

Brookside Primary School

EYFS Policy



Learn Together, Achieve Together

Summer 2022

Our 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'. (Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021)

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. At Brookside Primary School children are admitted into school in the September following their fourth birthday.

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Brookside Primary School we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. However, we also believe that early childhood is valid in itself as part of life. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

Our Aims & Objectives

We aim to support all children to become independent and collaborative learners. We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential.

At Brookside Primary School, we will:

- Provide a happy, safe, stimulating and challenging programme of learning and development for the children to experience as they begin their journey through school.
- Provide a unique, broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond and enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence.
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress.
- Develop excellent relationships with parents and carers to build a strong partnership in supporting their children.
- Provide a caring and inclusive learning environment which is sensitive to the requirements of the individual child including those who have additional needs.

The early years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- It builds on what our children already know and can do;
 - It ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged.
- It offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children, and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
- It provides a rich and stimulating environment;
- It acknowledges the importance of a full working partnership with parents and carers.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based on **four themes**:

- **A Unique Child**
- **Positive Relationships**
- **Enabling Environments**
- **Learning and Development**

A Unique Child

At Brookside Primary School 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 children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion - We value the diversity of individuals within the school and believe that every child matters. All children at Brookside Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, gender, religion or abilities. All families are valued within our school.

We give our children every opportunity to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when we are planning for their learning. In the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations keyed to the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage. We do this 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 wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them learn effectively;
- Offering a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Employing resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- Planning challenging activities to meet the needs of both boys and girls, of children with special educational needs, of children who are more able, of children with disabilities and of children from all social and cultural backgrounds.
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary (such as referrals to speech therapy) as necessary.
- Working closely with parents, carers and other outside agencies to ensure all children's needs are met and we enable them to access the curriculum and make good progress.

Positive Relationships

At Brookside Primary School we recognise that children learn to be strong, confident and independent from being in secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners - We recognise that parents/carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value being partners with them in their child's education through:

- Offering taster sessions and tours **before** the application deadline.
- Talking to parents/carers before their child starts school.
- Parents completing an All About Me form to tell us about their child.
- Where possible visiting children in their nursery setting and discussing with the staff how to best support the child
- Offering all parents, the opportunity of a home visit to meet their child in a relaxed environment, otherwise a telephone call.
- Attending a Parent Afternoon to give important information eg uniform, meals
- Providing information about commencing Reception at Brookside Primary.
- Outlining the school's expectations in the Home-School agreement.

- Inviting new starters to spend time in Reception Class for sessions during the summer term.
- Providing an induction meeting in September for parents/carers to meet with staff to discuss school routines, expectations and to answer any questions parents/carers may have.
- Holding a parent consultation early in the academic year to establish how a child is settling into the school environment.
- Operating an open door policy for parents/carers with any queries or concerns. Conversely, if Reception staff have concerns about the progress of a child, they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss them.
- Written daily contact available through the Reading record and regular school newsletters.
- Class newsletter sent regularly to update parents on class activities and remind them about important information.
- Sending home certificates of achievement designed to enable parents to record outstanding achievements.
- Inviting parents to attend informal meetings about areas of the curriculum, such as phonics and reading.
- Offering two parent/teacher consultation meetings per year at which their child's progress is discussed, as well as 2 mini progress reports in the Autumn and Spring Terms.
- Sending a final written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of their time in reception.
- Asking parents to sign a generic permission form for visits, food tasting and photographs etc.
- Parents are invited to a range of activities throughout the school year such as assemblies, workshops, Christmas Nativity play and sports day etc.
- Offering opportunities for parents and carers to visit the school on a volunteer basis to assist with the children's learning e.g. hearing readers.
- Regular parent reading (weekly)
- Mystery guest visits by parents/family members e.g Nurses, Police Officers, Artists

Enabling Environments

At Brookside Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development, where the children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have regular access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision. Play-based learning is paramount and children have opportunities to direct their own learning with planned opportunities provided by staff. We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning and reflects the individual's interests, passions and abilities. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning. We ensure that resources and spaces are safe to use and checked regularly.

Learning and Developing

The EYFS Curriculum – Our unique Curriculum for the Foundation Stage reflects the areas of learning and development identified in the Educational Programmes within the Statutory Framework.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in Early Years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. None of the areas of learning can be delivered in isolation from the others. Our children's learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skill across a number of learning areas. 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. 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.

The three Prime areas are:

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

Staff will also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The four Specific Areas:

- Mathematics
- Literacy
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Children's development levels are assessed and as the year progresses, the balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning, as children grow in confidence and ability within the three Prime Areas.

However, if a child's progress in any of the prime areas gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents/carers and agree how to support the child.

Reception pupils also participate in daily phonics sessions soon after they begin school, following the guidance in 'The Reading Framework-Teaching the Foundations of Literacy' (January 2022).

'Daily phonics sessions should begin as soon as children start their Reception year. Learning to read and write letters develops phonemic awareness rapidly. It seems easier for children to identify phonemes in words when they know how they correspond to letters, because letters provide visible and concrete symbols for sounds.'

Characteristics of Effective Learning

We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

- **Playing and exploring** - children will have opportunities to investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.

'Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development.' Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

- **Active learning** - children will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy their achievements.
'Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.'
Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence, they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.
- **Creating and thinking critically** - we encourage and support children to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things. "When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions." Children should be given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning. Adults can support children's thinking and help them make connections by showing interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open ended questions. Children can access resources and move around the classroom freely and purposefully to extend their learning.

Planning – We have designed our unique EYFS Curriculum at Brookside by taking the Educational Programmes from the EYFS Statutory Framework and creating a tailor-made and ambitious Curriculum. It is based on the important aspects of our wonderful school and its pupils. The subsequent planning is created regarding the individual children's needs and interests, allowing challenge and wonder to develop in our learners. Lessons are engaging, practical and enjoyable for our pupils. Children needing extra intervention are planned for carefully and given this tailored support via our Rainbow Curriculum within our provision. Therefore, every child's needs are planned for thoroughly on an individual basis, to ensure that every child achieves their full potential. Progression is ensured through vigorous assessments and observations which also inform future planning. Thought is given to the work the children will do in Year 1, ensuring continued development of skills and knowledge.

Observations - Reception staff use observations as the basis for planning. Staff are skilled at observing children to identify their achievements, interests and next steps for learning. These observations then lead the direction of the planning. Pupil Voice is regularly recorded in the class Floor Books.

Assessment –During the first term in Reception, the teacher assesses the ability of each child using a baseline assessment. The teacher completes the formal RBA (Reception Baseline Assessment) within 6 weeks of the children starting school, as well as our own set of Baseline activities and observations at Brookside. The results of these assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children.

The **Early Years Foundation Stage Profile** is the nationally employed tool that enables teachers to record their assessments at the end of the Foundation Stage, and to summarise their pupils' progress towards the Early Learning Goals. It covers each of the seven areas of learning contained in the Curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage. We record each child's level of development against the 17 Early Learning Goals as 'emerging' or 'expected'. We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs.

Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of observations, photographic evidence and through planned activities. Assessment is completed regularly and involves both the

teacher and other adults, as appropriate. Floor Books are used in class to record learning taking place and children's thoughts/comments. Individual Learning Journeys are no longer kept in line with the Foundation Stage Profile Handbook 2023.

'Schools should not include burdensome evidence gathering requirements against any of the areas of learning in their assessment policies so that teachers and practitioners can spend as much time as possible interacting with children and directly supporting their learning and development. However, teachers may find it helpful to record, in a simple way, particularly noteworthy achievements, such as what phonemes and numbers a child has learned, to determine what to teach next. This is sufficient to make a judgement. Sources of written or photographic evidence are not required and teachers should not record evidence.'

Tracking -Progress Meetings are held with the Headteacher and Progress Grids are updated at the end of each term (at a minimum). These provide a summary of the progress of the cohort, identifying interventions required at any stage. We also complete 'mini reports' about each child's level of development to be 'working towards' or 'expected' in relation to their progress towards the 17 Early Learning Goals. These are shared with parents at the end of the Autumn and Spring terms.

At the end of the Summer term in Reception, we send a summary of the final assessments to the LA for analysis. We also share a child's individual information with parents in the Annual Report at the end of the year. This Annual Report comments on the child's progress, also incorporating their Characteristics of Effective Learning. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs. We complete these in June and send them to parents in early July.

The Learning Environment -The Reception classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are specific areas where the children can be active, be quiet, creative etc. Children have access to both inside and outside areas regularly; this has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and in different scales than when indoors. The children can explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. The children also have a half day of Forest School each week.

Teaching & Learning Styles

The features of effective teaching and learning in our school are defined in our policy on teaching and learning. They apply to teaching and learning in Reception just as much as they do to the teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 or 2. The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the EYFS are:

- The partnership between teachers and parents, carers and other settings that helps our children to feel secure at school, and to develop a sense of wellbeing and achievement;
- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this must be reflected in their teaching;
- the range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions, and extend and develop the children's play, talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage;
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests, and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- the support for learning, with appropriate and accessible space, facilities and equipment, both indoors and outdoors;

- the identification, through observations, of children's progress and future learning needs, which are regularly shared with parents;
- the clear aims of our work, and the regular monitoring of our work to evaluate and improve it;
- the regular identification of training needs for all adults working at the EYFS.

Transition

Starting school can be a difficult time for young children; we therefore plan this time carefully to support children with the transition and to ensure it is as smooth as possible for each child and that they settle into their new class quickly and happily.

There are several ways we plan for a new child at Brookside.

*School Taster Sessions and School Tours in November before deadline for admissions

* Nina's Nursery (onsite) /Hoot Owls Easter Egg Hunt

* Nina's Nursery (onsite) /EYFS Reading Session weekly in June/July

* Nursery Visits for all by Class Teacher and TA in Summer Term

* 2 Stay and Play Sessions for all new intake children in June/July. This means that before they join their new class the Reception environment is already a familiar place to them.

* Parent Meeting in Hall for new intake- uniform, meet the staff (questions informal), school meals, current parents/children, Floor Books, PTA (July)

* Individual New Parent Consultation appointments- chance to meet and discuss medical, or any other information before entry.

* Home Visits -Summer offered for all new children- optional or telephone call if preferred

* In September the Parents are invited to a New Parent meeting to discuss the class routines, PE kit, Behaviour policy and other day to day housekeeping.

September Intake - When children join the school in September the following procedures will apply in order that they can gradually adjust to their new surroundings:

- During the first week only, children will attend for either a morning session or afternoon session.
- During the second week and thereafter, children will attend for the full school day unless the class teacher and parents or guardians agree that it is not in the best interests of an individual child.

Safeguarding & 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.'

(Statutory Framework for EYFS 2021)

At Brookside Primary School, we understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2021 Section 3. This includes, but is not limited to...

- To provide a setting that is welcoming, safe and stimulating where children can grow in confidence.
- Promote good health.
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- To ensure that all adults who look after the children, or who have unsupervised access to them, are suitable to do so;
- Ensure that the setting, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for the purpose it was intended for;
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for the safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

Keeping Safe - It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on 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. We encourage children to take risks and highlight the importance of keeping themselves safe by teaching them how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See our Safeguarding Policy).

'It is essential that everybody working in a school or college understands their safeguarding responsibilities' (Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2022)

Good Health - All children are provided with a healthy snack each day as well as being given the choice of milk. They have access to water at all times.

Intimate Care - "Intimate" care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. However, depending on a child's age and stage of development, they may need some support, for example dressing, wiping their bottom after using the toilet and changing underwear following an accident. In most cases, intimate care is to do with personal hygiene. Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of those working in Reception to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Head teacher, Mr Rick Tavernor, will carry out monitoring on EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.