



**BROADWAY
FIRST SCHOOL**
Inspire • Challenge • Achieve

Early Years Policy

	Date	Signed
Staff agreement:		
Governor agreement:	17 January 2024	
To be reviewed:		

Broadway First School

Early Years Policy

1. Definition

Early Years refers to the period in a child's life from birth to the end of Reception. In our school, early years refers to the time that a child spends in the Early Years class following the foundation stage framework. Our Early Years class has children from the age of three.

Aims

- To provide a rich and stimulating environment that promotes learning through play
- To understand every child as an individual
- To help children to develop their sense of identity as individuals but also as part of a group
- To help children to develop a balance of self esteem and a sense of being valued
- To develop an awareness of the needs of others
- To develop the ability for children to take responsibility for their actions and so increase independence and resilience
- To develop skills and positive attitudes towards critical thinking, learning, self-motivation and questioning
- To provide a happy, safe and caring environment to enable children to learn how to work, play and co-operate with others
- To offer a broad and balanced curriculum which covers all seven areas of learning, including the use of the outdoors that enables each child to reach their full potential whilst fostering a great enjoyment in learning
- To help children develop a knowledge and understanding of their environment by providing opportunities to investigate, explore and question
- To enable children to communicate effectively through talking, listening, reading and writing
- To develop an effective partnership with all those who are involved in the development of the child
- To ensure continuity for every child from pre-school to Key Stage 1
- To continue our own professional learning and so further enhance the early years experience for our children

2. Induction

For Reception Children:

Summer term before entry

- For Reception children, where possible, the teacher will visit the children in their existing setting. Teachers will discuss and observe children with their current providers and begin the process of getting to know each child and to ensure consistency of the nursery/playgroup transfer record.
- There are two induction mornings planned for the children. The first two involve all or half of the new reception group working with their parents in the classroom, depending on numbers. There is also an opportunity for pre-school children and their parents to attend at least one of these sessions so that parents and children can meet.

- The parents are invited to an induction evening. Here they will be given information about the whole school, including a guided tour of the building. They will also be given all the induction information and a chance to discuss and ask any questions.

Autumn Term of entry

- From the first day, children will attend school full time. However, parents can request that their child attend mornings only if this is in the best interests of the child.
- For the first week, parents will accompany the child into the Early Years classroom and support them with the range of activities available in the room. Parents will leave at 8.50am. From the second week, parents are to take the children to the playground where they will line up at 8.50am with their class and teacher/Teaching Assistant. Parents are welcome to stay until the bell goes.
- Compulsory school age begins in the term after a child's fifth birthday.

For Preschool Children:

- Where the child is joining in the autumn term, and parents have applied and been granted a place prior to this date, children and parents will be invited to at least one play and stay session alongside the new Reception children.
- Additional play and stay sessions in the Autumn term will be held for potential new parents and children as well as those joining the following the child's third birthday.
- A settling in period for the pre-school children will be half a term. In a small number of instances, a meeting may be held with parents if it is felt the setting is not suitable for your child. Both the school and parents reserve the right to terminate a pre-school place if it felt that the child needs alternative provision.

3. The Curriculum

The Early Years Foundation follows the Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage 2021 which focuses children to the end of reception.

The philosophy underpinning the EYFS curriculum is that:

- Children must have access to a rich learning environment where opportunities and conditions allow them to flourish in all aspects of their development.
- Children have extensive opportunities to use and embed new words (vocabulary) in a range of contexts within a language rich environment. This enables children to become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.
- The learning environment should provide balance across the areas of learning.
- Integral to this is an ethos which:
 - respects each child as an individual
 - values children's efforts, interests and purposes as instrumental to successful learning
- When practitioners are evaluating the effectiveness of their assessment processes they should consider:
 - child development, both the biological and cultural aspects, and its impact on how learning may best be supported
 - planning which ensures a relevant, motivating, flexible and interesting curriculum
 - provision of an environment which truly enables successful learning by all children in their care

- the need for detailed understanding of the EYFS framework for assessment in order to gather accurate, reliable and meaningful information
- the importance of high quality adult interaction which is sensitive and adaptive to the needs of individual children and capable of promoting learning
- organisational aspects of provision, resources, curriculum and people¹

This is primarily achieved through providing a rich variety of play activities and other experiences in a stimulating and challenging environment.

- Children will complete the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum by the end of their Reception Year. However, the school has a number of ways in which the learning journey is continued from Reception into Year 1 and the beginning of the National Curriculum.
- Towards the end of the Reception year there will be also be a focus on preparing children for Year One.

4. Learning and development

- The EYFS curriculum is based on an observation of children's needs, interests and stages of development.
- In partnership with parents, the school promotes the learning and development of pupils to ensure they are ready for the next stage of education.
- There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape education programmes in EYFS settings. These are split into two sections – prime and specific; however, all the sections are interconnected and important.
- The 'prime' areas of learning and development are:
 - Communication and language
 - Physical development
 - Personal, social and emotional development
- The 'specific' areas of learning and development are:
 - Literacy
 - Mathematics
 - Understanding the world
 - Expressive arts and design
- The Statutory early learning goals (ELGs) are not used as a curriculum or in any way to limit the wide variety of rich experiences that are crucial to child development. The ELGs are used to support teachers to make a holistic, best-fit judgement about a child's development and their readiness for Year 1.

¹ From: Early Years Foundation Stage Handbook (DfE 2018)

- Activities are planned to reflect children’s interests and individual circumstances in order to provide each child with a challenging and enjoyable experience.
- The **EYFS lead** discusses any cause for concern in a child’s progress, especially in the ‘prime’ areas of learning, with the child’s parents. A strategy of support is agreed upon and consideration is taken as to whether the child may have a special educational need that requires additional support.
- **For children whose home language is not English, the school **may** take reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning, supporting their language development at home. During assessment, if a child is found to not have a strong grasp on English, the **EYFS lead** will contact the child’s parents to establish their home language skills to assess if there is cause for concern about a language delay.
- Each area of learning and development is implemented through activities the teacher believes are the most effective for the children they are teaching.
- The school responds to each child’s emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through friendly and positive interaction.
- Activities are planned with regard to the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning in the EYFS:
 - Playing and exploring – children investigate and experience things
 - Active learning – children concentrate, keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy their achievements
 - Creating and thinking critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things
- Further information regarding learning and development is set out in the school’s **Teaching and Learning Policy**.

5. The Learning Environment

The Learning Environment will:-

- be safe, secure, welcoming and stimulating
- promote a positive self image
- foster independent learning through play
- encourage the children to challenge themselves
- maximise opportunities for effective learning through
 - playing and exploring
 - active learning
 - creating and thinking critically

Adults will:-

- have a shared purpose, expectations and good communication as a team
- ensure that all children make progress in all areas of the curriculum
- take a lead from the children's interests
- encourage children to enquire
- intervene sensitively and purposefully in children's learning to develop the children's ideas
- work in partnership with parents and carers

6. Planning

- Our planning is based on topics delivered on a two year cycle, which then break down into a weekly focus. Children are very much involved in the planning of their learning as well.
- Although planning is prepared in advance, delivery is responsive to the developing needs of the children in the Early Years class at any one time. The children's own ideas are also included in the planning stage.
- The class teacher and teaching assistants meet regularly to review and evaluate, plan, prepare and adjust work together.

7. Specific Practice

The curriculum is fluid and the guidance clearly states that it should not be viewed as steps as children develop in their own way. They signify a typical stage of development. Therefore, expectations for progress in pre-school is not determined in a specific way. However, part of the role of the teacher of Reception children is to prepare children for Year One. Therefore the following guide for specific practise had been formed:

Mathematics

**Mathematics taught using a mastery approach that is used throughout school.
Reception children are expected to:**

- In the autumn term, children will focus on becoming familiar with number, representing and composing numbers to 5. They will also be introduced to pattern, shape and measures.
- In the spring term, children will begin to use addition and subtraction in numbers to 10. They will begin to find pairs of numbers that make totals. They will continue exploring pattern, shape and measures.
- By the end of the summer term, children will have a deeper understanding of numbers to 10 and beyond, including the composition of each number, subitising, comparing, recalling of number bonds, and adding one more and less to a number. They will learn about evens and odds, double facts and how quantities can be distributed equally. Children will continue geometry and spatial awareness and recognise patterns between numbers and shapes.

Literacy

- Phonics is taught through the use of Read Write Inc (RWI). This follows a systematic, synthetic approach.

- Through the autumn term, the children are taught the 42 sounds RWI scheme as well as the formation of the simple letters. They are introduced to a new sound every day and blending skills are begun as soon as the children have learnt their first group of sounds
- In the spring term, the sounds are reinforced and children will learn the diagraphs set out in the RWI scheme. The children will begin to write sentences and captions. Children who are struggling to retain their sounds will work in a smaller focus group with the teacher or teaching assistant. Children are streamed according to their phonics and reading ability.
- Handwriting is taught within the Read Write Inc scheme and supported through the Morrells handwriting scheme used within school. This includes developing fine and gross motor skills; these are physical movements to develop muscle and fine motor control.
- In the Autumn term, parents are invited to 'An introduction to Early reading and writing and RWI', which is led by the EYFS lead and English subject lead. Reading is taught through the RWI scheme. Additional phonics books that are matched carefully to the phonics level of the child will be provided and books will be changed when they have been read at home. The school's reading scheme starts with picture books, then books to compliment developing children's phonetic skills.

8. Outside Learning

We have fantastic access to an outdoor environment and are therefore able to offer a continuous, free-flow provision that incorporates planned and child-led learning opportunities both indoors and outdoors. These support pupils' awareness and natural curiosity about the world around them.

In doing so we aim to:-

- promote a developing interest in the immediate environment of the school site
- encourage use of a different range of resources
- provide opportunities to extend the cross curricular work from the indoors
- stimulate further their curiosity about living things
- provide interesting and exciting direct experiences

At Broadway First School, Early Years children have their own dedicated area for outdoor learning. We are also very fortunate to have extensive outdoor areas. In addition to our playground, we have a large open field, a wooded area used for Forest School, an outdoor classroom, pond and an eco-area. The staff use these areas to offer stimulating learning experiences outside the traditional classroom setting.

- Educational visits within the local community and further afield are also planned to support children's learning within the Early Years. There are range of whole school and class trips which will be detailed on newsletters.
- Forest school sessions are held regularly thorough the year with a specialist Forest School leader. An interest in the environment is fostered and self-confidence is built. Skills and attitudes learnt in these sessions are encouraged in everyday life.

Staffing

The Early Years staff work together as a team to plan and deliver activities to maximise the use of resources available, to enable the children to realise their full potential. The role of the adult changes according to the activity.

Staff are deployed to work specifically with the pre-school children. However, the class teacher and teaching assistants work together to support all children in the Early Years class. Children are assigned a staff member as their key worker to support them in their learning Journey.

Parents are also a fundamental part of the children's learning experience. Partnership between home and school is actively fostered through 'Play and Stay' sessions, Book and Biscuit, certain assemblies, Inspire workshops, parents' contributions to learning journals and regular communication as appropriate, for example the home-school book. Parents are also given access to their child's 'Class Dojo' account so that they are able see how their child is progressing.

9. Assessment and Recording

- Children's progress is recorded using the Statutory Early Learning Goals covering the seven areas of learning. A tracking system is used which makes the data accessible to all staff in school including senior leaders and subject leaders.
- Assessment is made regularly by all adults through frequent daily observations of the planned and self-initiated activities.
- During the first half term, children's baseline assessments will have been completed. This together with the existing data provided by their previous setting, enables staff to have a clear understanding of children's unique skills and plan for their development.
- The EYFS profile is continuously updated and monitored by senior leaders and subject co-ordinators at least half-termly. The analysis of the data allow the class teacher to identify strengths and weaknesses so that planning can be altered to respond to these needs. When assessing whether an individual child is at the expected level of development, teachers should draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgement. Staff **are not required** to prove this through collection of any physical evidence.
- Analysis of the data gathered provides evidence for the amount of progress made across the Reception year. It is important because it is the benchmark against which future value-added progress is measured.
- At the end of reception, a EYFS profile is completed for all children. This details a well-rounded picture of the child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their attainment against expected levels and their readiness for Year 1. Each child's level of development must be assessed against the ELGs and indicate whether children are reaching expected levels of development or not yet reaching expected levels.
- A copy of EYFS profile must be given to Year 1 teachers and results must be shared with parents/carers.
- The results of the EYFS profile must be sent to local authorities on their request.

- Children moving to a new school during the academic year, the original school must send their assessment of the level of development against the ELGs to the new setting.

10. Reporting

- A nursery/pre-school transfer record is completed by each child's early years setting and received by school. This record forms part of the information which allows the class teacher to form a picture of each child before they begin where possible.
- The class teacher has more informal contact with parents than other teachers in the school and much of the picture of how children are doing is communicated in this way.
- Communication takes place in a variety of ways and parents are encouraged to have a two-way dialogue.
- Parents have two opportunities to meet formally with the class teacher, one in each of the autumn and spring terms. Towards the end of the school year, parents will receive an annual report from the class teacher summarising the progress of your child throughout the year. Parents may then book an additional meeting to see their child's class teacher.

11. Transition to Year 1

- Time is spent with the teacher in Class 1 to help the children to feel secure about the transition.
- Time is allocated for the Reception and Year 1 teacher to observe together and discuss the profiles and think about continuity in the first few weeks in September.
- During the first half term in Year 1, there is a gradual transfer to the National Curriculum. Children begin to experience more focused work alongside child-initiated activities as appropriate.