



FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

UPDATED NOVEMBER 2018

"Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil 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."

"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."

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage
Department for Education, 2014

At Birkwood Primary School, we are committed to providing a high quality early years education, which gives children a secure and confident start to their school life and nurtures a lifelong love of learning. We are fully committed to the purpose and aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework.

Staffing and Organisation

The Foundation stage focuses on the needs of children from 3 to the end of Foundation Stage. Although there is a two-term entry into the FS1, if places do become available at other times of the year then children will join us shortly after their third birthday. At over subscribed times some children will not start until they are four. There is a one term intake of 40 FS2 children in September comprising of two classes of 20; Pupil Premium Funding has enabled class sizes to remain small.

The unit is divided into two areas; a nursery setting and a foundation stage two setting. Therefore, the learning environment can be tailored to meet the needs of the children.

Staff are organised to support the children in a balance of adult led and child initiated experiences throughout the day in both settings. All children access a phonics and numeracy session every day. All further sessions include free flow access to the provisional areas indoors and outdoors. Practitioners are aware of the need to be flexible in order to respond to unplanned events that the children are interested in.

Planning

The Early Learning Goals are the knowledge, skills and understanding which young children should have acquired by the time they reach the age of five. There are three prime areas of learning:

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

Within the Foundation Stage we 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

Our planning has a sharp focus on the children's needs, their interests and their stages of development. We recognise that the seven areas of learning cannot be delivered in isolation and seek opportunities to make links between them. We aim to deliver the curriculum through planned, purposeful play and present new concepts in meaningful contexts that enable the children to build on what they already know.

Long Term Planning

Long term planning shows the aims and values and demonstrates how continuous provision meets the EYFS requirements.

Medium Term Planning

Medium term planning shows the key learning objectives for each area of the curriculum. Practitioners use this flexibly, choosing learning experiences to meet the needs of the children. At the beginning of each topic, practitioners lead the children in discussion in identifying areas that they are particularly interested in. These ideas are incorporated into medium term planning.

Short Term Planning

Short term planning shows the learning opportunities that will be available throughout the week. It includes differentiated experiences for all curriculum areas, as well as showing how the learning environment will be enhanced in response to the previous week's observations and assessment of the children.

Effective Teaching and Learning

Children are encouraged to play an active role in shaping their learning experiences. Adults engage in discussion with the children about what they are interested in, which skills they would like to develop further and which resources they need to support their learning. The children look at and discuss their Learning folders and electronic journey with their key person and with their parents/carers at Open days and parent's evenings throughout the year.

We aim to provide an attractive, challenging and supportive learning environment that offers high quality opportunities for the children to learn through play, both indoors and outdoors. There is a range of "continuous provision" available in the unit, that is designed to offer open-ended, practical learning opportunities. Children are supported to think creatively and imaginatively and explore how resources can be adapted. The provision is enhanced with additional resources every one to two weeks based on the children's needs and their next steps.

The adult led focused activities incorporate CLL, Literacy, mathematics and Open Futures; the children are grouped according to ability across EYFS for phonics and mathematics. There are also practical activities and these are based on first hand experiences wherever possible. The children are supported to develop problem-solving skills through open-ended tasks and opportunities to share their thinking with others.

Observation and Assessment

Internal assessment systems are robust, accurate and inform provision. Staff undertake intensive assessments relating to each individual child, collating as much information as possible, this may include pre-school visits, observations, Open Days, transition visits including visits from other settings. At Birkwood, the robust process includes:

Pre-school

- Visits from other settings are organised as part of the transition process;
- Where necessary, Birkwood staff visit other settings;
- Observations and home visits are undertaken with parents and carers for children new to the setting in both nursery and Foundation Stage 2.
- An Open Day is held for all new children and their families in nursery
- A transition Morning and lunch is held for all children starting in Foundation stage 2
- Information and documentation collected from other settings which informs initial judgements;

- Informal conversations with parents, including an 'All about me' booklet that parents can complete with their child;
- School documents shared with parents, e.g. School Prospectus and school information provided on a memory stick.

Within the first 15 days (or longer if a child requires more time to settle)

- Collect evidence from other settings, for example individual Learning Journeys that inform similar documentation within our setting;
- Where available and appropriate, information is collected from other agencies, e.g. Health Visitor, Parent Support Advisor, this informs the required provision and support;
- Formal and informal baseline observations commence immediately and take place from the 1st to the 15th day of starting at Nursery (or longer if a child requires more time to settle);
- A key person is assigned to each child and is responsible for the above assessments;
- Records of observations, conversations with other children and adults, photographs, pieces of work are utilised to assess each child against the criteria from the New EYFS Framework;
- This evidence is collated into an individual Learning log on Eazmag.

During child initiated activities, practitioners record 'snapshot' observations on iPads. Notes about guided activities are recorded also on iPads or planning sheets. In Foundation Stage 2 children have a literacy folder, a mathematics folder and a topic folder. In Nursery children have a learning folder. Each child has a 'Learning Journey' on the EAZMag system and all observations are gathered along with photographs and recordings which inform tracking and assessments.

In the Summer Term, FS2 staff consider the 17 ELGS in the EYFS Profile to decide whether a child is working at the **expected** levels, **exceeding** the levels or have not yet met the levels (**emerging**).

Judgements against the ELGs are based on ongoing observations; all relevant records; discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

At the end of the year, Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report and the information is transferred onto Educator. This helps to create a smooth transition and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1.

Working in Partnership

We recognise that children may access EYFS provision through other providers throughout the week and that all providers have an equally important role to play in their early years experiences. We seek information about the other settings that our children attend so that we can establish communication about their learning and development.

Parent Partnerships

We value the contribution that our parents and carers make to their child's learning and take every opportunity to work in collaboration with them. Each half term, we publish a newsletter to inform parents of what their child will be learning and how they can support them at home. Parent consultations are held termly. We welcome contributions from home and provide interest sheets for parents and carers to complete. We offer workshops and 'Stay and Learn' sessions for parents to attend through the year. The FS2 children take reading books and a phonics pack home to share and also have a Home Learning folder that encourages home/school links. Parents also have access to their child's electronic learning journal on EazMag through a parent app.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

We give every child the opportunity to achieve and be 'the best they can be' and we do this by taking account of our children's life experiences when planning for their learning.

We meet the needs of the children 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 safe and supportive learning environment in which the contributions of all children are valued;
- Using resources that reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding requires extension activities.
- Small intervention groups for children who need extra support.

Visits

Written parental permission to take the children into the local environment is sought upon admission to the school. Further permission is obtained for any other visits linked to topics and themes. Risk assessments are completed accordingly.

Key Person Approach

In Nursey each child is assigned a 'key person' who may be the teacher, nursery nurse or a teaching assistant. Parents are informed of who their child's key person is and receive information about their role.

The key person's responsibilities include:

- Helping the child to become familiar with the setting.
- Building a relationship with each child's parents, working in partnership with them to ensure that the child is being cared for appropriately for each family.
- Responding sensitively to the child's needs, feelings, ideas and behaviour.
- Ensuring that the learning opportunities on offer meet the needs of each child.

In Foundation Stage 2 the children are organised into two classes and have a 'key person' who may be the teacher or teaching assistant. They are split into ability groups for phonics, mathematics, squiggle while you wiggle and dough disco and work with all adults across the setting in further guided groups.

Risk Assessments

In addition to the school's risk assessment, there is a foundation stage risk assessment document to address hazards in the provisional areas indoors and outdoors. The hazards are identified and managed.

Information for Parents and Carers

A prospectus is provided for new parents and carers that includes information about Birkwood Primary School and an EYFS pack which details the types of activities provided, staffing and food and drink. There is a weekly newsletter that is sent home with the children every Friday to inform parents/carers about upcoming events or important dates.

Transition from Pre-school to the Foundation Stage

We work closely with our feeder settings to ensure that children make a smooth transition to school. We have contact with the settings throughout the year and invite them to visit us on a regular basis. In the summer term, we organise opportunities for each setting to bring groups of children to visit. School staff makes additional visits to talk to pre-school staff.

We hold a transition meeting for new parents in the summer term, where we outline daily routines and expectations. Parents are invited to attend an Open Day with their child where we collect information about the child and if parents wish organise a home visit.

Being Active

The children have access to an outdoor area, which provides a range of physical activities; including large balls, bats and balls, digging equipment and climbing apparatus. The F2 children are also able to access the trim trail on the main playground. The children take part in one PE session each week.

Food and Drink

We provide a ‘free flow’ snack area in Nursery. In Foundation Stage 2 the children have a ‘snack time’, in the morning, where they develop the speaking and listening skills while enjoying their snack, milk or water. A range of healthy snacks are available, supplied by “The School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme”.

Information about the children’s dietary needs is sought when they enter the setting. A list of the children’s dietary needs is available in the unit and all practitioners have regard to this when putting out food and drink in the snack area or when leading a cooking or food tasting activity.

Illnesses and Injuries

If a child becomes unwell whilst at school, a member of staff will:

- Phone the parents/carers, explain that their child is unwell, explain the symptoms noted and ask them to collect their child.
- Sit with the child in a quiet place away from other children, if possible, until the parents arrive.
- If the child has had sickness or diarrhoea, explain the policy of at least a 48 hour clearance of either symptom before the child may return.

In the case of an injury, appropriate first aid will be administered by a qualified first aider. A first aid kit is kept in the unit and its contents are in accordance with advice from the Health and Safety Executive and the Community Health Physician. All accidents are recorded in one of the school’s accident books and signed by the member of staff who dealt with the incident. The staff member dealing with the incident is responsible for completing an accident slip and this is sent home with the child at the end of the day. Parents/carers may be contacted by telephone to inform them of an injury if deemed necessary.

Monitoring and Review

The Governing Body reviews this policy every 2 years. The Governors may, however, review the policy earlier than this, if the government introduces new regulations, or if the Governing Body receives recommendations on how the policy might be improved.

This policy will be reviewed in November 2020.

Signed _____ Headteacher Date _____

Signed _____ Chair of Governors Date _____