some of our children.

6 The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum

- 6.1 Four guiding principles that shape our early years practice 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**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers; and
 - **children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.**
- Our curriculum covers the education and care of all children in early years, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

These four principles underpin our effective practice in the care, development and learning of young children within our setting. The experiences that our children meet often enable them to develop a number of competencies, skills and concepts across several areas of learning.

- 6.2 Throughout the Reception year in our school, children have daily phonics, mathematics and literacy sessions with a short carpet session and a follow-up activity which the children complete in small groups. As children progress through the year, they will be encouraged to start working more independently. In Nursery, children have a daily Group Time session when they spend time with the other children who are in their group to complete a short activity. Nursery children also have a daily phonics session where they focus on either environmental sounds – tuning their ears into the sounds around them or learning the sounds of the letters. Children in both Nursery and Reception also have daily Physical Development Sessions where they will be involved in activities which will develop their gross and fine motor skills.
- 6.3 The Early Learning Goals provide the basis for planning throughout the Foundation Stage. Our Long-Term plan is a 2-year cycle, based around famous children's authors. Our Medium-Term planning is completed half-termly and identifies the intended learning, with outcomes, for children working towards the Early Learning Goals, and for those exceeding the Early Learning Goals. Our planning is also flexible to allow our practitioners to incorporate children's interests and needs.
- 6.4 Daily synthetic phonics lessons take place following the Letters and Sounds scheme of work to ensure progression in reading skills in line with the Year 1 phonics screening test.

7 Assessment

- 7.1** We use on-going assessment of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of observation, and this involves the teacher and other adults, such as Teaching Assistants as appropriate.
- 7.2** During the children's first 3 weeks in the Reception class, the teacher assesses the ability of each child using a baseline assessment. We use this information to modify the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children. In Nursery, children will be observed as part of their baseline too.
- 7.3** The teacher completes assessments every half term, before making a final judgement at the end of the child's Reception year. The child's next teacher uses this information to make plans for the year ahead. We share this information with parents at parents' evenings and in the report which parents receive in the Summer Term. In Nursery, the teacher will make assessments of children every half-term too. This is based on observations of the children in child-led play as well as in adult-led activities such as Group Times or activities which the children have been taking part in.
- 7.4** Each teacher keeps Special Books and uses these to record examples of each child's work. These Special Books contain a wide range of evidence that we share with parents at each parents' evening. The Special Books are also available in baskets in the entrance of Reception and Nursery so that parents can access them at any time. We also encourage parents to bring in photographs or evidence of achievements made by their child outside of the school.
- 7.5** Reception children have targets in their Mathematics and Literacy books. The school, parents and children all work in partnership to enable the children to reach their targets and identify next steps for progression and learning. Parents receive an annual report that offers brief comments on each child's progress in each area of learning. It highlights the child's strengths and developmental needs and gives details of the child's general progress.

8 The role of parents

- 8.1** We believe that all parents play a vital role in the education of their child. We recognise the role that parents have, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:
- discussions with parents their child before they start in Nursery/Reception;
 - the teacher and Nursery staff visit all children in their home setting prior to them starting Nursery;

- the children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school;
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school;
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our Reception class and Nursery;
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher about any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents each term at which the teacher and the parents discuss the child's progress. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year;
- having flexible admission arrangements that enable children and parents to feel confident in the provision we offer, and by allowing time to discuss each child's circumstances;
- We understand that for most children, going to Nursery is the first time they have been separated from their parents / carers. For this reason we encourage children to visit the Nursery with their parents prior to them starting. Once the child starts Nursery, we encourage parents to stay if there are problems with their child's admission;
- arranging a variety of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents;
- offering a range of activities that support the involvement of parents.

9 Resources

9.1 We plan a learning environment,

- both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children live in and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own choices over the activities on offer to promote independent learning.
- our resources are labelled and have photographs which supports the children to be more independent in accessing resources, but also promotes independence when tidying resources away.

10 Early Intervention

10.1 Through our on-going assessment and observation of children in Early Years Foundation Stage, we are able to identify children who may need some additional support in order to fully access the Early Years Curriculum. We will discuss our concerns with you and with your consent, we may refer your child to external agencies such as Speech and Language for further assessment or we may provide your child with some additional support within school. If a parent has any concerns about their

child's development, Early Years Foundation Staff available on a daily basis to discuss these concerns with the parents. Parents can also speak with the SENCo if they have any concerns about their child's development.

11 Promoting Healthy Lifestyles

- 11.1** Whilst children are in Nursery or Reception, they have a snack mid-morning. To drink, children are offered milk or water and to eat, children have fruit or vegetables. Each child has their own water bottle which has their name on it and the children are able to access these throughout the day.
- 11.2** Children in Nursery and Reception are also enrolled onto the Let's Brush Tooth Brushing scheme and children are encouraged to brush their teeth after having their snack. This is a supervised activity. Toothbrushes are replaced every term. Toothbrushes are regularly sterilised.

12 Outreach Staff

- 12.1** Outreach Staff may be in Nursery and Reception to provide additional support for children in our Nursery and Reception. These staff also provide support to other children in other settings.

13 Key Workers

- 13.1** When your child is admitted into Nursery or Reception, they will be allocated a Key Worker. The role of the Key Worker is to ensure that children feel safe and cared for whilst in Nursery or Reception. The role of the Key Worker is particularly important in settling the child into the setting. The Key Worker is responsible for completing the child's Special Book as well as completing assessments for the child. The Key Worker is the first point of contact if you have any concerns whilst your child is in Nursery or Reception, however as the Early Years Foundation Stage Team work so closely, if the Key Worker were unavailable, parents can speak to any member of staff.

Signed: (Chair of Governors)

Date: September 2018

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