



The BAWB Collaboration – Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Aims

- To give each child a happy, positive and fun start to their school life in which they can establish solid foundations on which to expand and foster a deep love of learning.
- To offer each child a wide range of new and exciting experiences and give them the opportunity to consolidate, explore and test them out along with their own, individual experiences.
- To enable each child, through encouragement and high expectations, to develop, to the full, socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally.
- To offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited opportunity for development.
- To encourage children to develop independence within a loving, secure and friendly atmosphere.
- To support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing.
- To help each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and developing the confidence to work towards personal goals.

The Curriculum

The Nursery and Reception children follow the curriculum as outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) document, which is available to download at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/299391/DFE-00337-2014.pdf.

This clearly defines what we teach, supported by this policy which details practice in our collaboration.

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are seen as important and interconnected. Three areas are seen as particularly important for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, for building their capacity to learn and form relationships and thrive (DfE 2014: 1.3), they support children's learning in all other areas, they are known as the prime areas.

The three prime areas are:

- **Communication and Language** – Listening and Attention, Understanding and Speaking
- **Physical Development** – Moving and Handling and Self care
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development** – Making relationships, Managing feelings and behaviour and Self-confidence and Self-awareness

The specific areas of learning develop essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society. The specific areas are:

- **Literacy** – Reading and Writing
- **Mathematics** – Numbers and Space, Shape and Measures
- **Understanding the World** – People and communities, The world and Technology
- **Expressive Arts and Design** – Exploring and using media and materials and Being Imaginative



Characteristics of Effective Learning

Characteristics of Effective Learning highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them.

The three characteristics are:

- **Playing and Exploring** – children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- **Active Learning** – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- **Creating and Thinking Critically** – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Teaching strategies

We ensure that there is a balance of adult-led and child initiated activities throughout the day. Although much of the time is spent with children self-selecting tasks, the interaction between the adult and child is essential as the adult's response to children builds understanding and therefore guides new learning. The adult's role is to continually model, demonstrate and question what the child is doing.

In some cases the adult will ask a child to come and complete a task or game with them; at other times they will participate in a child's game, extending it where possible.

By the summer term in Reception the children will experience many more adult directed tasks as they prepare for their transition to year 1.

Play

Learning through play is an important part of our EYFS classrooms. We believe children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them. Using children's interests as a starting point, we provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning to help them make sense of the world. They have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own.

They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experience at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests and inspire those around them. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. We believe it is important that adults take an active role in child initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating and extending their play. Getting the balance right between child-initiated play, which is controlled, and adult led activities is very important to us.

Teaching

We include direct, carefully planned, adult led experiences for children in the form of structured teaching and group activities. These are particularly important in helping children to learn specific skills and knowledge and it is often through children's play that we see how much of this learning children have understood and absorbed.

Each day we follow a timetable with set routines in place. We set aside times each day when the children come together to be taught in the more traditional sense, gathered together on the carpet as a class. In these slots we focus on our topic work, maths, literacy, phonics, and stories. These sessions help to develop vital habits of learning: learning as a group, listening to the teacher, taking turns to answer, sitting still etc...

Reading and story play an important part of the day. We want to make sure our children have a love of books and will leave the EYFS with a bank of stories they know well, both traditional and modern classics. We make sure there is



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always time for whole class story at the end of the day but also that there are many opportunities to enjoy books at other times. Every child is given their own book bag and has a designated day when they will have one-to-one time sharing books with an adult (although it is fine for others to listen too!) or, in Reception, a group reading session (guided reading).

Planning

We believe that many children need to be given a starting point to learn new things and find that topics/themes are a great way to inspire children. We have a four-year theme cycle (in line with our KS1 and KS2 curriculum). Learning in these theme areas in EYFS is often centred on:

- Understanding the World
- Literacy
- Communication and Language

Themes are flexible to ensure that we also take direction from children's own interests.

Staff plan in detail on a weekly basis using daily notes, observations and interactions with children to inform progression through the learning journey. Although class teachers are responsible for writing plans, the EYFS team plan together with input from Teaching Assistants.

Classroom Organisation

Our Early Years classrooms have defined areas with clearly labelled resources to ensure that children can access them easily. Each classroom is set up in a way to provide children with experiences and activities in all of the seven areas of learning. Classrooms have a writing area, maths area, creative area, book corner, role play area, construction/small world area, outdoor area and carpeted teaching area, amongst others. A variety of activities are planned for and set up in the different areas each day. The adults move to whichever area their focus for the session/day is.

The outdoor area is a very important part of the classroom with many children choosing to learn outside for much of the day. We try to ensure that the range of activities outside reflects the different curriculum areas through an open-ended and creative approach; using natural resources where possible.

Each child has their own labelled peg. We encourage children to take responsibility for keeping their clothes, book bag and work safely in one place, and for putting their home-school link book into the box on arrival into school.

Assessment, Observations and Portfolios

Assessment is an essential part of the learning and development of children in the EYFS. It involves practitioners observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations.

To ensure we have evidence of a child's progress in the EYFS we use a range of strategies all of which come together in their individual portfolio which is managed in software called 2BAP 92 Build-aProfile). We are very proud of our portfolios: these are collections of children's work, photos and observations which create a detailed picture of the child.

Where appropriate, we include individual next steps for children's learning. These next steps are discussed by the EYFS team in informal meetings and inform planning for the next day and week ahead. Staff have iPads to capture observations.



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Parents are sent electronic portfolios every fortnight and have the opportunity to respond by email. In addition, parents communicate regularly via the home-school link book.

On entry to Nursery and Reception, we carry out baseline assessments for each child. These results will be shared with parents from September 2017.

Throughout the Early Years, summative assessment (informed by all observations and formative assessment) is made termly, showing each child's development across the seven areas of learning.

At the end of Reception, the class teacher assesses each child against the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELGs) and decides whether a child's development in each is either 'emerging', 'expected' or 'exceeding'. This information is also communicated to parents and carers in the Reception child's end of year report.

Partnership with Parents and Carers

We believe that parents and carers are a child's first educator and therefore work very closely to ensure they are involved in what we do with their child at school. We want parents to feel they can speak to us about their child at any time and feel comfortable in our setting. We have an open-door policy and parents are encouraged to come into the setting in the morning and when collecting their children.

Before your child starts in our EYFS setting, members of staff will visit any previous settings (e.g. playgroup 0) and will make arrangements for a home-visit where appropriate. Over the first few days at the school we encourage parents and carers to stay for as long as they wish in the classroom to ensure the transition to the school goes smoothly.

Health & Safety and Safeguarding

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance (2014):

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/299391/DFE-00337-2014.pdf

It is important to note that members of staff do not use their mobile phones or personal handset devices in the classroom and are prohibited from taking photographs with their personal handsets. Members of staff do, however, use school iPads to take photographs as evidence to support the regular observation assessment cycle in the EYFS. These photographs are used in children's portfolios, in class displays and on the school website. All parents are asked to state if they give permission for their child's image to be used on the school website through the paperwork in their initial starter packs.

We take all accidents seriously and always log and phone home immediately if a child bangs their head. We also endeavour to report minor incidents to parents in the interests of effective communication and home-school links.