



Brackenhill Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Rationale

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Brackenhill Primary School, children join Nursery after their third birthday and Reception class in the year that they turn five. In partnership with parents and carers, we enable the children to begin the process of becoming active learners for life. We endeavour to ensure that children 'learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe.' We aim to support children by promoting 'teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness'' in order to give children 'the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.' (Early years foundation stage statutory framework 2024)

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A unique child – developing resilient, capable, confident and self-assured individuals.
- Positive relationships – supporting children in becoming strong and independent.
- Enabling environments with teaching and support from adults – supporting children to learn and develop well by responding to their individual interests and needs and helping them to build their learning overtime, whilst developing a strong partnership between practitioners, parents/carers and the child.
- Learning and development – An acknowledgement that children learn in different ways and at different rates.

A Unique Child

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, as well as celebration/sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion/Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

All children and their families are valued at Brackenhill Primary School. Children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all provisions available. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. Assessments consider contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child that has/potentially has a special educational need or disability is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of SEND is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at



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an early stage and the school's SENDCO is called upon for further information and advice. Appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the school's SEND policy.

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 acting to provide support as necessary.

Welfare and Safety

'Children learn best when they are healthy, safe, secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.' (Early years foundation stage statutory framework 2024)

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. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See Safeguarding Policy)

At Brackenhill we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Early years foundation stage statutory framework 2024. We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare and safeguarding of children.
- ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access with them are suitable to do so.
- promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- support and understand behaviour, managing this effectively in a manner appropriate to children's stage of development and individual needs.
- maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

Positive Relationships



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At Brackenhill 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.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most significant educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating their child. We build strong partnerships through:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school.
- visiting the child at home/at their previous setting before they begin Nursery and/or Reception.
- giving children the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during transition sessions.
- supporting children through the transition from home to Nursery with the children attending their first session with their parent and then gradually building up their time to a full session on their own.
- supporting children through the transition from Nursery/Pre-school to Reception with the children attending part time as part of a staggered start during their first week. This is also to support staff and parents in getting to know one another as well as the children.
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school and again during the first half term of the child's Reception year in order to detail how we aim to work with their child, particularly in relation to reading and phonics.
- encouraging parents to talk to their child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents twice a year at which the teacher and the parent can discuss a child's progress in private. Parents then receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of the school year.
- allowing parents continuous access to their child's learning journey and assessment records through the online platform Seesaw.
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between children, school and parents: stay and play sessions, celebration assemblies, school visits, enterprise days etc.
- ensuring all parents know that who their child's Key Worker is in Nursery and that their child's teacher and Early Years Practitioner (EYP) are both their key workers in Reception.
- providing a quiet and private area where parents are able to discuss any concerns they have in confidence.

Enabling Environments

We create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have access to an indoor and outdoor environment daily that is set up to enhance their learning with carefully planned activities made available as part of continuous provision.



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New learning builds and extends upon prior learning and in following children's interests, adults are able to use information gathered to inform their planning to ensure effectiveness of teaching. Observations of the children also allow for teachers and EYPs to include children's current interests and experiences within their planning. These observations are recorded on electronic devices which are connected to the Seesaw platform. Play based learning is paramount and children are able to direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities provided by staff. Staff enhance play and extend as needed to further develop individual learning.

Learning and Development

Teachers and EYPs provide the curriculum in the foundation stage classes. There are seven areas of learning and development of which three are 'prime areas' and four are 'specific areas'.

The prime areas are:

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

The specific areas are:

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

Through careful assessments and observations, including information provided by parents and other settings, children's development levels are assessed. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children grow in confidence and ability within the 3 prime areas. However, if a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents and/or carers and agree on how best to support the child. This may also include a discussion with the SENDCO in order to access SEND support where appropriate.

At Brackenhill, each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Play is used as an essential pathway into children's development and in building their confidence as children explore, investigate and experience things, develop their own ideas, make links between them and develop strategies for doing things, as well as persevering when they encounter difficulties so they may enjoy their achievements. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. There is an on-going judgement to be made by practitioners about the balance between activities led by children, and activities led or guided by adults. Practitioners respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interactions. As



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children grow older, and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning, as they prepare for Year 1. A child's entire early years' experience is carefully planned so that it 'contributes positively to their brain development and readiness for Key Stage 1'.

Experiences and activities planned will reflect the different ways in which children learn. At Brackenhill we support children in using the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning. These are:

- **playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.
 - **active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements and
 - **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.
- (Early years foundation stage statutory framework 2024)

Religious Education is also taught in the Reception classes in accordance with Bradford guidelines.

Equal Opportunities

All members of the school are treated as individuals. We aim to meet the needs of all, taking account of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, special educational needs, disability, and social circumstances. All staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect cultural diversity and the need to prepare pupils for life in a diverse and multi-faith society.

Health and Safety

At Brackenhill, there are clear procedures for assessing risk which include procedures for keeping children safe during outings and for any aspects of the environment or provision that may require a further risk assessment.

- Fresh drinking water is available at all times.
- Children's dietary needs are recorded and acted upon when required.
- Each classroom has a snack and sink area that can provide healthy snacks and drinks.
- A first aid box is accessible at all times and a record of accidents and injuries is kept. First aid is administered by trained staff only.
- A Health and Safety Policy and procedures cover identifying, reporting and dealing with accidents, hazards and faulty equipment.
- A Fire and Emergency Evacuation Policy and procedure is in place.
- An Online Safety Policy stating how mobile phones, cameras and other devices such as smart watches are to be used and stored securely whilst children are in the setting is in place. Cameras that are used in school must also not be used for staff's own personal use.
- A Code of Conduct Policy clearly outlines the clothing staff are expected to wear in order to ensure they are able to support children in their learning so



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that they can get to a child's level and play and engage with them at floor level and within the outdoor area.

Transition

From home / Pre-school to Nursery

During the term prior to a child's entry into Nursery, the following procedures have been put in place to ensure a successful transition:

- Parents and children are invited to a meeting to look around the school, meet the staff and ensure they know about school procedures and allocation of classes and any concerns they may want to express. At this meeting the parents book a suitable time for a home visit.
- A home visit takes place approximately two weeks before the child begins Nursery.
- Children and parents are asked to fill in an 'All About Me' booklet to bring with them on their first day.
- Children attend their first session for one hour with their parents, their second session for one hour on their own, their third session for the full three hours on their own. This procedure is flexible and is often adapted to meet differing needs.
- Regular phone calls are made to parents/carers to reassure them during this nerve-racking time and if a child becomes extremely distressed, parents/carers are always contacted.

From Nursery / Pre-school / home to Reception

During the summer term prior to a child's entry into the Reception year, the following procedures have been put into place to ensure successful transition:

- Parents and children are invited to a meeting to look around the school, meet the staff and ensure they know about school procedures and allocation of classes and express any concerns they may have.
- The children are invited to visit their Reception class.
- Members of staff from Brackenhill make visits to feeder settings. The number of visits will depend on the child's needs and how much information gathering is required in order to support a child's transition.
- Children from Brackenhill Nursery will have regular, planned visits into their Reception class where they get an opportunity to engage with staff and become familiar with the environment.
- Children requiring extra support can have additional visits regardless of their setting.

From Reception Class to Key Stage 1

During the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile (EYFSP) is completed for each child. The EYFSP provides parents/carers as well as staff, with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge and understanding as well as their abilities and progress against expected levels, as they prepare for Year 1. The profile includes



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on-going observations, all relevant records held by the setting, discussions with parents, carers, and any other adults whom the teacher/parent/carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

Each child's level of development is assessed against the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) and the profile indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development, if they are exceeding expected levels or if they are not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the child's report together with a short commentary on their skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This informs the dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1. Activities and experiences in Year 1 are then planned to encourage play based, independent learning with the 'characteristics of effective learning' continuing to underpin practice.

Headteacher..... Date.....

Chair of Governors..... Date.....

This policy will be reviewed annually.