

Beaconside Primary & Nursery School



Early Years Teaching & Learning Policy

Signed by:

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Statement of intent

At Beaconside Primary & Nursery School we offer a curriculum rich in wonder and memorable experiences. We work hard to provide a stimulating environment that provides exciting opportunities, promotes challenge, exploration, adventure and a real love of learning.

It is our **intent** that all children develop physically, verbally, cognitively and emotionally in an environment which values all cultures, communities and people. We aim for our children to be confident and independent and to believe in themselves and interact positively with others.

We understand that play is an integral part of learning, and this is at the heart of our early year's curriculum. We recognise that children have a thirst for knowledge and should be provided with opportunities to engage their inquisitive minds. Therefore, we provide vibrant continuous indoor and outdoor provision, that follows the children's interests to support learners in investigating and developing their skills. We believe that the correct mix of adult-led and child-initiated play ensures the best outcomes for pupils.

Warm and positive relationships between staff and children, consistent routines and strong relationships with parents are key.

We recognise the crucial role that early year's education has to play in providing firm foundations upon which the rest of a child's educational journey is successfully based.

Learning values

As a whole school these are the core leaning values which we develop, promote, model and embed through our early year's provision.

- Ambition
- Independence
- Responsibility
- Communication
- Reflection

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Childcare Act 2016
- Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- Education Act 2011
- DfE (2021) 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Early Years Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Equality Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Behaviour Policy

2. Roles and responsibilities

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Acting in accordance with the '[Headteachers' standards](#)' and the expectations of the school community.
- Ensuring that all staff are up to date with current statutory and Ofsted expectations, including early years team and the SLT.
- Creating a culture where children experience a positive and enriching school life.
- Upholding ambitious educational standards which prepare children from all backgrounds for their next phase of education and life.
- Promoting positive and respectful relationships across the school community and a safe, orderly and inclusive environment.
- Establishing and sustain high-quality, expert teaching across all subjects and phases, built on an evidence-informed understanding of effective teaching and how children learn.
- Ensuring teaching is underpinned by high levels of subject expertise and approaches which respect the distinct nature of subject disciplines or specialist domains.
- Ensuring a broad, structured and coherent curriculum entitlement which sets out the knowledge, skills and values that will be taught.
- Establishing effective curricular leadership.
- Ensuring valid, reliable and proportionate approaches are used when assessing children's knowledge and understanding of the curriculum and ensure effective use is made of formative assessment.
- Forging constructive relationships beyond the school, working in partnership with parents and the local community.

The early years leader is responsible for:

- Leading the early years team in the planning and delivery of a creative and stimulating curriculum based on the Educational Programmes of the '[Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage](#)'.
- Supporting staff development by identifying and/or providing regular training and CPD opportunities.

The teacher is responsible for:

- Taking responsibility for high-quality teaching provision throughout the early years stage.
- Supporting the policies, ethos and vision of the school and actively promoting high levels of achievement in the early years stage.
- Ensuring the educational provision and practice is based in the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning, supports a range of learning needs and develops children's independence.
- Ensuring the requirements for the early years stage, including the arrangement of assessment, are met in line with the relevant statutory requirements.
- Monitoring the progress of children and reporting evaluated data to the headteacher.
- Developing and maintaining effective relationships with parents, colleagues, the governing board and the local community.
- Ensuring parents are informed about their child's progress, development and targets, and are aware of relevant early years policies, practices and procedures.
- Ensuring that the children they support receive learning tailored to their needs.
- Engaging with parents to support them in guiding their child's development at home.
- Helping families with more specialist support, where required.
- Helping children become familiar with the school and acting as a point of contact for children and their parents.

All early years staff are responsible for:

- Acting in accordance with this policy at all times.
- Maintaining their professional knowledge and understanding of statutory documentation.
- Understanding and acting within the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.
- Having proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school.
- Demonstrating consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct.
- Having a firm understanding of child development and age-appropriate needs.
- Supporting and promoting children's early education and development in the EYFS.
- Planning and delivering valuable learning experiences, environments and opportunities that are appropriate to the age, stage and needs of individual and groups of children.
- Identifying the needs, interests and stages of development of individual children.
- Using formative and summative assessment to track children's progress to plan next steps and shape learning opportunities.
- Working cooperatively with colleagues and other professionals to meet the needs of all children and enable them to progress.

- Identifying any areas of concern relating to children and their learning, development and emotional needs.
- Considering whether a child may have SEND which requires specialist support, and knowing and understanding the policy and procedure to follow to provide this.
- Taking charge of their own personal development, including undergoing additional training, and identifying what support they need to benefit children and the provisions in place to support them.

3. Learning and development

In partnership with parents, the school will promote the learning and development of children to ensure they are ready for the next stage of education.

The Educational Programmes of the EYFS

Provision and practice within the early years will be centred around the requirements of the DfE's 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'.

The Educational Programmes in the EYFS underpin the curriculum that will be taught. This will be based on observations of children's needs, interests and stages of development. Teaching will be planned to reflect these interests and individual circumstances through the educational framework in order to provide each child with a challenging and enjoyable experience.

The EYFS framework outlines the seven areas of learning and development that are the Education Programmes of the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'. These are split into two interconnected sections – Prime and Specific:

The 'Prime' areas of learning and development are:

- Communication and language
 - Listening, attention and understanding
 - Speaking
- Physical development
 - Gross motor skills
 - Fine motor skills
- Personal, social and emotional development
 - Self-regulation
 - Managing self
 - Building relationships

The 'Specific' areas of learning and development are:

- Literacy
 - Comprehension
 - Word reading
 - Writing
- Mathematics
 - Numbers

- Numerical patterns
- Understanding the world
 - Past and present
 - People, culture and communities
 - The natural world
- Expressive arts and design
 - Creating with materials
 - Being imaginative and expressive

In organising and implementing educational programmes, the school will ensure that a broad range of activities and experiences are planned, having regard to three characteristics of effective teaching and learning in the EYFS:

- Playing and exploring – children investigate and experience things.
- Active learning – children concentrate, keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy their achievements.
- Creating and thinking critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Curriculum planning

For children to make progress in learning, appropriate planning is important. When planning the curriculum, the school will ensure that:

- Diversity and inclusion are at the heart of planning, ensuring provision enables every child access to engaging and challenging learning.
- Staff observations and ongoing formative assessments are used to inform planning and create an accurate and informed picture each child.
- When planning teaching, it considers:
 - The stages of children’s development.
 - Children’s individual needs and interests.
 - The learning environment, inside and outside.
- Staff develop knowledge of children and their families and use this information to inform practice and provision.
- There are sufficient amounts of time and resources available for staff to engage in planning and assessment activities.
- Curriculum plans are flexible working documents which will be adapted and changed to respond to the needs and interests of children

4. Assessment

Assessment plays an important part in helping the school to recognise children’s progress, understand their needs, plan activities, and assess the need for support.

In line with statutory requirements, the school will undertake a summative assessment of each child’s development at certain stages. These are:

- Reception Baseline Assessment – a short assessment which is taken within the first six weeks of a child starting Reception, regardless of what time of the year this occurs.
- The EYFS Profile – a comprehensive assessment completed at the end of the EYFS to provide a well-rounded picture of a child’s knowledge, understanding and abilities, attainment against the early learning goals (ELGs), and their readiness for Year 1.

Ongoing formative assessments will be used to assess the day-to-day learning and development of children in the EYFS. Practitioners will interact and observe children to understand their achievements, interests and learning needs, and will use this information to shape learning experiences for each child.

Parents will be kept up-to-date with their child’s progress and development, and the early years leader and key person will address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents.

When undertaking assessment activities, all staff members will have due regard to the ‘Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Handbook and Assessment and Reporting Arrangements (ARA) for that year, and any Local Authority advice

5. The learning environment

The school recognises that the physical and emotional environment play an important role in supporting, enabling and extending pupils’ learning and development.

A safe and stimulating environment will be provided. One that values active learning, exploration and play, and one where children feel free to create, make links and develop critical thinking skills.

Learning environments within the school will be well-organised and suitable for group, individual and whole-class learning, with interactive displays and easily accessible resources utilised to encourage independence.

Children will have access to indoor and outdoor learning environments. Staff will plan provision to ensure that there are a range of learning opportunities available, and that the learning opportunities available in the outdoor environment build on and develop those inside.

Independent learning will be encouraged through planned continuous provision where children can make their own selection from a variety of resourced areas.

Staff support children to navigate and access the learning environment, intervening and interacting where necessary to ensure that all learning opportunities and teaching moments are captured and capitalised upon.

Appropriate and stimulating educational visits and visitors, from both within and outside of the local community, are arranged to further expand children’s learning experiences.

The school values the importance of positive relationships. To support this, staff are responsible for:

- Knowing and understanding the families, cultures and what experiences they bring (also known as cultural capital).
- Ensuring they interact and empathise with children.

- Supporting children's emotions.
- Ensuring children feel valued and confident to try new things.

The expectations of behaviour are consistent throughout the different learning areas and children are supported to regulate their emotions through co-regulation and their knowledge of the expectations of the teacher/school.

6. Parental engagement

The school firmly believes that the EYFS cannot function without the support of parents and that children benefit from a strong partnership between staff and parents.

To capitalise on children's school and home experiences, the school is committed to working closely with parents and creating an ongoing dialogue. The school asks that parents support the school by:

- Ensuring that their child regularly attends school, giving reasons for any absences.
- Informing the school of any concerns or problems which may affect their child.
- Actively engaging in the school community.
- Meeting with the teacher when required.
- Enabling their child to be as appropriately dressed as possible with regard to the School Uniform Policy – parents should talk to their child's class teacher if this is a problem so that the school can support this.
- Enabling their child's knowledge and understanding through sharing the ideas sent from school.
- Encouraging their child's development and progress.

The school will support parents by:

- Sharing all school policies and procedures as required, including the school's privacy notice.
- Committing to the wellbeing of all families and children.
- Informing them the school approaches and provision and what teaching and learning is provided.
- The daily routine and the activities offered in the early years and how parents can support their child's learning at home.
- Explaining how support for children with additional needs is provided.
- Providing details of how the school's snack and lunch menus are developed, including how the school caters for allergies and dietary preferences.
- Providing staffing details, including an explanation of their roles.
- Providing communication platforms for parents to make contact.

The school provides support, advice and workshops for parents, with the aim of developing a two-way understanding so that the school can use children's home cultures and backgrounds to enrich and underpin teaching. The school also provides parents with the opportunity to support pupils in their learning with tasks which are set to be completed at home under parental supervision. Tapestry is also used as tool for sharing learning and progress.

Parents are kept up to date through the use of the school website, emails, ScholarPack app messages, fortnightly newsletters, and letters. The school understands the importance of talking with parents, and an open-door policy is in place. Members of the leadership team are available on the playground every morning and the class teacher is available for brief conversations/sharing of information at the classroom door before and after school. More detailed conversations can be arranged via the school office outside of teaching hours.

Parents are also invited to termly parents' evenings where they can speak to the teacher, SENCo, Well-being Mentor and members of the leadership team. Pupils learning and the classroom environment can also be viewed.

The school has a Complaints Procedures Policy in place which is shared with parents – written records are kept of all complaints the school receives.

7. Inclusion

All children are valued as individuals, irrespective of any protected characteristics, in line with the Equality Act 2010. The Equal Opportunities Policy: Pupils ensures that the needs of all children are met, regardless of their protected characteristics.

The EYFS curriculum is planned in order to meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace.

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy ensures all children receive the support they need and are given the best learning experience possible. SEND in the EYFS setting will be monitored and managed by the school SENCO.

8. Transition

The school understands the importance of the transition process and, therefore, adapts its practices to support children settling into their new environment.

In addition to a tour of the school, Nursery and Reception parents are invited to attend an induction parents' information session. This will be attended by EYFS staff, the SENCo and the leadership team who will all be available for individual questions.

Internal transition is a carefully planned process that focusses on a child's needs. Transition meetings are held between Beaconside Nursery and Reception teachers.

Pupils who are joining Nursery or Reception from external settings will have a visit in their setting (where possible) and a transition conversation will take place between school and the setting and school and parents.

Children are supported during transition periods. The school offers sessions during the Summer term prior to child starting primary school. The children will visit at least twice without the support of their parents.

Transition meetings between early years and Year 1 teachers are held during the Summer term. Early years staff provide the Year 1 teachers with information regarding children, allowing them to accurately plan effective learning during Year 1.

The following process is in place to ensure children's successful transition to Year 1:

- Parents are invited to a 'Meet the Teacher' presentation to ensure they know about the year group expectations and procedures, and to seek clarification on any areas.
- Children are invited to a series of visits to their Year 1 class and to meet/engage with their new teacher.
- In the Summer term, early years and Year 1 teachers will meet to discuss each child's development in order to support a smooth transition to Year 1.

9. Monitoring and review

The quality of teaching is continuously monitored by the Early Years Leader/Early Years Advisor/Maths and English subject leads, SENCo and the leadership team.

This policy is reviewed on a biannual basis. The next scheduled review date of this policy is September 2023.

Any changes to this policy are communicated to parents and staff members, who can request a copy of the policy from the school office.