



# EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

## BRICKHILL LOWER SCHOOL

MAY 2016

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## **Brickhill Lower School**

### **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

*Our aim is to provide a stimulating, secure and challenging environment in which each individual has the opportunity to develop their potential starting from what he or she already knows and can do.*

#### **The Early Years Foundation Curriculum**

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is the statutory framework published in 2012 by the Department for Education that sets the standards for the development, learning and care of children from birth to five. We at Brickhill aim to provide your children with the best learning opportunities in order to meet the standards set by the Government.

The Foundation Curriculum consists of two aspects:

**Prime Areas** – begin to develop quickly in response to relationships and experiences and run through and support learning in all areas. The Prime Areas continue to be fundamental throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage.

#### **Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)**

##### **Physical Development**

##### **Communication and Language**

**Specific areas** – include essential skills and knowledge. The specific areas grow out of the Prime Areas and provide important contexts for learning.

##### **Literacy (Reading & Writing)**

##### **Mathematics (Numbers & Shape, Space and measures)**

##### **Understanding the World (People & Communities, The World & Technology)**

##### **Expressive Arts & Design ( Exploring & using media & materials & Being imaginative)**

The Characteristics of learning move through all areas of learning. There are 3 areas.

#### **Playing and exploring - engagement**

Finding out and exploring

Playing with what they know

Being willing to have a go.

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### **Active Learning – motivation**

Being involved and concentrating

Keeps trying

Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

### **Creating and thinking critically – thinking**

Having their own ideas

Making links

Choosing ways to do things

### **The Early Years Profile**

The Government requires each child's attainment and progress to be recorded against national standards known as *The Foundation Stage Profile*. Each child will have their own Profile, these Profiles are compiled from a summary of the observations and notes made by the class teachers and teaching assistants. The Profiles indicate a child's achievements and progress in relation to the **Early Learning Goals**. Parents are able to see their child's Profile at any time. The Profile outcomes will be passed to the new teacher in Year 1 who will use it to plan work appropriate to the needs of individual children and to set targets.

The profile is based on ongoing observation and assessment in the three prime and four specific areas of learning and the three Characteristics of Learning and is split into the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELGs)

Child development is measured in months from birth. Below are the specific age bands:

Birth to 11 months

8 to 20 months

16 to 26 months

22 to 36 months

30 to 50 months

40 to 60 months

and then the Early Learning Goals.

The Early Learning Goals are where the majority of children should be at the end of the Foundation Year. Please see our development grids (at the rear of the policy) for the Early Learning Goals, 40-60 months and 30-50 months to show you the range of development and examples of the typical type of activity within in each band which is expected within the Foundation Year.

## Recording and Reporting and Link with Parents

### *We believe in partnership with parents*

Continuous assessment is carried out by the teachers and teaching assistants through observing the children both at work and play. This assessment is used to determine what the child knows, understands and can do in relation to the areas of learning. More formal assessments are also made, for example, to determine phonic and word knowledge. Foundation Stage children begin to think about their own strengths and areas for development, and are encouraged to set their own simple targets.

In the Autumn and Spring Terms, **Consultation Evenings** allow the teachers an opportunity to share information about the how children are progressing in terms of the Early Learning Goals and how they are interacting with other children. The evenings also provide an opportunity to share specific targets to help your child at home.

During the Spring Term we will send an **Interim Report** to parents and carers. The report will inform parents about their child's progress in Reading, Writing, Number and their general behaviour at school.

At the end of the academic year, every parent also receives a **written report**. The report outlines children's attainment in all areas of the curriculum. The report will let parents know if a child has *met* the Early Learning Goals which will be reported as **Expected**, if they *have not* met the Early Learning Goals it will be reported as **Emerging** or if a child has *excelled* beyond the Early Learning goals which will be reported as **Exceeded**. The report will also contain a brief summary about **The Characteristics of Effective Learning** which will inform parents and carers about *how* their child learns at school. If a child is Emerging in any of the areas we will provide parents with specific information about exactly which age band they are at.

We run **Parent Drop Ins** to allow Parents and carers to view their child's Portfolio throughout the year. The sessions are an informal way for parents to look at their child's progress towards the Early Learning Goals with their child.

We also like to gather information from parents about their child's development through our **Pit Stops** (a small informal questionnaire about children's interests at home which is returned to school and then a second section is completed with your child and a Foundation Team member about how they learn at school). The Pit Stops again allows parents to inform us of how their child learns at home and this information is used to build the child's Portfolio, set targets and inform our planning.

In order to develop closer links families we send home a book called a **Home-School Journal**. The Home-School Journal allows parents and carers to share what they do as a family on weekends and holidays. The Home-School Journals are shared by children in class. We have found that the Home-School Journals are an important part of home school liaison as it lets us know the interests of children outside of school. The Home-School Journals also help to contribute towards the Early Learning Goals.

We also gather information from our After School & Breakfast Clubs. Staffs observe children at the clubs and write short observations on how they are interacting and playing with other children. In Foundation we have found that this is a valuable link and shows us how our children are learning in another setting.

### Inclusion and Special Needs

*We believe in meeting the individual needs of all pupils*

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children at Brickhill Lower School are treated fairly and equally. All children and their families are valued within our school.

The school has a comprehensive policy for special needs with a named member of staff and a governor responsible for ensuring that it is effectively implemented. This policy may be summarised as follows:

- early identification of children who need learning support;
- registering any concern by placing the child's name on the special needs register. Children are placed at the appropriate stage on the register according to their individual needs. Parents are always informed of any such action;
- planning of programmes of work to meet the individual needs of these children;
- close liaison with parents who are encouraged to support their child at home;
- consultation between the class teacher and Special Education Needs Co-coordinator (SENCO);
- involvement of outside agencies where appropriate.

## The Foundation Learning environment

*We believe that children learn through their play*

### The learning stage

In Foundation we aim to teach the curriculum in a bright and stimulating learning environment. We provide a broad and balanced curriculum where high quality play can take place so that children can consolidate their learning,

imagine,

rehearse,

collaborate,

explore,

experiment,

question,

investigate,

and become independent learners.

In order to achieve these key learning strategies, we offer the same learning opportunities inside and outside the classroom. We provide specific learning areas to develop children's independent learning.

### Writing Areas

We encourage children to become confident independent writers so that they can communicate their ideas in writing. We encourage children to *think* about what they *want* to write and then have a go at writing it. We support writing by teaching children letter sounds through the Letters & Sounds programme. By the end of the Foundation Stage year, children should be able to construct simple phrases and sentences and write them by themselves without adult help. Children have access to a range of paper, card, pencils, crayons, felt tip pens to stimulate their writing.

### Maths Areas

We encourage children to put into practice what they have been learning in our Maths lessons so that they can become numerate and enjoy all aspects of the Mathematics curriculum. The Maths Areas encourages children to investigate and problem solve numbers. We provide a wide range of mathematical resources such as clocks, jigsaws, cubes, shapes, counters, dice and maths games to develop numeracy skills such as counting, ordering estimating, sorting and grouping.

### Understanding our World display

We investigate materials and learn about our world through this display in the classroom. We also provide many other opportunities for pupils to experiment with a range of materials.

### Sand and water

We have sand both inside and outside and provide a range of resources which children can choose from to play and explore. In addition natural materials such as wood are provided as well as a children's garden where they can plant seeds, plants and vegetables and watch them grow.

### Book Corner

Inside the classroom, we provide comfortable reading areas with sofas and cushions so that children can relax learn and enjoy and sharing a range of books. In the Outdoor Classroom we provide a book table each day so that children who like to play outside have the opportunity to access books. We also take children to our School Library where they can select a book to take home. Each learning area will also have appropriate books to support learning.

### Block Play Area

Inside we have designated area for Block Play with large and small wooden blocks which children can combine when playing to make all sorts of structures eg. houses, boats, aeroplane and castles. The Outdoor Classroom has a range of equipment for construction eg. Mobilo, Duplo and large coloured plastic bricks. The Block Play area helps to develop mathematical understanding of shapes and encourages skills of negotiation.

### Small World Toys

We provide a wide range of small world resources eg. farm, castle, dolls' house, and garage so that children can use their imagination to make representations of the real world in their play.

### Home Corner

Our Home Corner is well resourced with a range of equipment that allows children to play imaginatively with their friends. Our Home Corner is sometimes themed for specific role play eg. Garden Centre, Restaurant or Hospital.

### Music Trolley

Children have access to a range of musical instruments for their music making. Children also have a weekly music lesson which stimulates their understanding of rhythm and sound. Children learn new songs and learn how to play the musical instruments correctly.

### Creative, Art and Design & Technology Area

We provide children with the opportunity to access a range of materials and tools so that they can cut, paint, draw, plan and combine materials to make models and collage.

### Malleable table

The malleable table allows children to investigate materials such as play dough, cornflour and clay. This type of play is very good for helping with pre-writing skills and developing fine motor control.

### ICT

In Foundation we have four computers which the children can use. We also teach children how to programme toys such as a *Beebot* and use the digital camera and ipads. We use the school ICT suite once a week to further develop children's computer skills.

### Physical

Children have access to the outdoor area all day. We have a wide range of resources and equipment such as bats, balls, hoops and scooters to develop children physically. Each week P.E. is taught to our children by the teacher who co-ordinates P.E. across the school.

### Snack Table

We provide a Snack Table for children each day. Children have free access to fruit, milk and water all day. We sometimes have vegetables on the Snack table so that children have a balance of healthy foods. We insist on good hygiene practice teaching children to wash their hands before eating. The children then highlight their name on a class list before eating and drinking their snack. We show children how to wash and dry the cups and plates that they use.

The resources are labeled and stored so that children have easy access to them and are able to become independent in selecting materials and putting them away after use.

### Teaching and Learning

The curriculum is delivered using a variety of teaching styles, including whole class teaching, group and individual work in order to meet the needs of each individual child.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Provision of a broad and balanced range of experiences that consider individual learning needs and abilities, and which recognise that children will be at different stages of their development.
- Planning opportunities for children to engage in stimulating and challenging activities that build upon and extend their knowledge, experience, understanding, skills and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contributions of all children are valued and risk taking is accepted as part of learning.
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

### Child Initiated Activities

In Foundation Stage a range of activities are planned and organised for the children to participate in. Children will be encouraged to select what they want and who they want to play with. Children have free access to play inside and outside all day. The Foundation team works with children in groups or as individuals on adult-directed activities. The Foundation Team also supports children's play by playing alongside them.

Throughout and at the end of the Foundation Stage, children's progress and achievement are assessed in relation to the Early Learning Goals. This assessment is used to help plan next steps by the next teacher to ensure they continue to make progress in Year 1.

### Accommodation

The accommodation is a spacious and bright, large open-plan classroom. We have a smaller classroom for group work and it is the Ducklings classroom base for whole class sessions such as register and story time. At the end of the main Foundation Stage corridor are the children's toilets.

The outdoor area has a large canopy so that, even on rainy days, children have the opportunity to play outside. Under the canopy we have free-standing sand and water trays and a large sand pit. We provide a range of resources eg. sand wheels, buckets and spades which children can select for their child-initiated play. Each day under the canopy, we set up a writing area, book table and music trolley. Our outdoor play area is called the *Outdoor Classroom*.

### Outdoor Classroom

We are fortunate to have a range of hard surfaces and grassed areas in order to develop children's large motor skills. We have a Children's Garden where there is a potting bench and soil so that children can plant seeds and vegetables. We have two sheds to store the equipment and when it is

tidying up time outside, we expect all children to help tidy up the equipment that they have been playing with. The outdoor area is partly walled and is securely fenced.

### Keeping Safe, Health and Well-being

“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 aim to educate children about boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. An Early Years Risk Assessment policy is in place which is reviewed regularly. This involves staff undertaking a daily ‘Open/Close’ risk assessment of the learning environment

We aim to protect the physical and psychological well being of all children.

At Brickhill Lower School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation. We understand that we are required to:

- Promote the welfare of children.
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children’s stage of development and individual needs.
- Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment are safe and suitable for purpose.
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe and efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

### Transition

We recognise the role that parents have played so far, and their future role, in educating their children. We do this through:

- Encouraging parents to talk to the headteacher and view the school prior to requesting a place in Foundation Stage.
- The Foundation Leader visits children in their setting prior to children coming to school. Visits are usually to the local play groups.
- Giving children the opportunity to attend a ‘**Story Club**’, prior to entry, for approximately three weeks in the summer term. It provides the children with the opportunity to

familiarise themselves with the staff and the school and for the teachers to build relationships with the children. The children attend with their parents/carers.

- Parents are invited to a **New Parents Meeting** in Spring Term. At this meeting, parents are given information regarding their child's start date and the opportunity to book a home visit at the beginning of the academic year. The aims of the school and the Foundation Stage are outlined with an overview of the curriculum. This also provides an opportunity to emphasise the parental role in preparing their child for school and to explain fully the child's first year. During this evening parents have the opportunity to meet the governors, staff and PTA and have the chance to look around the Foundation Stage. Parents are given an information pack at this evening to take away.
- Children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during a session called a Taster Day which happens on the borough **Transfer Day** in July. Children meet their new teacher and class. Parents can attend this session with the child.
- Parents and children are given the opportunity to make an **'All About Me' book** together during the summer holidays. This is then shared during the home visit or between the adults and children in school.
- **Home visits** take place in the first week of the Autumn Term.
- Parents are invited to share information about their child's likes, interests and abilities as part of their record of achievement. They are invited to view and contribute to their child's 'Foundation Stage Portfolio'
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns through the 'Open Door' Policy where staff are available at the beginning or end of the day. There is a formal meeting for parents each term at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year; this is a summary of their child's 'Foundation Stage' achievement
- Parents are invited into school to have **lunch with their child** at their first lunchtime session in the hall.
- Parents are encouraged to read daily with their child and share their comments in the child's **Home/School Book** (Green Reading Record Book). This book is also used as a method of communication between parents/staff to keep everyone informed of their child's progress.
- Day to day communications are supported by use of a **'Parent's Notice Board'** outside the main classroom door and on door or windows to the main areas. Planning for the current half term eg **Parent Overviews** and extra copies of relevant newsletters are also displayed on the notice board as well as being sent home.

### Supporting Learning

The Foundation Stage is staffed by fully qualified teachers, one of whom is the Foundation Stage Leader and Assistant Headteacher. The Foundation is supported by two full time and a part time teaching assistants. Nursery Nurse Students and Trainee Teachers may undertake work placement in the Foundation Stage under the guidance of a teacher mentor.

### Key Person

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with the children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At Brickhill each of the EYFS teachers acts as a 'Key Person' to all children in their class, supported by named Teaching Assistants.

### Observation, Assessment and Planning to Support Every Child

Much of the assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. Daily observations are carried out as the children are learning and written on mini observation slips which are then collated and analysed at the planning meetings. The mini observation slips inform the staff of the learning and interests of the children which inform the planning. We also take many photographs of children's learning. When there is an adult-directed activity running, adults working with groups of children frequently write comments about the children with whom they are working eg. Writing Task information is recorded on a prepared sheet which informs staff of the level of achievement.

There are also sessions each week for planned observations of the children or areas of learning. This ensures that all children are observed. These are called 'Long Narrative Observations'. The adult undertaking the observations will spend a period of time observing and recording the child's activities, their learning, vocabulary and interests. These observations are also discussed at planning meetings with next steps drawn up to support a child's learning with their interest as the key influencing factor. The observations may also identify learning needs of individuals or groups.

Through analysing the observation each week, interests of the children can be identified and 'PLODS' (Possible Lines of Development) can then be drawn up. These show the interest at the centre of the planning with a range of 'possible' activities that could be provided in the classroom to further the children's learning based around their interests. This feeds into the weekly planning in terms of activities offered in the learning areas, as well as the usual continuous provision.

The weekly planning is drawn up every week as a combination of looking at the medium term planning, observations and assessments to decide what activities to offer to support and enhance the children's learning experiences. This is recorded on a weekly planning sheet. Any activities or resources that are provided as a direct result of observations of the children are highlighted.

The Foundation Stage Profile is updated continually. Submission of all results are made to the 'Local Authority' by the date requested, which is usually just after the summer half term. This is a statutory requirement. We are currently trialling an electronic system which helps to collect the data children make towards the Early Learning Goals.

### The Wider Context

At Brickhill Lower School we work in partnership with other settings through liaison with pre-schools prior to the children starting school. The Foundation Stage Leader/Class Teacher visits the main 'feeder' pre-schools in the summer term to observe prospective children, receive feedback from the professionals in the settings and build relationships with the children. Pre-schools pass on records of

their children's development towards the EYFS curriculum which are used as a basis for planning for the Autumn Term.

The Foundation Stage Teachers attend local study groups when possible to build up a network of contacts and exchange ideas of best practice with a view to enhancing our provision. The sessions also allow teachers to keep up to date on new procedures. All staff are given opportunities to attend training sessions that support the enhancement of the Foundation Stage provision or support them in their career development.

### **Monitoring and review**

It is the responsibility of the EYFS Teachers and staff to follow the principles stated in this policy.

The Head teacher and Foundation Stage Leader will carry out monitoring of the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

A school governor will visit the Early Years Foundation Stage at least once each academic year.

This policy will be reviewed in the next 12 months.

Policy reviewed and updated: Summer 2016

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_