



Early Years Policy

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Related Documents		
Guidance		
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Aims:

- That every child has access to a broad and balanced curriculum, which focusses on the whole child. This will ensure children begin their school journey being immersed in skills that will equip them for throughout their school life and beyond. We strive to offer the very best for every child in our EYFS.
- That teaching and learning is of a consistently high quality and is both engaging and interactive so that children can make good or better progress. Our curriculum is designed closely around the needs of children at Bradford Academy and our knowledge of their next steps.
- That all practitioners work closely with parents and carers to ensure that their contributions to their children's learning are respected, encouraged and held in the highest regard.
- That all children are included, whatever their needs, learning styles or background to ensure equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

This policy is based on requirements set out in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which applies from September 2021.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/974907/EYFS_framework_-_March_2021.pdf

“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.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children’s ‘school readiness’ and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.”

Structure of Bradford Academy EYFS

Our EYFS structure is based over three classrooms; our two year old room (tiny seeds), nursery and reception classes.

In tiny seeds, sessions are offered on a morning 8.00-11.00am and afternoon basis 11.45-3.10pm. (2.10pm finish on Fridays). There is no charge to attend tiny seeds. Children are provided with a daily snack of milk, fruit and other healthy items such as toast, bagels, cereal and yoghurts free of charge. Parents are asked to provide spare clothes and toileting items (nappies/wipes). Children move from our two year old room to nursery at transition points during the year; September start, January start and April (if appropriate and there is space in nursery) the term after the child's third birthday. Our approach is flexible in order to best meet the needs of our children. We work closely with families to ensure we are offering the very best for their child's needs. Transition points will be carefully considered based on children's academic and social stages of development. Tiny seeds and nursery staff work closely together throughout the year to ensure our children are happy, settled and given an appropriate level of challenge.

In nursery the room allows for no more than 29 children in the room for any given session. Sessions offered are as follows;

Mornings: 8.00-11.00am daily

Afternoons: 11.45-3.10pm daily (2.10pm finish on Fridays)

Beginning of week: 8.00-3.10pm Monday and Tuesday, 8.00-11.45am Wednesday

End of week: 11.45-3.10pm Wednesday, 8.00-3.10pm Thursday, 8.00-2.10pm Friday

30 hours: 8.00-3.10pm daily (2.10pm finish on Fridays)

For those children who stay for dinner, a charge of £1.80 per day is applicable to cover the cost of their meal. Children are provided with a daily snack of milk, fruit and other healthy items such as toast or bagels free of charge. Parents are asked to provide spare clothes and toileting items if required (nappies/wipes). Transition points mirror those in the 2 year old room, and priority for session times is given to those already attending Bradford Academy.

In reception, children enter via a staggered start in September usually at a rate of 5-6 children starting in each class every day until full classes are attending daily. From their first day children attend all day including staying for dinner time. A more flexible timetable will be considered if this is deemed necessary for any child who struggles to settle. This would be discussed with parents should the need arise. In nursery, children also enter via a staggered start in small numbers per session. The aim is for children to stay for the duration of their session but this is always flexible should children require short sessions whilst settling in. In tiny seeds, all children's start date is 'day one' with the acknowledgement that they are likely to attend short sessions whilst settling in. Daily conversations take place with families to ensure transition takes place sensitively and is led by the emotional wellbeing of each child. Parents are also welcomed to stay for extended periods of the session if this further supports their child to settle in.

Our reception classes are two rooms. Children can access either classroom when in free flow provision play. Outdoor provision is always on offer whilst children are in continuous provision in nursery and Reception. The outdoor provision access is free flow and continuous in these classes. In our 2 year old nursery Outdoor provision is regularly offered at certain times during the day. Each class has access to their own outdoor area.

All children in reception are provided with a school meal under the Universal Infant Free School Meals funding and a free daily snack under the School Fruit and Vegetables Scheme. Milk is also provided on a daily basis. The term after children turn 5, there is a charge for this.

We are guided by the four guiding principles, on which the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is based:

- Every child is unique.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- Children learn and develop to their best of their ability through enabling environments.
- Understanding the importance of learning and development.

Every Child is Unique

“Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.”

At Bradford Academy Primary 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, at varying rates. Children’s attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, alongside celebration and sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

- **Inclusion**
- We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of ‘differences’. All children at Bradford Academy Primary are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.
- At Bradford Academy, we believe that all our children matter. We give our children 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 the EYFS 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.

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. We aim to offer a curriculum based on ‘awe and wonder’ and real life experiences to foster and promote a love of learning in all our children.
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children, regardless of ability and other factors is valued.
- Using resources that 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. This action encompasses a wide range of strategies such as seeking support from external agencies, offering intervention and liaising closely with families.
- The use of our skills and milestones documents and our curriculum action points to ensure our curriculum caters to the needs of our children.

Welfare and Safeguarding:

“Children learn best when they are health, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults who care for them.”

At Bradford Academy, we understand and adhere to all legally required welfare requirements as set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework.

We understand that we are required to:

- **Safeguard the welfare of all our children.**
- **Promote good health, including oral health.**
- **Manage behaviour effectively and appropriately.**
- **Ensure the suitability of all adults working with our children, only allowing unsupervised access to adults who it is suitable to allow this for.**
- **Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.**

These are followed alongside our whole school safeguarding policy and procedures. Our remaining safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

At Bradford Academy, we actively encourage good health through promoting physical exercise and leading an active lifestyle. Children in reception have a weekly PE session in addition to their continuous outdoor provision. Those in tiny seeds and nursery also have weekly sessions in the hall to promote the benefits of physical activity. An understanding of the importance of a healthy diet is fostered through healthy snack, balanced school meals, healthy additions to school meals and whole class discussions around healthy diets. Screen time is limited to educational purposes, this is discussed with the children in an age-appropriate manner.

Good oral health is promoted through the tooth-brushing program, which we deliver in partnership with the Bradford Oral Health Improvement Team. Tooth brushing resources are also sent home throughout the year as ‘holiday packs’ and at additional times throughout the year if there is a specific need. Children in nursery and reception brush their teeth once per session/ day.

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. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

All EYFS staff hold a first aid qualification. Medical Tracker is used to record first aid incidents, all of which are then reported to parents on the same day. An accompanying letter is used for head injuries and those which may be slightly more serious such as a facial injury. Each classroom has a first aid log to record minor incidents where the use of a first aid kit is not required. This is used for minor grazes etc. These incidents are also reported to parents on the same day.

A risk assessment policy is in place for all EYFS classrooms. A daily checklist for staff provides certainty that our classrooms are safe and ready for learning at the start of each school day.

Positive Relationships

“Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.”

At Bradford Academy, we recognise and support the notion that children learn to be strong and independent from having secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, mutually respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as partners

We recognise that parents are children’s first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children in our care.

We ensure that parents/ carers are fully involved in their child’s education in variety of ways:

- Play sessions in tiny seeds, which parents attend with their child to support settling them in. These build gradually until the child is ready to attend independently for increasing amounts of time. Staff will liaise with families to ensure these decisions are made in partnership.
- All new to tiny seeds and nursery families are offered visit sessions prior to starting at Bradford Academy. These sessions take place after school to ensure we offer a quiet session, attended by a small number of children with their parents and carers. We find this supports our children’s transition and gives families an additional feeling of security as they have spent time with us.
- Children transitioning from tiny seeds to nursery attend play sessions to support them in the weeks prior to moving rooms. These sessions also take place in July for those children transitioning from nursery to reception in September.
- Rising reception children who are new to Bradford Academy attend play sessions with their families. These sessions are a great opportunity for staff to meet new children and spend time with them in our setting. They also allow us to discuss any additional support a child and their family may require.
- The 50 things to do before you’re 5 programme is used within classrooms and on tapestry observations to promote parental engagement with learning.
- Stay and play sessions, which take place termly across EYFS. Sessions have a focus on the 50 things to do before you’re 5 programme.
- Inviting all reception parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school.
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child’s progress in our classes. Such as open evenings, celebrations of learning, sports day and regular PUR staggered throughout the year.
- The use of Tapestry across EYFS to share every child’s learning and achievements. Parents are able to comment on existing observations, add their own and communicate with us via Tapestry. Tapestry also gives us the opportunity to share ideas and wider learning such as RWInc phonics videos in the nursery summer term and throughout reception.
- Regular PUR sessions throughout the year to update parents of their children’s progress across all areas of learning.
- Parents receive an annual report in July to outline children’s academic achievements, characteristics of effective learning and next steps. Whilst we acknowledge that the characteristics of effective learning are no longer a statutory requirement of reporting to parents, we strongly believe that the behaviours demonstrated in these characteristics, are those which parents feel most strongly they wish to know about their child/ children.

- For children entering tiny seeds, a 2 year old progress check is written during their first half term. These are shared with families and the child's health visitor. They focus on the prime areas, celebrating the child's current successes and targeting next steps in learning and development. Progress checks are discussed during PUR, ensuring families have a thorough understanding of their content.
- Open door policy at drop off times throughout EYFS.
- Reception teachers and the EYFS lead speak to all external childcare providers in the summer term prior to new to Bradford Academy children joining us in September. Visits take place to these providers should a child require additional support. Home visits and additional time spent at Bradford Academy can also be used as a further transition tool, should this be required.
- All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. Our ethos around play based learning is strong, giving staff ample opportunities to interact positively with our children.

Enabling Environments

At Bradford Academy Primary, we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by spending time with the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning. Some of these experiences will be captured through observation, where new or significant learning is demonstrated.

Planning:

In all our EYFS classrooms, a long-term plan is completed for the academic year. A two-year cycle is in place in nursery as some children will remain in the same classroom for more than one academic year. Our plans outline half-termly topics and opportunities to meet Development Matters and ELG statements, however an emphasis is always placed on children's interests and child-led learning. We offer a curriculum which is aimed at the needs of the children attending our school, offering a wide-ranging curriculum which extends far beyond Development Matters guidance and the Early Learning Goals.

Activities and experiences planned by staff ensure children experience a broad, balanced and enriching curriculum. Through a focus on the prime areas with our youngest children, important academic, social and life skills are embedded. All learning opportunities take into account children's prior learning and next steps in order to ensure it is appropriate to the child's current abilities. The use of annotated milestones documents at each data point ensures staff are aware of next steps, and can plan accordingly to meet them.

Across all our EYFS classes, planning is completed on a weekly basis in line with children's next steps based on data, children's interests and the class' core text. A small number of continuous provision is enhanced on a weekly basis in accordance with children's interests and next steps in learning. Staff also feedback to class teachers on a weekly basis to inform next steps planning. Staff then work closely with children in their areas to challenge and promote quality learning opportunities throughout the week. Daily circle times provide opportunities for children to listen to stories, sing nursery rhymes and songs, and take part in activities linked to wider learning.

In nursery, maths and literacy sessions are planned for on a weekly basis, with children taking part in either a whole class mixed ability session or small group mixed ability sessions dependent on the

content being covered. Adults leading groups are also rotated to ensure all children have access to the skills of their class teacher and the other practitioners. In the summer term, rising reception children are taught Read Write Inc phonics lessons. These sessions focus on learning letter sounds and learning the skills of oral blending in readiness for reception learning.

In Reception, once settled into school life in September, children take part in daily phonics, literacy and maths focussed sessions. In the afternoons there is also the opportunity to explore topic based learning through a variety of creative activities and twice weekly whole class sessions. Literacy and maths adult-led sessions take place in mixed ability, whole class groups. For phonics, children are grouped based on ability, as per Read Write Inc guidance. All children complete a maths focus task weekly, with the opportunity to re-visit their learning if further support is required. Weekly writing focus tasks are also in place. Children have a 'drawing club' book where evidence of this learning is collated by staff to record the learning journey. Maths evidence is recorded in a floor book until the Summer term when children then have their own individual maths books. RE is taught once weekly and collective worship is delivered on a daily basis, this learning is collated in a year group floor book. Collective worship in reception is delivered through song, story, picture news, prayer and time for reflection to ensure children develop an understanding of our Christian ethos from a young age. RE is given a focus in nursery and tiny seeds via the use of story telling and singing. Faith days and weeks also take place for key religious festivals such as Diwali, Eid, Easter and Christmas. These ensure children are given the opportunity to explore how a variety of faiths celebrate key festivals and develop their understanding and empathy towards customs which may be different to their own.

Bradford Academy skills documents are also in place for CLL, PSE and PD. 'I can' statements within these skills documents are used in provision and outdoor weekly planning. Focus skills are included in all MTPs. Skills documents are reviewed in December, April and July with a focus on coverage of key skills. This ensures no child leaves our EYFS without the opportunity to visit and re-visit all key skills we deem a Bradford Academy child to need. Within these documents, information is also included to support staff in how to plan to meet these skills and offer many opportunities to refine them.

Sticky knowledge documents and a knowledge organiser are completed once per half term (in line with each topic) in reception. All topics use the 'Understanding of the World' strand as a stimulus from which to branch out. This ensures that whilst this area of the curriculum does not form part achieving a Good Level of Development, our curriculum remains based fundamentally around the key knowledge, skills and experiences our children need in order to thrive. Sticky knowledge documents are made in nursery and tiny seeds if the topic has sufficient knowledge content for this to be appropriate.

Observation and provision play:

At Bradford Academy, we understand the importance of spending time with our children, supporting and moving them on in their learning. Observations are recorded when new and/or significant learning is demonstrated. This ensures our focus remains with our children, rather than on typing up lengthy observations. Our emphasis is on play and challenge within this play. Staff consistently work towards this ethos and understand that play cannot take place from behind an iPad. Observations are recorded on Tapestry, with parents/carers having the opportunity to comment on these, and to add their own. In Reception, evidence of weekly maths learning is recorded in a floor book and evidence sheet until the Summer term where evidence is recorded in children's individual maths books. Evidence of weekly literacy tasks is recorded in individual children's drawing club books to evidence the progress each child is making in reading and writing. In tiny seeds and nursery, all learning is recorded in floor books and **on tapestry**. Nursery children also have a busy book, in which they complete a bi-weekly mark

making activity. This activity is based on an observational drawing and attempting to create lines, shapes and marks that have been modelled. This activity is also sometimes linked to the 'story dough' programme which children access in nursery. Pencil grip is also taught at this time.

Assessment:

Children are assessed as being 'on/off track' at four assessment points throughout the year: a baseline in September, end of December, Easter and final data (June EFYP submittal for reception, July data for tiny seeds and nursery). Bradford Academy milestones documentation is used to support best judgements, these are then annotated with next steps, gaps in learning and any other relevant notes. Reception children will complete the NFER Reception Baseline Assessment on entry. Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress against the ELGs. Tiny seeds and nursery families also receive a written report summary. Whilst we recognise that commenting on the Characteristics of Effective Learning is no longer a legal requirement, we feel that being able to demonstrate these qualities is vital to overall development. Therefore, our end of year report comment continues to be underpinned by the CoEL. We give a reasonable opportunity for the parents to discuss these judgements with the EYFS teacher. The report shares whether children are on or off track.

The Learning Environment

- The EYFS classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The classroom is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and located equipment and resources independently.
- The EYFS classes have their own enclosed outdoor area. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children to explore, to use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all the areas of learning. Weekly enhancements are planned for, alongside key continuous provision which is accessed all year round.

Learning and Development

Curriculum:

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2021.

The EYFS consists of seven interlinking areas of learning, three prime and four specific:

Prime areas:

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

Specific areas:

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

The prime areas of the curriculum are the most important in the early years of a child's educational life. Unless the prime areas are fully supported, the child will fail to thrive and learn. The prime areas form the basis for teaching and learning predominantly in tiny seeds and at the start of nursery. This will continue whilst the children develop and embed these crucial skills. Our flexible approach ensures that we continue to direct our focus towards every child's next steps in their development. None of the seven areas of learning can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All skills are developed through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. In each area, there are Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

The prime areas of learning are developed and embedded further through the exploration and teaching of the specific areas of the EYFS curriculum. Core knowledge and skills for current and future learning are vital at this stage. We offer a careful balance of skill and knowledge based learning with a real drive on ensuring children leave EYFS with the basics required to ensure they continue to thrive.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

At Bradford Academy, we understand that children learn in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are inter connected. We value the characteristics of effective learning in supporting children to be the very best life long learners they can be.

Playing and exploring: through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them 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: occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence, they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfactions as they take ownership of their learning.

Creative and critical thinking: children should be given opportunity 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.

Monitoring and Review:

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teachers and EYFS Lead to follow the principles stated in this policy. The head teacher, senior leaders and subject coordinators will carry out regular monitoring throughout the academic year as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.