

Breachwood Green JMI



Foundation Stage Policy

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Foundation Stage Policy

Introduction

At Breachwood Green school we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning. We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent. We value the individual child and work alongside parents and others to meet their needs and help every child to reach their full potential.

Children join us at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. We believe that even the youngest of children benefit from being in school at the start of the academic year. In highly exceptional circumstances, summer born children may start in the January before their fifth birthday if not ready to start in September (Compulsory schooling begins at the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday). Key Stage 1 begins at the beginning of Year 1. The Foundation Stage is important in its own right, preparing children for later schooling. The Early Learning Goals set out what is expected of the children by the end of the Foundation Stage.

As outlined in the EYFS '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.'

The following documents should be read in conjunction with this policy: Admissions Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy; Behaviour Policy; Child protection and Safeguarding, Assessment and Curriculum.

The Early Years Foundation Stage framework

Teaching in the EYFS is delivered in accordance with the government's statutory document 'The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage'. This document is a principled approach to Early Years education, bringing together children's welfare, learning and development requirements through four themes.

- Every child is an **unique child**, 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

- **Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates**

Principles into practice

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven areas of learning, using play as the vehicle for learning
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support
- Work in partnership with parents and within the wider context
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-initiated and child-initiated, supported by the adult
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and out

Foundation Stage Curriculum

In Class 1, a mixed Reception/Year 1 class, we plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based upon our observation of the children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve and exceed the early learning goals. All the seven areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

Careful planning and organisation ensures that the Year 1 children are appropriately challenged and follow the National Curriculum.

During the Foundation Stage, 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.

These three areas are the **prime** areas:

Communication and Language

Physical Development

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Children are also supported through the 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

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which they explore, think creatively and are active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

The class teachers plan using the EYFS based on a series of topics over a 2 year cycle each of which offers experiences in all seven areas. These plans then inform the short-term weekly planning, alongside our observations, which remains flexible for unplanned circumstances or children's responses.

Children experience whole group and small group learning opportunities which increase formality as they progress through the EYFS. We deliver a daily phonics session using 'Letters and Sounds'.

Our curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the EYFS.

'Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities'

Time is carefully planned to ensure there is a balance between children having the time and space to engage in their own child-initiated learning and activities which are planned and led by adults. During child-initiated learning, the early years practitioners interact to stretch and challenge children to take their learning forward.

In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice.

We aim to create a stimulating environment to encourage children to free-flow between the inside and outside areas.

Observation and Assessment

The main EYFS assessment method is through practitioners' observations of children in different teaching and learning contexts, including both adult focused activities and child initiated play. Observations take place on a daily basis (both formally and informally). Practitioners make time to carry out planned observations of individuals and groups of children regularly. They also make spontaneous observations in order to capture significant moments of children's learning. All

practitioners are involved in observing children. Practitioners use observations to support their developing knowledge of individual children. It informs them of children's abilities, needs, interests and learning styles. Observations are evaluated, children's learning priorities are identified and relevant learning opportunities are planned to support children to make the next steps and progress.

Learning Journeys record children's progress over the academic year in all Areas of Learning and Development of the EYFS framework. Samples of children's work are gathered, along with photographic evidence, quotes and observations. There is continuous monitoring and assessment of each child's development using the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. At the end of the academic year it provides a summary of every child's development and learning achievements. Baseline assessment is carried out using the EYFS Profile during the children's first four weeks upon entering the school. Judgments made on children's development in the Profiles are based on practitioners' evidence of children's behaviour observed independently and consistently in their self-initiated activities across all Areas of Learning and Development.

The parents and guardians are given the opportunity to meet with the Foundation Stage Team each term and, at the end of the third term, we provide a written summary in relation to the children's early learning goals and the Characteristics of Effective Learning to parents and guardians.

The Early Years teachers will attend moderation cluster meetings upon request. Internal moderation takes place during the Early Years Team meetings.

Key Person

The key person approach is aimed at enabling and supporting close attachments between children and practitioners. Attachment provides a sense of security so that children can become confident, independent and capable young learners.

At school, the key person is the Early Years class teacher. Their role is to meet the needs of each child in their care and respond sensitively to their feelings, talking to the parents and working in partnership with them. They will of course work in close partnership with the other practitioners operating within the setting.

Safety

The children's safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. We have stringent policies, procedures and documents in place to ensure children's safety and wellbeing.

We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of fruit and following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident. We adhere to the statutory welfare requirements as detailed in the Early Years Foundation stage documentation.

Independence

We aim for all our children to be self-sufficient and independent learners. They are encouraged to take responsibility for their own belongings including their PE kits, plimsolls and personal hygiene.

Inclusion

We value all our children as individuals at Breachwood Green School, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace so that most of our children achieve and even exceed the Early Learning Goals. We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so, work closely with parents and outside agencies.

Parents as Partners and the Wider context

We strive to create and maintain partnership with parents and carers as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child's learning. We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child's education and care in numerous

Working with other services and organisations is integral to our practice in order to meet the needs of our children. At times we may need to share information with other professionals to provide the best support possible.

We draw on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on outings/inviting members of the community into our setting.

The Induction Process

Parents of new Reception Year children are invited to a meeting during the summer term when admission arrangements, class visits, parent 'welcome meetings'; uniform etc. are discussed.

During the Summer Term, prior to starting school in the following September, the following visits are conducted:

- Foundation stage staff will visit pre-school providers and settings from which September's intake will be taken.
- Parents may request a home visit where a member of the foundation staff will visit their child in their home environment.
- Each child and their parents and carers will be invited to join us for an induction/ taster session and lunch.

Transitions

We liaise with parents and the previous settings/provider to ensure a smooth transition into our school. We encourage the previous settings and parents to share the children's assessment records and learning journeys with us as part of our baseline assessment procedures.

In the final term, 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.

The Year 1 teacher and foundation stage teacher will moderate and be in agreement where a child is judged to be exceeding an early learning goal.

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