

Early Years Foundations Stage (EYFS) Policy
Barnes Infant Academy



Approved by: Mrs J Rushworth

Last reviewed on: October 2024

Next review due by: October 2026

Statement of intent:

This policy has been developed in conjunction with the relevant DfE guidance and legislation to ensure that each child has a happy and positive start to their school life in which they can build a foundation for a love of learning.

The Early Years is a crucial phase in education; it is the basis for long term well-being and lifelong learning.

At Barnes Infant Academy our Early Years Curriculum is designed to be creative, challenging, memorable and meaningful to the children within a safe and caring environment. We aim for children to be active agents in their own learning.

We place a strong emphasis on communication and language and children's social and emotional development.

Children need to be provided with a range of experiences and opportunities that helps to develop their understanding and equips them with the skills needed to be successful, confident, life-long learners who reach their full potential. We recognise and build upon previous learning and strive to develop a curriculum that is engaging and motivating to support all children when reaching their full potential.

Staff follow the statutory framework for the early years foundation stage 2024. Development Matters (revised 2023) is used to support learning and development, Birth to 5 Matters 2021 is also used as a tool to further support practice and provision.

Aims:

We seek to provide:

- A broad and balanced curriculum that gives children the range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and through life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so every child has the opportunity to reach their full potential
- Close partnership between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- Equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported

Through the implementation of this policy, we aim to:

- Give each child a happy and positive start to their school life in which they can establish a solid foundation for a love of learning.
- Enable each child to develop socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally.
- Encourage children to develop independence within a secure and friendly atmosphere.
- Support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing.
- Work alongside parents to meet each child's individual needs to ensure they reach their full potential.

Four guiding principles shape our practice:

- 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 the school and parents.
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning. There are three prime areas that are fundamental to learning and development.

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 of the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Our curriculum embraces the community in which it is situated particularly when recognising the geographical location and the different cultures within our community.

The ability to learn is underpinned by the teaching of basic skills, knowledge, concepts and values. We constantly provide enhancement opportunities to engage inquisitive minds and provide opportunities for children to practise and consolidate learning and skills.

Characteristics of Effective Learning:

We also support and develop the Characteristics of Effective Learning through a play based, interest led approach where staff work hard to support and develop the children across all areas of learning through both adult led and child initiated learning. The Characteristics of Learning are about *how* children learn, thinking about the process rather than the outcome. The Characteristics are the driving force of the learning. We need to ensure that opportunities are provided to promote and support the children with this. Our environments and interactions with the children need to be responsive to their interests and fascinations. We do this through:

- Having Open ended, natural resources
- Uninterrupted play
- Challenging resources
- Staff who support, scaffold and develop children`s thinking.

The three Characteristics of Effective Learning are:

Playing and Exploring – engagement

Children investigate and experience things and `have a go`. This involves the children responding to first hand experiences while playing and representing experiences through imaginative play. During their play children will adapt, and connect learning and experiences. Children will be willing to take risks in their learning and develop the view that getting something wrong is an opportunity to learn.

Active Learning – motivation

Children have opportunities to develop lines of interest and display high levels of concentration. Children keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and they enjoy their achievements.

Creating and thinking critically – thinking for themselves

Children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

Implementation:

Staff plan activities and experiences that enable children to develop and learn effectively. Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests and stages of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan challenging and enjoyable experiences. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required and will liaise with outside agencies where appropriate.

Each area of learning and development will be implemented through both adult-led and child -initiated activities and learning. Staff will respond to ~~each child's~~ emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through friendly and positive interactions.

We have overarching topics that have been carefully planned to support progress in learning and are based on predictable interests. Children's own interests are used by the adults to engage the children in higher level thinking and deeper learning. Child initiated learning is greatly valued and encouraged. Timetables allow the opportunity for sustained periods of child initiated learning in order to develop this. Through adult led learning we introduce new concepts and knowledge, support children to develop new skills and provide opportunities to embed skills and knowledge. The progression of this can be led by the children through enabling environments and continuous provision. Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through adult led and child initiated activities. Practitioners are very skilful when responding to each child's emerging needs and interests, acting `in the moment` and guiding their development through warm, positive interactions.

To provide the opportunities for all children to access the outdoor area and develop a range of skills and learning opportunities, outdoor sessions are timetabled. Being outdoors offers the children further opportunities to explore the world around them, use their senses, develop their language skills and be physically active. It also

supports the development of their confidence when in a larger environment where they can feel more confident and secure. We have regular visits to our local park where children gain different experiences of the great outdoors.

Key Person:

Each child is assigned a key person who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents/carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

In Nursery and Reception children participate in daily key group sessions which are primarily focused on the development of communication and language and personal, social and emotional development. Staff plan sessions linked to current interests and the specific needs of the group.

Letters and Sounds:

Within Nursery children explore Phase 1 of Little Wandle letters and sounds Revised through regular focused sessions and through targeted support within the provision. This helps to secure children's listening skills and oral blending and segmenting skills to help prepare for their next stage.

Within Reception we teach reading through *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised*, which is a systematic and synthetic phonics programme. The children participate in daily phonics sessions. Children in Reception are taught to read and spell words using Phase 2 and 3 GPCs, and words with adjacent consonants (Phase 4) with fluency and accuracy. For further information, please refer to reading policy. Children also complete reading practice sessions three times each week to develop fluency, prosody and comprehension.

Mathematics:

Across EYFS practitioners work alongside children to develop positive attitudes to maths and encourage children to play with numbers, not being afraid to make mistakes.

In Nursery, children engage with stories, books and rhymes that explore early mathematical concepts. They also begin to develop their understanding of numbers 1-3 with the help of our friends the number blocks.

In Reception, teachers use NCETM Mastering Number programme to secure firm foundations in the development of number sense for all children. Through a combination of adult led teaching, opportunities for learning through play and routines children develop their understanding of early maths concepts. Developing spatial reasoning in EYFS is also an important part of mathematical development. In reception, weekly opportunities are planned for children to explore an element of size, shape, measures or position. Continuous provision also allows opportunities for children to practise spatial assembly when playing with resources such as blocks, construction and jigsaws.

Impact:

At Barnes Infant Academy on-going assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to inform planning. Practitioners also take into account information shared by parents/carers.

Children at all levels are helped to reach their full potential. Those who are working above age related expectations are challenged and supported through opportunities for greater depth. Those who are not working at age related expectations are encouraged and given targeted support to embed skills and to learn in a style that suits their needs.

From their different starting points, all children will make good progress academically, emotionally, creatively and physically. Knowledge, understanding and skills will be secured so children attain high and are fully prepared for the next stage in their education.

Children's progress and attainment is monitored by regular pupil progress meetings, scrutiny of planning, learning walks and observations, evidence of learning and discussions with staff and children. Pupil progress meetings are held each term to ensure children's needs are met and that they achieve their full potential.

At the end of EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against all 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Working at the expected level of development (ELG)
- Not yet meeting the expected level of development (Emerging)

The profile reflects on-going observations and discussions with parents/carers. The results of the profile are shared with the parents/carers.

The purpose of the profile is to inform parents about their child's development against all Early Learning Goals and the characteristics of effective learning, it also supports a smooth transition to Key Stage One as it is the basis of professional conversations and helps Year One teachers to plan effectively for their new cohort.

Working with parents:

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value greatly the contributions they make. We understand that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents/carers.

At Barnes Infant Academy we work hard to develop relationships with our parents/carers from the very beginning. We do this through:

- Induction meetings and induction visits before the child starts Nursery or Reception.
- Home visits with every child new to the EYFS – this provides the opportunity for the family to meet staff within an environment where they feel comfortable and provides the opportunity to ask any questions or share any information.

- Regular parent consultations where parents/carers can discuss their child's interests and progress and together agree next steps for learning.
- Class Dojo as a form of communication.
- An `open door` policy where staff are available if parents do have any questions or concerns.
- Activities, workshops and stay and play sessions arranged throughout the year that encourage collaboration between children, school and parents/carers.
- Parents/carers are invited along on any visits or trips.

Parents/carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. The EYFS profile helps to provide parents/carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Health and safety

A first-aid box is located in the First Aid Room and in Nursery provision.

The school's Medicines in School Policy outlines the procedures for administering medicines.

The class teacher will report any accident or injury involving a child to their parents on the day it occurs, and any first-aid treatment administered to a child will also be reported to their parents.

Accidents and injuries will be also be recorded.

The school has a Fire Evacuation Plan in place.

Any food or drink provided to children is healthy, balanced and nutritious.

Information about any dietary requirements, preferences, food allergies and any special health requirements a child has will be recorded and shared with the staff working with the child.

Safeguarding and welfare procedures

All necessary steps are taken to keep the children in our care safe and well. Any safeguarding or welfare issues will be dealt with in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, and all members of staff in the EYFS are required to read this policy as part of their induction training.

The DSL is Mrs Whiteside, the deputy DSL are Mrs Rushworth and ~~Miss Young~~.

The DSL is responsible for safeguarding children and liaising with local children's services as appropriate. The deputy DSL will undertake the duties of the DSL in their absence, but overall responsibility for safeguarding will remain with the DSL.

The DSL and deputy DSL will undertake child protection training as required.

Staff will receive safeguarding training that enables them to understand the safeguarding policy and procedures, have up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues, and recognise signs of potential abuse and neglect

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by Mrs Janine Rushworth – EYFS Lead and Assistant Headteacher every 2 years.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.