

# Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

The Beeches Primary School



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Version:	3
Approval date:	Sept 2024
Next revision date:	Sept 2025
Approving / revision body lead:	Governing Body

## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

### 1. INTRODUCTION

*“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.” (DfE 2014)*

### 2. Aims

At the Beeches Primary School we aim to support all children to become independent learners. We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum, enriched with enhancements and experiences that will enable every child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential.

At The Beeches Primary School we will:

- Provide a happy, safe, nurturing and stimulating environment that supports the children’s learning and development as they begin their journey through school.
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant, focussed and creative curriculum that will ensure firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond.
- Provide opportunities for children to learn through planned, purposeful play in all areas of learning and development
- Provide opportunities for the children to make choices, gain independence, build confidence and become resilient learners.
- Use individual assessments of every child to ensure they get the support they need to progress.
- Develop strong partnerships with parents and carers to support their child’s learning.
- Provide a safe, challenging, stimulating, caring and sharing environment which is sensitive to the needs of the child, including children with additional needs.
- Ensure that all children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability , have an opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development.

### 3. PRINCIPLES

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- **A unique child:** 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 and develop positive attitudes to learning.
- **Positive relationships:** We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relations and aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relations with the children and their families.
- **Enabling Environments:** We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children’s development. Through observations we assess the children’s interests, stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging and achievable learning activities and experiences to extend their learning.
- **Learning and development:** The Reception setting is organised to allow the children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet, be thoughtful, be creative, be independent and be collaborative. The learning environment is set up in learning areas where children are able to find, locate and use equipment and resources independently.

At The Beeches Primary School we greatly value the important role that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

#### 4. LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The early learning goals (the knowledge, skills and understanding which young children should have acquired by the end of Reception year ) and the educational programmes (the matters, skills and process which are required to be taught to young children) are set out in the “Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage” [document \(DfE 2023\)](#).

Our EYFS Curriculum reflects the areas of learning as identified in the Early Learning Goals. There are seven areas of learning and Development that must shape the provision in the early years. All of areas of learning and development are important and interconnected. Our children’s learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skill across the curriculum. 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. At the Beeches Primary School we believe that it is crucial that every child becomes a competent reader and that every child leaving EYFS must leave able to blend and read words appropriate to their age. We use the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds systematic phonics programme to ensure all our children leave reception able to recognise letters and words, are able to blend and can read words with developing independence in order to be well prepared for the KS1 curriculum and continuation of the programme.

The seven areas of learning and development are:

**Three Prime Areas:**

- \* Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- \* Physical Development
- \* Communication, Language and Literacy

**Four Specific Areas:**

- \* Literacy
- \* Mathematics
- \* Understanding of the World
- \* Expressive Art & Design

At The Beeches Primary School we believe all seven areas are of equal importance and fully ensure that the three prime areas are embedded in the four specific areas. All areas are delivered through planned, purposeful play with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

## 5. PLANNING

Good planning is key to making children's learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive. Effective learning builds on and extends what children know and can do. Our planning shows how the principles of the EYFS will be put into practice and is always informed by observations we have made of the children, in order to understand and consider their current interests, development and learning. All practitioners who work in Reception at The Beeches are involved in this process.

- **Long Term Planning:** We have created a framework, which gives structure and coherence to the curriculum. Topics are planned for each of the six terms and the ELGs are distributed over the terms to determine broad and balanced coverage.
- **Medium Term Planning:** We address particular aspects of the curriculum in more detail for each term. We include links between different areas of learning and development for the use of ICT.
- **Short Term Planning:** We identify specific learning objectives and plan activities, differentiation, assessments, deployment of adults and resources, to meet the needs of the children on a weekly basis. Planning reflects and supports the characteristics of effective learning and the different ways children learn: play and exploration, active learning and creative and critical thinking.
- **In the Moment Planning:** All staff have the freedom to change and develop their planning and 'plan' in the moment based on what a child or group of children are doing, interested in, need developmentally or intellectually in order to ensure the best learning opportunities possible for all our learners.

## 6. ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND MONITORING

At The Beeches Primary School, we undertake assessment for learning. We analyse and review what we know about each child's development and learning and then make informed decisions about the child's progress. This enables us to plan the next steps to meet their development and learning needs. All practitioner who interact with the child contribute to the assessment process.

- **Formative assessment:** This type of assessment informs everyday planning and is based on continual observation assessment of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles. These take place in books and other focused assessments e.g. phonics and number assessments. **Each class has a Learning Journal (Floorbook) where photos and examples of work and learning across the curriculum is showcased. Each child has maths and Literacy to work in, and a phonics book.**
- **Summative assessment:** At the end of the Reception year the EYFS Profile is completed which provides information of a child's knowledge, understanding and their progress. Each child will be assessed as either 'meeting the expected levels'(expected), or 'not yet meeting the expected levels (emerging) in each of the seven areas of learning. A baseline assessment is completed of each individual child as they start in the Reception Year (STA issued Baseline). Children are re-assessed on a half termly basis, with a termly report written by the team leader each term (analysing the data at that point for each child in all areas of the EYFS curriculum).

Teaching and Learning is monitored in line with the school's Monitoring Policy by subject leaders and the Senior Leadership Team through lesson observations, pupil interviews and work sampling. The EYFS Leader monitors on a weekly basis, analyses the data half termly and reports to the Senior Leadership Team. The Senior Leadership Team monitor the teaching and learning across the Foundation Stage throughout the year and analyse the EYFS Profile data.

## 7. LEARNING THROUGH PLAY

At The Beeches Primary School, we do not make a distinction between work and play. We support children's learning through planned play activities and decide when child initiated or adult -led play activities would provide the most valuable and effective learning opportunities. We believe that it is important for adults to support children's learning through play by getting involved in the play themselves.

## 8. THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

We create attractive, welcoming and stimulating learning environments which will encourage children explore, investigate and learn through first-hand experience. We also make it a place where children feel secure and confident and are challenges to develop their

independence. We have four classrooms (one classroom “*The Butterfly Room*” providing smaller group, focused play and learning for children who find a busy classroom challenging), and a large outdoor space which the children have the freedom to move around and use. The outdoor provision is divided into different zones but the children are encouraged to select their own resources and create their own lines of enquiry and investigation on a larger scale than they can indoors.

## **9. THE TEACHING OF PHONICS**

We use Little Wandle Letters and Sounds in our school. The children in Reception have 2 phonics sessions every day. They are taught to recognise the sounds letters make using the Little Wandle scheme of work, which introduces each phoneme with a picture and formation phrase. Children are taught whole class (regardless of ability) so every child is introduced to the new phonemes at the same time. Children in Reception focus on Phase 2, phase 3 and phase 4. Children are also taught to read in differentiated groups using the Little Wandle principles of decoding, prosody and comprehension. Children read the same book twice a week with the teacher and then take this book home to celebrate and practise their developing reading skills. Children also take a sharing book from the school library home twice a week to share with an adult at home and to help develop a love of reading. Timely, quick interventions (Keep up) take place daily with a designated and regular repeated practise throughout the day, in addition to daily teacher observations and assessments ensures that every child keeps up with the pace of the scheme. All children write every day- developing handwriting and grapheme skills daily as part of the phonics lesson.

## **10. LIAISON WITH PRE-SCHOOL SETTINGS AND INDUCTION**

Children at The Beeches School come for a large variety of pre-school settings from all around the city. Reception practitioners utilise the transfer records from these pre-school settings to inform them about each new intake.

Open Sessions are held in July for parents and the children who are due to enter full-time education the following September. During the session, they meet the Head Teacher, Foundation Stage Coordinator and other staff and are shown around the school. Parents are given the opportunity to observe the school in action. Information is shared with parents through discussions, photographs and displays.

Once places have been offered, parents are invited to a meeting. At this meeting they meet all the teaching staff and are given our School Prospectus, information about the school and an induction pack. The induction programme is outlined and explained. Parents’ questions are answered and they can look around the school.

On these occasions, these areas are highlighted:

- partnership with parents
- attendance
- punctuality
- appropriate clothing
- school rules
- school routines.
- what happens in Reception- teaching and learning
- expectations for parents and school partnership

Each parent is given a '**Starter Pack**' containing:

- School Prospectus
- Information about EYFS
- Information about school uniform
- An in school 1:1 appointment time with the class teacher.

### **Settling in procedure**

Following a small group session with children in school, children begin school full time, and quickly settle into the classroom and school routines. Adjustments are made if any child is really struggling to transition into school, and a planned slower more part-time approach is adopted, with the majority of children full time by the first week of Sept.

## **11. RECEPTION TO YEAR 1 TRANSITION**

Reception and Year 1 work together to make the transition from Early Years Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 as smooth as possible.

At The Beeches Primary School:

- children are encouraged to develop independence when dressing and undressing and when organising their personal belongings throughout the Reception year
- Reception practitioners plan for more structured activities as the year progresses and during the summer terms plan activities that encourage less dependence on adult support.
- EYFS Profiles are available for the Year 1 teachers to access.
- Year 1 teachers have access to the data held on insight tracking systems for all children- which shows the level of attainment as well as highlighted curriculum statements which show strengths and areas of development.
- Reception and Year 1 teachers meet to discuss the individual needs of children in July.
- Reception children visit their new Year 1 teacher and class in July as part of the whole school 'move up' sessions.

- The Little Wandle approach to phonics and spelling is continued throughout Year 1 and Year 2.
- There is a similar structure to the school day during the Autumn term when the children move to Year 1 with regular playtimes.
- There is an overlap in approach and routines e.g. whole school behaviour systems etc.
- Where possible, the Year 1 children continue to enjoy practical learning experiences which gradually become more formalised.

## **12. HOME/SCHOOL LINKS**

We recognise that parents are the child's first and most enduring educators. When parents and practitioners work together in early years settings, the results have a positive impact on the child's development. A successful partnership needs to be a two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise.

We develop this by:

- Outlining the Reception curriculum to parents during the new parents' meeting in July, to enable them to understand the value of supporting their child's learning at home.
- Sending home an outline of topic activities
- Operating an 'open door' policy, whereby parents can come and discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner
- Sharing progress at school and encouraging parents to interact with Tapestry (the online journal) by commenting and liking posts by staff and by adding photos and posts from home too.
- Inviting parents to drop everything and read, family phonics, Early Words Together, and stay and play sessions throughout the year.
- Encouraging parents to listen to their children read each night and to comment on reading progress in a home/school reading journal.
- Encouraging relevant learning tasks to be continued at home, ensuring that experiences at home are used to develop learning in school
- Providing an annual written report to parents in July summarising the child's progress against the early learning goals and EYFS assessment scales, outlining the characteristics of effective learning and linking to the school's core value system.

## **13. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

At The Beeches Primary School we provide pupils, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability, equal access to all aspects of school life and work to ensure that every child is valued fully as an individual. Practitioners, as role models, are aware of the influence in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical ideas.



#### **14. INCLUSION**

Children with additional needs will be given support as appropriate to enable them to benefit from the curriculum. This includes those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities. Additional adult support may be provided for children with special needs, thus increasing the adult/pupil ratio. The school's SEN co-ordinator is responsible for providing additional information and advice to practitioners and parents, and for arranging external interventional and support where necessary.

#### **15. SAFEGUARDING AND WELFARE**

*“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.” (DfE 2014)*

At The Beeches Primary School we provide a welcoming, safe, secure and stimulating environment enabling all children to develop into independent and confident individuals. Please also refer to the Safeguarding Policy and Health and Safety Policy.