



Blackdown Education Partnership

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Approved: February 2024

Next review date: Spring 2025

Contents

Blackdown Education Partnership	1
Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy	1
RATIONALE	3
LEGAL FRAMEWORK	3
ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	4
ADMISSIONS	4
Reception.....	4
LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT	5
Characteristics of effective teaching & learning.....	6
Playing and Exploring	6
Active Learning	6
Creating and thinking critically	6
Areas of Learning in the EYFS curriculum.....	6
THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AND OUTDOOR SPACES.....	7
ASSESSMENT.....	8
INCLUSION	8
SAFEGUARDING, WELFARE AND HEALTH AND SAFETY	8
MOBILE TECHNOLOGY	9
SCHOOL LUNCHEES AND SNACKS.....	10
FREE SCHOOL MEALS AND PUPIL PREMIUM FUNDING	10
INFORMATION AND STORAGE AND RECORD KEEPING	10
PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT	11
TRANSITION PERIODS	11
MONITORING AND REVIEW	12

RATIONALE

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to five years. Blackdown Education Partnership has five primary schools, and this policy relates to IKB Primary School, Neroche Primary School, Orchard Grove Primary School, Uffculme Primary School & Wellesley Park Primary School.

The EYFS is based on four overarching principles:

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- Importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

“All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives, so their experiences in early years have a major impact on their future chances. A secure, safe, and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning provide the foundation children need to fulfil their potential.” Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, Department for Education (January 2024)

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

In addition to this Early Years Foundation Stage policy, the following policies are also of particular importance and should be read in conjunction with this policy:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEND policy and SEND Local Offer
- Behaviour Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions
- Blackdown Education Partnership Data Protection Policy
- School Admissions Policy
- Blackdown Education Partnership Equalities and Diversity Policy
- Fees Policy (applicable to pre-school & nursery setting)

Each of our school's websites provides useful information regarding children's learning, EYFS curriculum and upcoming events.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for all children, including those within the EYFS. Each staff member within the Early Years Foundation Stage has a duty of care and is responsible for the welfare, safety, progress, and achievement of each child within their class/setting. The class teacher or nursery manager should be the first port of call for parents/carers should they have any information or concerns regarding the well-being and progress of their child. Each EYFS class has an allocated teaching assistant and staff: child ratios are adhered to with an appropriate number of practitioners within the early years' settings.

Where there is additional need, further teaching assistants are deployed, usually to support pupils who have complex special educational needs where there is an Education, Health and Care Plan in place (see SEND policy for further information).

In addition:

- There is an EYFS Lead
- The School's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-Ordinator (SENDCo) provides support for staff, parents, and pupils
- There is a Trust EYFS & Nursery Lead

ADMISSIONS

Preschools & Nurseries

Throughout the Blackdown Education Partnership our school based early years offer enables parents to access preschool & nursery provision for their children either term time only or all year round. Our preschools open for 38 weeks of the year with various session times available, whilst our nurseries open 7:45am-6:00pm all year round with the exception of 1 week shutdown at Christmas & at Easter. Details of opening times & available sessions can be found on the relevant schools' website.

All of our settings offer places for children accessing two year, universal & extended funding vouchers. In addition, parents can make payments via tax free childcare or childcare vouchers.

Reception

In our Primary Schools, all children join us in their reception class at the beginning of the school year in which they are five years old. The start of the school year may vary from year to year, depending on term dates, but may include a part-time element for the first few days, unless a part time approach is agreed in the interests of the child. Our Primary School staff also contact prior settings, where appropriate, for information regarding each child's progress, achievements and interests and share the Early Years transition

documents to share records. A programme of transition is shared with parents, which may include visits into school, and in some cases, home visits.

Parents/carers have the right to request deferred or delayed entry into Reception. In both cases, parents/carers must outline their reasons for this request and explain how a deferred or delayed entry is in the best interests of their child. Requests for delayed or deferred entry must be made formally in writing to the Headteacher and in good time for allocation of school places. Our schools' admissions policies can be found on each school's website and also on the BEP website.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Teaching and development in the Early Years Foundation Stage at our Primary School's focus upon:

- The partnership between teachers and parents/carers, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement.
- The understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;
- The range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication;
- Making optimum use of the local community as an educational resource, away from the school site;
- The carefully planned curriculum that helps children secure the Early Learning Goals (ELG) and achieve a Good Level of Development (GLD) by the end of Foundation Stage; extending into National Curriculum for Key Stage 1 where appropriate;
- The provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, social and emotional abilities;
- The encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence, self-management, and the ability to resolve personal conflict and disagreements with others;
- The support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- The identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are regularly shared with parents/carers;
- The good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school;
- The clear aims for our work, and the regular reflecting and monitoring (between EYFS staff, Year 1 staff and the school leadership team) to evaluate and improve what we do;

- The close communication between parents/carers and staff including workshops/open sessions to facilitate understanding of teaching and learning approaches.

Characteristics of effective teaching & learning

Playing and Exploring

Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them to make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas and 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. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Active Learning

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop 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

Children should be given opportunities to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas, and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

Areas of Learning in the EYFS curriculum

The EYFS has three 'Prime Areas' and four 'Specific Areas' of learning.

The three Prime Areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

The four Specific Areas are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. In each area, the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage prior to moving to Key Stage One.

THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AND OUTDOOR SPACES

The planning within the EYFS is based around different themes. These plans are used by the EYFS teachers and teaching assistants as a guide for weekly planning, however the teachers will adapt these in response to the needs, progress and interests of the children. This will be indicated on weekly planning. Staff make regular assessments of children's learning and use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs.

The EYFS classes are organised to allow children to explore and learn in a safe and secure environment. There are areas within their classroom where the children can be active, be quiet and rest, engage in solitary play and engage in cooperative play as well as direct teaching as whole class and in small groups or 1:1 with an adult. Each classroom is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

Each class has its own enclosed early years outdoor area. Being outdoors offers the children further opportunities 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 areas of learning. We also ensure that children experience a range of trips offsite to develop their experiences and learning further.

The organisation of the classroom reflects the importance that is placed on children learning through play. Opportunities include first-hand experience, developing independence and resources to encourage children to initiate their own activities.

These activities include, but are not limited to:

- Small world resources for retelling stories
- Role play area
- Large and small construction
- Book corner with a range of fiction and non-fiction books
- Writing table with a range of writing resources
- Making area with access to a choice of natural and man-made resources
- Technology
- Interactive whiteboard
- Malleable materials
- Musical instruments

- Painting and creative equipment
- Maths games and equipment
- Outside classroom – a safe, fenced area including a sand pit, den, mud kitchen, planting equipment and areas, water trays, outside toys including trikes

ASSESSMENT

Blackdown Education Partnership recognises that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Through observation, we assess the children's interests, stages of development and learning needs, in order to plan challenging, achievable and exciting activities and experiences to extend the children's learning based on their interests.

The Reception Baseline (RBA) is a short interactive statutory assessment, taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts reception. The RBA assesses a child in early mathematics, literacy, communication and language. Ongoing assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation and is recorded. This involves the teacher and teaching assistants as appropriate. These observations are recorded in a variety of ways and used to inform ongoing assessments as well as end of year judgements for each child in all of the prime and specific areas of learning. Some writing and maths activities are also recorded in books to show children's learning and progress over time.

At the end of the summer term, teachers provide attainment results to parents/carers, reporting their child's progress and attainment against the Early Learning Goals and ages and stages. These final assessments at the end of the year are used to inform the child's next class teacher to highlight strengths and next steps for development.

INCLUSION

All schools within Blackdown Education Partnership serve its local community and therefore our schools are truly inclusive, mainstream primary schools. They have a well-deserved reputation for meeting the needs and supporting the progress of pupils with additional needs.

Please see the School's SEND policy and local offer for further information.

SAFEGUARDING, WELFARE AND HEALTH AND SAFETY

At Blackdown Education Partnership it is important to us that all children in the school are safe. We aim to educate children about boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they are special. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards and to ask for help, where needed. We are

committed to protecting and promoting the physical and psychological well-being of all children. In addition, we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships.

We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families and children's safety and welfare is paramount at all times.

Safeguarding is of paramount importance and all staff understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All staff have completed Child Protection training and know about possible indicators of abuse and their responsibilities within Keeping Children Safe in Education.

All adults volunteering in school will have a cleared DBS check and will be guided directly by teaching staff in their support of pupils. Staff have a duty of care to the pupils of which includes promoting the welfare and safety of pupils on all parts of the school site, and off-site when partaking in school visits. The Trust's Health and Safety policy is adhered to at all times.

As a Trust, we are committed to:

- Promoting the welfare of children
- Promoting good health, and taking appropriate action when children are ill
- Managing behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs
- Ensuring all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so
- Ensuring that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
- Ensuring that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and develop experiences tailored to meet their needs
- Maintaining records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children

Please see the School's Safeguarding Policy, SEND Local Offer, Behaviour Policy/Anti-bullying policy, for how we support children and their families where there are concerns.

MOBILE TECHNOLOGY

Pupils will use a range of mobile technology in their classroom to support their learning, including tablets & laptops. Pupils will also be taught about the safe use of technology and keeping themselves safe when using technology, in an age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate manner.

Images and records will only be stored in line with the Blackdown Education Partnership Data Protection Policy and GDPR guidelines. Parents/carers will have signed consent forms for the publication of non-identifying digital images of their children.

Parents/carers are encouraged to read the school's e-safety advice and updates and attend parent workshops to support children's online safety.

SCHOOL LUNCHES AND SNACKS

All children in the EYFS are provided with free fruit, daily. Water is also provided.

Details of lunch provision within our preschools & nurseries is available on each settings website. Children eat as a class in the school hall and are supported by appropriate adult ratios and qualified staff during the lunchtime period.

All Reception-age children are entitled to a universal free school meal. These need to be ordered online from home. By ordering with your child at home, you will know exactly which meal your child is receiving each day, and you will be able to talk to them about the importance of a healthy diet.

Further information and menus can be found on the relevant school website.

FREE SCHOOL MEALS AND PUPIL PREMIUM FUNDING

Reception children are eligible to receive free school meals if their parents/carers are in receipt of any of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income-based Job Seekers' Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the Guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided they are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190, as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs.

All eligible parents are requested to complete an application form, copies of which are available on request from the school office.

INFORMATION AND STORAGE AND RECORD KEEPING

In-school assessments by teaching staff and parents/carers are recorded in a number of ways. All records are stored securely in line with the Blackdown Education Partnership Data Protection Policy.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

We recognise that parents/carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents/carers have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- Talking to parents on home visits about their child before their child starts
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the summer term before their child starts school
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher or keyworker if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents in the autumn and spring terms at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress. Parents of children aged 3 and over receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of the school year in July. Parents of children aged 2 receive a copy of their child's 2-year progress check which is undertaken between the ages of two and three.
- Arranging open sessions throughout the year that encourage collaboration between children, school and parents/carers
- Offering a range of activities that support the involvement of parents/carers. We invite parents to a phonics/writing/maths/internet safety workshops to discuss the progression and stages of development the children undertake in the foundation stage. In all other areas of the curriculum, we encourage parents to participate and support learning through online observations and sharing of progress and achievements with school

All staff involved with our EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children and parents, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen.

Communication from school for parents/carers is usually via email, but notices and reminders may also come home with the children in book bags, Parentmail, Family or via the MCAS app.

TRANSITION PERIODS

Children who attend our nursery/preschool settings are offered induction sessions which provide them with opportunities to play within the setting whilst being supported by their parent, extending to independent short sessions prior to their start date. During the first term in school, much consideration is given to supporting the children's transition into their new class. Activities are carefully planned to promote the building of friendships, practising of routines in the classroom, developing listening skills and concentration skills, positive play and independence.

Joining the rest of the school for assemblies and whole-school events builds during the course of the year, once children have the skills needed to benefit from these activities. In addition, in the final term of the school year, pupils are supported into their next class through induction visits, teacher visits and open meet the teacher evenings.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

It is the responsibility of the Foundation Stage teachers to follow the principles stated in this policy.

The Headteacher, Senior Leadership Team and governors carry out monitoring of the Early Years Foundation Stage through observation and discussion as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

Appendix 1: Policy History

Approved by CEO, Headteacher, UAT Primary Advisor	Oct 2021
Updated by BEP EYFS Lead	March 2024