



BREWSTER AVENUE INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL

EYFS POLICY

This policy was ratified by the Full Governing Body on: 28 February 2019

Date for review (this policy will be reviewed every three years): Spring 2021

EYFS Policy

Introduction

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.'

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. At Brewster Avenue Infant and Nursery School children can be admitted into Nursery the term after their third birthday. They are admitted to reception in the September following their fourth birthday.

At Brewster Avenue Infant and Nursery School we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development.

Aims & Objectives

We aim to support all children to become independent and collaborative learners. We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential.

At Brewster Avenue Infant and Nursery School, we will:

- Provide a happy, safe, stimulating and challenging programme of learning and development for the children to experience as they begin their journey through school.
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond and enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence.
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress.
- Develop excellent relationships with parents and carers to build a strong partnership in supporting their children.
- Provide a caring and inclusive learning environment which is sensitive to the requirements of the individual child including those who have additional needs.

The early-years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- It builds on what our children already know and can do;
- It ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged;
- It offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children, and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;

- It provides a rich and stimulating environment;
- It acknowledges the importance of a full working partnership with parents and carers.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based on four themes:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

A Unique Child

At Brewster Avenue Infant and Nursery School we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion - We value the diversity of individuals within the school and believe that every child matters. All children at Brewster Avenue Infant and Nursery School are treated fairly regardless of race, sex, religion or abilities. All families are valued within our school.

We give our children every opportunity to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when we are planning for their learning.

We set realistic and challenging expectations keyed to the needs of our children. We do this 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 and support children and to help them learn effectively;
- Offering a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Employing resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- Planning challenging activities to meet the needs of both boys and girls, of children with special educational needs, of children who are more able, of children with disabilities, of children from all social and cultural backgrounds, of children from different ethnic groups, and of those from diverse linguistic backgrounds;
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary (such as referrals to speech therapy) as necessary;
- Working closely with parents, carers and other outside agencies to ensure all children's needs are met and we enable them to access the curriculum and make good progress.

Positive Relationships

At Brewster Avenue Infant and Nursery School we recognise that children learn to be strong, confident and independent from having secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners - We recognise that parents/carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value being partners with them in their child's education through:

- Inviting parents/carers and children the opportunity to spend time in Reception Class for three induction visits before starting school;
- Providing an induction meeting for Reception parents/carers to meet with staff to discuss school routines, expectations and to answer any questions parents/carers may have;
- Arranging, where possible, visits by the teacher to children in their home setting or childcare provision prior to their starting school;
- Outlining the school's expectations in the Home-School agreement;
- Holding a parent consultation early in the academic year to establish how a child is settling into the school environment;
- Operating an open door policy for parents/carers with any queries or concerns;
- Approaching parents and carers immediately, if Foundation staff have concerns about the progress of a child;
- Written contact through reading diaries and school newsletters;
- Sending home SMILE cards designed to share notable achievements;
- Publishing curriculum information on the school website;
- Inviting parents to attend informal meetings about areas of the curriculum, such as phonics or reading;
- Sharing regularly the children's online 2BuildaProfile 'Learning Journal' with parents/carers and valuing the on-going contributions to this from parents/carers;
- Offering two parent/teacher consultation meetings per year at which their child's progress is discussed;
- Sending a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of their time in reception;
- Asking parents to sign a generic permission form for visits, food tasting and photographs etc.
- Inviting parents and carers to a range of activities throughout the school year such as SMILE assemblies, class cafés, workshops, Christmas productions and sports day etc.

Staff - All staff in the Foundation Stage aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them.

Enabling Environments

At Brewster Avenue Infant and Nursery School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development, where the children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision.

The Foundation Stage classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are specific areas where the children can be active, be quiet, creative etc.

Play-based learning is paramount and children have opportunities to direct their own learning with planned opportunities provided by staff.

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning and reflects the individual's interests, passions and abilities. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning. We ensure that resources and spaces are safe to use and checked regularly.

Reception children also have regular access to our Woodland area. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and in different scales than when indoors. The children can explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. All areas of the curriculum can be explored outside.

Learning and Developing

The EYFS Curriculum

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. None of the areas of learning can be delivered in isolation from the others. Our children's learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skill across a number of learning areas.

They require a balance of adult led and child initiated activities in order for most children to reach the levels required at the end of EYFS. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The three Prime areas are:

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

Staff will also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

Specific Areas:

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

Children's development levels are assessed and as the year progresses, the balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning, as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

However, if a child's progress in any of the prime areas gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents/carers and agree how to support the child.

Reception pupils also participate in a daily phonics session, following the guidance in the "Letters & Sounds" document.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

- Playing and exploring - children will have opportunities to investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.

'Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development.'

Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, learn how to control themselves and understand 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.

- Active learning - children will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements.

"Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods."
(EYFS Statutory Framework)

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence, they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

- Creating and thinking critically - we encourage and support children to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

"When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions." (EYFS Statutory Framework)

Children should be given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning. Adults can support children's thinking and help them make connections by showing interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open ended questions. Children can access resources and move around the classroom freely and purposefully to extend their learning.

Planning, Observation and Assessment

The planning objectives are taken from the Development Matters statements from the Early Years Foundation Stage document building towards achievement of the Early Learning Goals. The planning is based upon themes with discrete phonics, maths, writing and reading directed teaching. However, planning, which is based upon a different topic which is identified as vehicle of interest to deliver the children's next steps in learning, also therefore responds to the needs, achievement and interest of the children.

Foundation Stage staff use observations as the basis for planning. Staff are skilled at observing children to identify their achievements, interests and next steps for learning. These observations then lead the direction of the planning. Relevant and significant observations are recorded in the children's Learning Journal.

During the first month, the teacher assesses the ability of each child. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children. We then make regular assessments of children's learning and use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs.

Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal observations, photographic evidence and through planned activities. Assessment is completed regularly and involves both the teacher and other adults, as appropriate. Progress records, observations and examples of each child's work and form a children Learning Journal, which we share via email and with parents at each parental consultation meeting.

The Foundation Stage Profile is the nationally employed assessment tool that enables teachers to record their observations at the end of the Foundation Stage (Reception year), and to summarise their pupils' progress towards the Early Learning Goals. It covers each of the seven areas of learning contained in the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage. We record each child's level of development against the 17 Early Learning Goals as Emerging, Expected or Exceeding. This data is submitted to the Local Authority and shared with parents via the end-of-year report. The child's Year 1 teacher also uses this information to make plans for the year ahead.

Parents receive an annual written report that comments on their child's learning and progress. We complete these in June, and send them to parents in early July each year.

Teaching & Learning Styles

The features of effective teaching and learning in our school are defined in our policy on teaching and learning. They apply to teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage just as much as they do to the teaching and learning in Key Stage 1.

The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the Foundation Stage are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, carers and other settings that helps our children to feel secure at school, and to develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this must be reflected in their teaching;
- the range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions, and extend and develop the children's play, talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the 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;
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- the support for learning, with appropriate and accessible space, facilities and equipment, both indoors and outdoors;
- the identification, through observations, of children's progress and future learning needs, which are regularly shared with parents;
- the good relationships between our school and the other educational settings in which the children have been learning before joining our school;
- the clear aims of our work, and the regular monitoring of our work to evaluate and improve it;
- the regular identification of training needs for all adults working at the Foundation Stage.

Transitions

Transitions are carefully planned for and time given to ensure continuity of learning. At any transition, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child and other settings, including other nurseries and child minders. Children attend introductory sessions to nursery and reception to develop familiarity with the setting and practitioners.

In the final term of EYFS, the Year 1 teacher will meet with the Early Years staff and discuss each child's development against the Early Learning Goals in order to support a smooth transition to Year 1. This discussion helps the Year 1 teacher to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of those working in Nursery and Reception to follow the principles stated in this policy.

Senior Leaders will carry out monitoring on EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.