

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Version	1.00
Approved By	G Brown
Issue Date	25/05/2022
Review Date	
Notes	



Brookside Primary School

Championing Children's Potential

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1. Introduction

Early Years education is the foundation upon which young children build the rest of their schooling. It is a holistic education that encompasses all learning and development. This is available to children who enter school from September of the academic year in which they will turn five years old. These children are in the final year of the EYFS. In the National Curriculum this is referred to as the Reception Year, or YR.

This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) at Brookside Primary School. In the policy the term 'practitioner' refers to the members of staff working with children in Reception at Brookside and the term 'parent' refers to any caregiver with responsibility for a child. The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of practitioners working in the EYFS at Brookside Primary School.

2. Aims

In the EYFS at Brookside Primary School we believe that all children are entitled to the best possible start in their school life, both intellectually and emotionally, to enable them to develop their full potential. We are committed to our school being a safe and inclusive place where learning is nurtured and encouraged in a happy, caring and fun environment.

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life.
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress, and no child gets left behind.
- A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

3. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) that applies from September 2021](#).

4. Admissions and Induction

Brookside Primary School provides full-time Early Years education for children in the Reception Year. This is for children who enter school from September of the academic year in which they will turn five years old. First time admission to Brookside Primary School is allocated by the Leicestershire Local Authority in accordance with our Admission Policy. (See Admission Policy)

Induction to Brookside Primary School is carefully planned for and significant time is given to ensure we can give every child the best possible start. We adapt our Induction process to meet the needs of individual

children, for example a child whose older siblings have been in Reception at Brookside might not need as much support as a child who has never been to Nursery or Pre-School before.

Before starting school, all children are offered a series of visits during the Summer Term. The purpose of these initial visits is for the children to meet their new practitioners and start to become familiar with the environment. Practitioners will also go to visit some children in their current setting if appropriate. The aim of these visits is to observe children in an environment they are comfortable in and to gain as much information about children from their current key workers/practitioners as possible to help make the transition period to Brookside Primary School as smooth as possible.

In the Summer Term Parents are invited into school to meet the Reception practitioners at the welcome meeting. At this meeting information regarding the induction process is shared. There is also time for informal chat and Parents' questions. School information packs will be distributed to Parents at this meeting, detailing school routines and expectations. The Family Liaison member of staff contacts all families and encourages them to have a tour around school, helps Parents to fill in paperwork and answers any questions they may have.

Home visits are offered to all families, and we aim to make visits to every family who has requested one, but if this is not possible, priority is given to families who are new to Brookside. These visits are carried out during the first week of the Autumn Term.

Children attend school on a part time basis as part of their induction, up to a maximum of two weeks. Every effort is made to make children feel safe, secure and happy. There is a relaxed and open ethos in the setting; routines are established and a calm atmosphere is developed. Parents and/or teachers may request for a child to remain part time for a longer period of time if they are finding it harder to settle.

5. Structure

At Brookside Primary School, our Early Years setting is made up of two mixed ability Reception classes, the Holly Blues and Red Admirals, collectively known as the Butterflies. Each class can accommodate up to 30 pupils. There is a single intake at the start of the academic year and children spend one year in Reception before moving on to Year 1. The Reception classes are based in a large open planned classroom. Most lessons are taught in class groups, but some are taught in differentiated groups from across the cohort. During free flow times (known as busy time), practitioners work with and make observations of all children, regardless of which class they are in.

Our Reception team is made up of two Teachers, two Nursery Nurses and one Learning Support Assistant. The school day begins at 8.50am and we ask parents to wait on the playground with their child until we open the doors. Home time is 3.15pm, parents wait on the playground and we send children to their parents. The Reception team are usually available to talk to, both before and after school, if the need arises.

Parents must let us know if someone different will be collecting their child. We will not let a child go home with someone we do not know if we have not been informed. Children in Reception must be collected by an adult or a young person over the age of 16.

If Parents need to collect or bring their child to school at other times i.e. if they are late, or have a doctor's appointment etc, then they *must* go via the office and register them there, BEFORE coming across to the classroom. Children arriving after 9.00am will be classed as late.

6. Curriculum

Our Reception classes follow the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2021. We have carefully developed our curriculum to give our children a wide range of experience across all subject areas with the aim that all children leave Reception with the language, skills and knowledge they need to succeed in Year 1 and beyond. High quality, structured phonics and maths lessons stand alone, and the rest of the curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the EYFS framework: *'Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities.'*

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and interconnected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

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

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

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

As well as the above areas, characteristics of effective teaching and learning are interwoven into the curriculum:

- Playing and Exploring - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.
- Active Learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties.
- Creating and Thinking Critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

6.1 Planning

At Brookside we use a thematic approach to our long-term planning as we have found this to be the best way to ensure we offer a broad and balanced curriculum. The topics have been carefully selected to cover all curriculum areas across the year and to provide firm foundations for future learning. We are in the process of mapping out the key knowledge and vocabulary taught in each subject, for each term in the year. We recognise the need to be flexible and follow the children's interests and this will be fed into our continuous provision.

Phonics and Maths are planned separately each week. All other areas of the curriculum are covered in our weekly topic plans. Weekly plans include whole class taught topic sessions, adult structured activities, adult initiated 'busy jobs', and provision enhancements. Key children for adults to observe/work alongside are also noted.

Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support and planning are required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

6.2 Teaching

At Brookside Primary School, we aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning. We believe that every child is a competent learner, and we work hard to help all our children to develop these skills, recognising 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 opportunities and rewards to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning. We want our children to be life-long learners!

During children's learning and play, practitioners interact, when appropriate, to stretch and challenge them further, providing breadth to their learning. Our skilled staff know all our children well and therefore tailor their interactions so personalised learning needs are met; a wide range of teaching strategies are used to compliment this.

Maths and Phonics lessons are both are taught 4 times a week with time to review and recap on the other day. Both subjects are taught whole class, as structured lessons, with opportunities to consolidate new learning in the provision.

The topic is then used as a theme to cover the wider curriculum. During the week, there are a range of activities that cover all areas of learning:

- Whole class, 'carpet time' sessions. These sessions relate to the topic and cover key knowledge that is set out in our long-term planning.
- Structured activities that all children complete. These are designed to cover key skills or knowledge.
- Adult initiated 'busy jobs'. These are planned for children to complete independently, focusing on consolidating key skills or developing next steps. These activities are planned with the needs of particular groups of children in mind, although they are open for all children to do.
- Child initiated activities. The classroom and outdoor area are resourced to allow children the opportunities to decide and develop their own learning. Our planning allows them time and space to follow their own interests.

Structured PE lessons are taught twice a week, once in the hall and once outside. Structured PSED are taught in the form of circle-time or R-Time, the focus is determined by the needs of the children. Educational visits within the local community and further afield are also planned to support children's learning within the curriculum.

7. The Learning Environment

The Reception base is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, quiet, creative etc. Our classroom has defined learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

Reception has an enclosed outdoor area, and at specific times during the week, children are able to free-flow between the indoor and outdoor spaces. Being outdoors offers the children opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. They are able to explore, use their senses, develop their language skills and be physically active. We plan activities and resources both inside and outside enabling the children to develop in all the areas of learning.

8. Observation and Assessment

On-going assessment is an essential aspect of the effective running of the EYFS at Brookside Primary School and is carried out in different ways.

At the beginning of the academic year, practitioners fill in the Brookside baseline assessment for each child, this informs staff of the children's unique learning journey ahead of them. Reception teachers also carry out the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA), within the first 6 weeks of the children starting school.

The main assessment method in EYFS is through practitioners' daily observations of children in a range of different contexts throughout the day. Our observations enable us to check if children are on-track with their learning. As a team we have daily discussions about children who are demonstrating the skills and knowledge we have taught them independently and the children we feel need extra support. These children are then identified on the planning and receive extra support from practitioners during the school day.

Regular, planned and focused assessments are made of children's attainment of key learning objectives. These assessments are usually carried out for structured, taught activities that all children complete. We use a Red, Amber, Green colour system to record children's attainment, this allows us to monitor children's progress and identify children who need extra support or greater challenge.

During the year, our formative assessments provide the basis for our summative assessments, which we make at the end on the Autumn, Spring and Summer terms. We review our assessments of all pupils and record on DCPro if children are on track or not on track.

At the end of the EYFS, teachers complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

These judgements are formed from our continuing observations and our EYFS practitioner's professional judgement. To ensure consistent and correct assessment, we participate in internal (referring to the Development Matters guidance) and external (in partnership with other local schools and the local authority) moderation, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. The EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

9. Transition to Year 1

The transition to Year 1 is carefully planned for to ensure continuity of learning and care. During the summer term of Reception, children will be invited into Year 1 on a number of occasions as part of the transition, this will be more for children with special educational needs and any other children we think might find the move to Year 1 hard. The staff in Year 1, teachers and support staff spend time in the Year 1 base during the Summer term getting to know the children. Our Reception teachers meets with the Year 1 teachers to liaise with them and discuss the individual children and their specific needs.

10. Parents as Partners

At Brookside Primary School we recognise the importance of establishing positive relationships with Parents. We understand that an effective partnership between school and home will have a positive impact on children's learning and development. Practitioners endeavour to encourage the regular sharing of information about children with Parents. We value the role of Parents as children's primary educators. The setting has a friendly, open-door policy and Parents are always welcomed into school and encouraged to discuss any concerns they might have.

Through informal chats at the beginning and end of the day and the 'All About Me' induction booklet at the beginning of term, practitioners encourage Parents to share their unique knowledge of their child, providing further insight into the child as an individual (e.g. characteristics, interests, experiences, likes, dislikes).

Parents are kept informed of what is happening in the setting through emails, our class Facebook page/ Class Dojo, reading records and informal chatting at the beginning and end of the day. Parents are invited to attend two Parent teacher interviews during the course of the academic year. They receive a mid term written report detailing their child's progress since starting school and their next steps. They receive a second written report at the end of the year summarising their child's EYFS profile results.

Parents are invited into the setting on other occasions such as open afternoons where children show them their work and special events such as Festival Days, Sports Day etc. We also invite parents into school throughout the year to attend and take part in various sessions planned to give them a greater understanding of the curriculum. For example, phonics for reading, phonics for writing, gross and fine motor skills and mathematics. These sessions may vary depending on the needs of the cohort. We also target particular groups of children with needs identified through observations and assessment and provide extra sessions for Parents, for example Meaningful Movement and Family Learning.

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11. Inclusion

We value the diversity of all children and their families within our school. All children at Brookside Primary School are treated fairly whatever their race, gender, religion or abilities. We believe that all our children matter and give them every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In Reception we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds. Our curriculum is designed to give all our children the essential knowledge they need to prepare them for their future success.

We meet the needs of all our 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 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 contribution of all children is valued;
- 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.

12. Equal Opportunities

All practitioners at Brookside Primary School have a responsibility to maintain positive attitudes to diversity and difference, ensuring that inclusive practice is delivered in the EYFS setting. All children, irrespective of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture or religion, and social circumstances, have the opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development within the EYFS setting at Brookside Primary School.

See Equal Opportunities Policy for more information.

13. Special Educational Needs

Continual informal and formal assessments undertaken by practitioners provide opportunities to identify any special educational needs a child may have. As children all develop differently it is recognised that a significant lack of progress after the initial settling in period represents a cause for concern and we will begin careful monitoring. If we continue to have concerns, it is our policy to raise these with Parents early on in the academic year in order to work together to assist the child. If the child continues to make little or no progress, we will liaise with Parents and the SENCO. Advice may be sought from other agencies e.g. Speech and Language Therapy Service. We will also begin an IEP to provide additional support. For children who arrive at the setting with identified special needs or significant concerns we will liaise with Parents, pre-school providers and outside agencies to support the child. We will then follow school procedures, guided by the EYFS and KS1 SENCO who works in Reception.

See Special Educational Needs Policy.

14. Safeguarding and Welfare Procedures

The safety and welfare of our children is paramount at Brookside Primary School. We follow the safeguarding and welfare procedures that are outlined in our whole school safeguarding policy.

We strive to provide a safe and secure environment for all children. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules, and limits and to help them to understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. We encourage our children to take risks but teach them how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children.

We comply with the welfare requirements set out in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage and understand that we must:

- Promote the welfare of all children
- Promote good health
- Manage behaviour effectively and appropriately
- Ensure all adults working with children are suitable to do so
- Ensure that the environment is safe, and all equipment and furniture is fit for purpose
- Ensure all children have a challenging and enjoyable learning experience.

We promote the good health (including good oral health) of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious fruit snacks, access to water throughout the day, allocating significant time for physical development and following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident. At least 2 members of EYFS staff hold the full Paediatric First Aid qualification, which is a statutory requirement of the EYFS and is renewed every 3 years. Other practitioners hold the Emergency Paediatric First Aid qualification.

All practitioners are aware of the school’s Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Practitioners attend safeguarding training on a yearly basis and are updated with any changes made, it is made clear how to report a safeguarding issue. All practitioners have read Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 and have signed to say they have; records of this are with the headteacher.

See Safeguarding Policy for more information.

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	Child Protection Policy (Brookside Primary School)
Procedure for responding to illness or infection	First Aid Policy
Administering medicines	Medication and Management Policy (Brookside Primary School)
Emergency evacuation procedure	See Health and safety policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	Protocol for dealing with children not collect from school. Lost child policy CP policy if Child Missing Education.
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	Complaints Policy (Oak Trust)

Data will always be processed to be in line with the requirements and protections set out in the UK General Data Protection Regulation.