

Bournes Green Infant School

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

Our Vision

At Bournes Green Infant School the governors, staff, children, parents and carers work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust in a community that is strengthened and enriched by a diversity of background, culture and religion. Our priority is to foster the self-confidence, self-esteem and independence of **all** in a climate of growth and opportunity that will enable us to achieve the highest standards. We actively promote a healthy environment in which children enjoy learning and develop the skills needed to become responsible members of society. We aim to bring learning to life.

'**Strength Through Wisdom**' was the original mission statement for our school. Today we nurture our children to be confident and articulate with an enjoyment of learning in the belief that this will enable them to gain strength from their developing wisdom.

See also related policies: Teaching and Learning, Curriculum, Assessment, Behaviour, Equal Opportunities, DDA Scheme, Role of Curriculum Leader, SEN, Early Years, Healthy Schools, Gifted and Talented, Home Activity Guidelines and all subject policies.

Aims at our school

We believe that every child has the right to be included in a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum; and that each child is entitled to have the opportunity to be involved in appropriate education which challenges, motivates and rewards them, so that they can fulfil their individual potential.

Key Principles

In the Early Years Foundation Stage we believe that children need:

- a happy, caring, well-ordered environment with clearly set out 'golden rules' in which they feel secure
- a broad, balanced, challenging curriculum differentiated to meet individual needs
- access to all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage and National Curriculum, when appropriate
- guidance to lead them through the curriculum
- inspiration to stimulate their interest and give them a sense of purpose and an enjoyment of learning

- the opportunity to learn through structured play and talk
- to develop the self-confidence, self-esteem and independence
- opportunities to learn about cultural and religious differences
- building on what they already know as we further develop their skills, knowledge and understanding
- opportunities to develop their basic skills
- an awareness of what it means to be healthy

Introduction and Definitions

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfill their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.' (EYFS, Statutory Framework 2012, p.2.)

'Early Years Foundation Stage' or 'EYFS'

'The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.' (EYFS, Statutory Framework, 2012, pg 2)

There are four guiding principles that should shape practice in 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**, 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**. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities. (EYFS, Statutory Framework, 2012, p.3.)

'Development Matters'

Development Matters is a document to be used by early years practitioners throughout the EYFS as a guide to making best-fit judgments about whether a child is showing typical development for their age, may be at risk of delay or is ahead for their age. Summative assessment supports information sharing with staff, headteacher and Ofsted. At Bournes Green Infant School we use Development Matters to determine a 'baseline' for our children at the start of the school year.

'Early Learning Goals' or 'ELGs'

The Early Learning Goals are the knowledge, skills and understanding which young children of different abilities and maturities are expected to attain by the end of Reception There are ELGs for each of the seven areas of learning within the EYFS.

Admissions & Induction Programme

Places at Bournes Green Infant School are allocated by the local authority in accordance with their Admissions Policy.

Our Induction Programme has been developed over a number of years in consultation with parents (see parent survey).

We are pleased to offer:

- Come and Play sessions - two sessions for all new children to play with current Reception classes
- Learning Conversations- Reception staff to find out about new children, either by meeting or holding a telephone conversation with preschools staff
- New Intake Meeting - children meet their new class teacher and there is an initial parent induction meeting
- Home Visits - A 20 minute visit for parents, children and teachers to meet in the child's home
- Taster Session - following the morning home visit, children come to school for an afternoon session in small groups of six or seven
- Week Two Attendance -children complete alternate mornings and afternoons
- Week Three- All children are expected to complete mornings with the option of staying all day
- Curriculum Meeting - children attend full time and parents find out about the learning and development requirements of the EYFS and the approaches adopted by the school

Class lists are drawn up based on information gathered on friendships, preschool(s) attended, birth dates, gender, ethnicity and any known special needs. In so doing, our aim is to create two classes of similar composition. Once the class lists have been agreed by the Headteacher, they are non-negotiable.

Parents/carers with twins/triplets are asked what their preference is in terms of whether or not their children should be placed in the same, or separate, classes. Every attempt will be made to honour these wishes, and should it not be possible, the Headteacher will meet with the parent/carer, prior to the classes being announced.

Teaching and Learning

The EYFS comprises seven inter-connected areas of learning. Three areas are particularly important for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These three areas, the *prime* areas, are:

- Communication and Language

- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

We must also support children in four *specific* areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

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

In the Reception classes, the EYFS is followed. This is structured to:

- provide for the different starting points from which children develop their learning, building on what they know and can do
- provide relevant and appropriate content that matches the different levels of young children's needs
- provide planned and purposeful activities with opportunities for teaching and learning, both indoors and outdoors

In order to focus teaching and assessment, 'focused-activities' are planned with each of the Prime Areas catered for and one of the Specific Areas. Reception receive a daily phonics session for the duration of the year.

In accordance with best practice in the early years a 'learning through play' approach is adopted in the Reception classes. 'All the areas must be delivered through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities'. Series of lessons are developed to ensure that all children receive this, as well as having equal access to both indoor and outdoor learning environments. Different learning styles are accounted for and opportunities for challenge and extension are provided through the use of higher-order questions and the inclusion of problem-solving and investigative tasks.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Teachers are required to record each child's progress towards the Early Learning Goals against the 'Early Years Foundation Stage Profile'. This provides a means of summing-up each child's learning and development achievements. It is based upon the ongoing observations and assessments of children across all seven areas of learning. Staff must indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, if they are exceeding expected levels, or have not have not yet reached expected levels ('emerging'). This is the EYFS Profile.

In accordance with these requirements, Bournes Green Infant School is committed to participating in all reasonable, annual, moderation activities set by the local authority.

As stated in the EYFS document, Year One teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. These should inform a dialogue between

Reception and Year One teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assist with the planning of activities in Year One.

The approach to assessment in the Reception classes is predominantly 'observation-based'. During the first few weeks in school, the children are assessed by the classroom staff against the document Development Matters 2012. The information gathered is then collated to provide us with 'baseline data'.

From then on, children's skills knowledge and understanding across all seven areas of the curriculum are continuously assessed through regular observations, conversations with the child and through interpretation of activity outcomes.

Individual achievements are recorded in children's 'Learning Journey' and these are shared with parents throughout the year. We also complete termly 'long' observations that are used to guide the progress of individual children by determining what each child has learned and what therefore, is his or her next step.

In accordance with our Marking Policy, feedback to Reception children about their own progress is rarely formalised and is usually undertaken whilst an activity is being carried out, through discussion between child and teacher or when looking retrospectively at photographs or physical 'work' outcomes. The Learning Journey books build on the children's progress throughout the year and also provide a good stimulus for 'learning conversations' both with staff and the children themselves.

Parents/carers are invited to attend parent interviews in the autumn and spring terms. At the end of the Reception year parents receive a summary of their child's achievements through the annual, written report and invited to a celebration evening.

Transition

Throughout the year, children are given regular opportunities to visit the Key Stage One playground and play with the older children.

From the start of the summer-term, the children adopt the morning routine of the children in Key Stage One, by being left at the entrance to the Early Years playground by their parents/carers. Once children are used to this routine they join the rest of the school by being admitted onto the 'big' playground at the start of the day.

On reviewing, the children's personalities and abilities, we sometimes find that it is necessary to revise the existing class lists at the end of the Reception Year in order to regain a balance. The classroom staff carefully considers abilities, needs, personalities and friendships when producing the new class-lists. Children are also asked to identify particular friends. Before finalising the lists, classroom staff endeavours to carry out 'taster sessions' with the proposed groups. These cover a range of contexts including playtimes, snack-times, 'activity times' and whole-class teaching sessions. Once finalised, the class-lists are not negotiable.

Children will have the opportunity to visit their new teacher with their classmates on 'class-swap' day. This is also the day that parents will be advised which class their child will be in and the corresponding staff. As much as possible, further opportunities are created before the end of the Reception Year for the children to visit their new teacher and for the new teacher to visit them in their Reception classrooms.

Before the end of the year, Reception staff meets with Year One colleagues to undertake 'learning conversations' about each individual child and share records and EYFSP data.

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

We support our EAL children in a variety of ways in Reception class. Whole class sessions provide helpful adult models of spoken English and opportunities for careful listening, oral exchange and supportive shared repetition. Group work provides opportunities for intensive, focussed teaching input. We repeat instructions for EAL children when necessary and emphasise key words. Some language may need careful explanation. We also believe in enhancing our curriculum by learning greetings and phrases from the different languages spoken by our children.

Special Educational Needs

It is our intention whenever possible to include all children in all activities. However, some classes may have children whose progress requires special consideration. In this circumstance the class teacher may wish to consider if the activity is the most appropriate way for the child to spend his/her time. The child's Provision Map will form the basis of their work. Some children may also benefit from using additional/special apparatus.

Academically More Able

In accordance with our AMA policy, children who have been identified as having knowledge, skills or talents beyond the levels of attainment of the majority of their peers, are recorded on our 'Awareness List', most usually in the latter part of the year.

'Learning conversations' with pre-school partners and the 'All About Me/My Child' documents completed by parents/carers can provide useful information for support identification of these pupils.

Equal Opportunities

Bournes Green Infant School is an all-inclusive school, and as such we actively promote positive attitudes to all. All activities are made available to all children.

Race Equality

We are constantly seeking to add to our multicultural resources within the Early Years classrooms and aim to build upon the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of the children in our setting. This is achieved in a number of ways, including celebrating a range of festivals and learning greetings in different languages.

Staffing & Roles

In the Reception Year, the minimum teaching staffing ratio is 1:30. At our school we are currently able to provide 1:15 as each class teacher is supported by a full-time, Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) who are also certified paediatric first aiders. When on trips and outings outside of school a paediatric first aider will be present.

These HLTAs also provide our Reception children with continuity of care throughout the day, by also supervising the lunchtime period.

Teaching-assistants work closely with the class teacher to support with the planning and delivery of lessons and to monitor and assess the progress of groups and individuals.

Partnerships with Parents/Carers

Parents are seen as partners in their child's learning and are encouraged to become involved both at home and in school by adding to their child's Learning Journey.

Parents are given the opportunity to become involved in their children's induction into school by bringing their children to 'Come and Play' sessions, attending the New Intake Meeting and Curriculum Meeting, by accepting home-visits and completing the 'All About Me/My Child' documents.

The school also encourages an 'open-door policy' for day-to-day contact, parents have to opportunity to see a member of staff after school.

Teaching staff regularly send letters home to keep parents/carers updated on events and routines in the Reception classes.

In accordance with the Home-Activities Policy, a regular numeracy task is sent home from the beginning of the spring term and parents/carers are kept informed of the sounds and words-of-the-week via a sticker placed in the home-reading diary each week. This book is also used to share details of children's reading experiences in school and at home.

Parent helpers with full DBS clearance are welcomed into the classrooms to help with learning activities in school.

Reviewed by staff in Summer 2016

Reviewed and approved by the Governing Body in Summer 2016