

BYRON WOOD ACADEMY



Early Years (Reception and Nursery) Policy

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1. Aims

Our work at Byron Wood is based on the belief that the early years of a child's life are vitally important. During the first five years, attitudes are shaped, first relationships formed, concepts developed and the foundations for later learning built. Our aim is to support learning and development of each individual child providing a secure learning environment, which enables children to be:

- happy and confident
- curious and creative
- tolerant and patient
- compassionate and caring
- independent and inter-dependent
- respectful of themselves and others
- appreciative and appreciated

1.1. To achieve these aims we will:

- provide a stable, caring and stimulating environment, which embraces all children and respects their race, gender, age, ability, culture, class and religion.
- develop and extend the language and communication skills
- value all children as individuals and appreciate their uniqueness
- value parents and carers as the child's first and vital educator
- have the highest expectations for ourselves and all our children
- value the wider community as a means of adding to the richness of our Early Years
- provide structured and planned experiences which promote a child's individual development.
- enable the child to observe, explore, experiment, question and discover.
- establish that learning is play based, exciting, absorbing, and where children make connections.

1.2. Our objectives are:

- to create an environment where children can develop at their own rate
- to promote self awareness and a realisation of his/her own potential.
- to develop through praise the child's self esteem
- to develop and encourage children's use of language, so he/she can begin to report, recall, identify, classify, and discriminate.
- to develop the child's fine and gross motor skills.
- to encourage the child to develop relationships with other children and adults.
- to promote caring, sharing, and turn taking.
- to provide experiences that will build on what children already know and can do.
- to provide an early years curriculum that is planned and purposeful, with relevant and appropriate content that matches the different levels of children's need.
- to help children to develop concepts and skills through play and appropriate experiences.

2. The Early Years Curriculum

We follow the Early Years (EYs) 2014 framework. Every child deserves the very best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child's experience in the

early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. When parents choose to use early years services they want to know that provision will keep their child safe and help them to thrive. The EYs is the framework that provides this assurance.

The overarching aim of our EYs is to help young children achieve the five *Every Child Matters* outcomes of staying safe, being healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic well-being by:

- **setting the standards** for learning, development and care young children should experience when they are attending a setting outside of their family home, ensuring that every child makes progress and that no child gets left behind;
- **providing for equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice and ensuring that child is included and not disadvantaged because of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties or disabilities, gender or ability;
- **creating a framework for partnership working** between parents and professional and between all the settings the child attends;
- **improving quality and consistency** in the early years sector through a universal set of standards which apply to all settings, ending the distinction between care and learning in the existing frameworks, and providing the basis for inspection and regulation;
- **laying secure foundation for future learning** through learning and development that is planned around the individual needs and interests of the child and informed by the use of ongoing observational assessment.

The EYs principles which guide the work of all early years practitioners are grouped into four distinct but complementary themes:

- A unique child
- positive relationships
- enabling environments
- learning and development.

Our effective practice is built on these four guiding themes. They provide a context for the requirements and describe how we as practitioners should support the development, learning and care of young children.

Each principle is supported by four commitments which describe how the principle can be put into practice.

The four Principles of the EYFS are:

- Every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person.
- The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning.

- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of Learning and Development are equally important and inter-connected.

The EY develops children's minds and extends the learning begun by their family and carers.

The Early Years is made up of seven areas of **Learning and Development; these are divided into**

➤ **Prime areas:**

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Communication and Language

Physical Development

➤ **Specific Areas:**

Mathematics

Literacy

Understanding the World

Expressive Arts and Design

All areas of Learning and Development are underpinned by the principles of the EYs. None of these areas of Learning and Development are delivered in isolation. They are equally important and depend on each other to support a rounded approach to child development. The seven areas will be delivered through planned, purposeful play with an appropriate balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities and experiences.

The seven areas of Learning and Development together make up the skills, knowledge and experiences appropriate for babies and children as they grow, learn and develop. All children are different so the age ranges have overlapped in the EYs to create broad developmental phases. Each child's progress is individual to them and they develop at different rates.

There are seven broad developmental phases:

- Birth – 11 months
- 8-20 months
- 16-26 months
- 22-36 months
- 30-50 months
- 40-60+ months
- Goals

The Early Learning Goals form the expectations that most children should reach by the end of the Foundation Stage - some children will exceed the goals whilst for other children their skills will be emerging within the goals. Our aim is to ensure that as many children as possible have developed the skills and competencies to prepare them for the Key Stage 1 curriculum. We also aim to ensure that all children see themselves as successful learners, by supporting them in developing the Characteristics of Effective Learning, as defined by the 2014 EYs Framework. This

includes engagement, persistence, motivation, thinking critically, having their own ideas, and being willing to 'have a go'.

2.1. Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Personal, Social and Emotional Development is made up of the following aspects:

Making Relationships, Self Confidence and Self Awareness, and Managing Feelings and Behaviour.

Children are encouraged to show appropriate self-respect and establish effective relationships with other adults and children. Children work both independently and co-operatively. They are encouraged to develop an understanding of what is right and wrong and are stimulated to show a range of feelings such as wonder, joy and sorrow.

2.2. Communication and Language

Communication, Language and Literacy is made up of **Listening and Attention, Understanding, and Speaking.**

Children's experience of language is widened as they are helped to acquire competence in English and heritage languages. They are helped to become competent in speaking and listening, extending their vocabulary and experience of stories, poems and rhymes. They learn to use language to imagine and recreate roles and experiences. They learn to ask questions and suggest explanations.

2.3. Physical Development

Physical Development is made up of 2 aspects: **Movement and Handling, and Health and Self Care.** Activities in this area focus on children developing physical (fine and gross motor) control, coordination, manipulation, movement and awareness of space in indoor and outdoor environments. They include establishing positive attitudes towards a healthy and active way of life.

2.4. Literacy

Children are encouraged to develop a love of books. They are invited to develop mark-making and writing skills within a range of meaningful contexts. Through Read Write Inc the children develop their ability to distinguish between sounds and link sounds and letters to blend and read words. For those children not yet able to access RWI (which corresponds with Phase 2 of Letters and Sounds) we use the principles of Letters and Sounds to develop sound discernment skills, understanding of alliteration and rhyme, and of oral segmenting and blending. Various activities are provided in order to help develop writing and literacy skills.

2.5. Mathematics

Mathematics covers number skills – counting, calculating and comparing – and Shape, Space and Measure – time, size, weight, capacity, pattern and shape. Children are provided with activities that build the foundation for numeracy and begin to understand and develop simple mathematical concepts. Mathematics is built into and found everywhere.

2.6. Understanding the World

Children learn about People and Communities, the World around them, and Technology. They learn about how we are the same in some ways, and different in other ways, about growth, the environment and how things work, and about a range of technology – computers, mobile phones, cameras and robots for example.

2.7. Expressive Arts and Design

In this area children are stimulated to develop their curiosity, imagination and their ability to communicate and to express ideas and feelings in creative ways. The children are encouraged to respond to their senses, share their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of art, music and movement, dance, imaginative and role play activities, and design and technology.

3. Assessment

- Each child has an EYs Learning Journey in which staff log observations, photos, samples of work etc as a record of their progress. These are freely available to parents at any time.
- Observations are used to plan for future activities, and to track children's progress. The children's progress is tracked on a document based on the EYs 2014 Development Matters.
- We use Learning Stories to observe a child at intervals throughout a day in a range of contexts, to capture child initiated learning and to gain a view of the whole child. Assessment involves all adults who work with children and we strive to involve parents in this by sharing learning stories as well as talking about children's home learning and experiences.
- We aim to discuss any concerns we may have about a child's progress with parents as soon as we become concerned, and to work with parents and carers, the school Inclusion Manager and outside agencies in partnership to ensure all children are able to access all aspects of the curriculum regardless of any additional need. We feel strongly that early help can overcome many difficulties to a significant degree.
- Children's attainment is assessed on entry to setting to establish which age band they are working within for all the areas of learning. We baseline Reception children on the Early Excellence baseline which will be statutory from September 2016.
- Termly assessments are made in accordance with the Assessment Policy Document tracking children through Nursery and Reception to Key Stage 1 and beyond.
- An end of year report, including EYFS Profile attainment information for reception children, is compiled and sent out during the final half of the summer term along with a report to parents about progress. We also share information about progress on a termly basis with parents.

4. Special Educational Needs

- We aim to identify any children with S.E.N. as early as possible, starting with information given on home visits and from other agencies.
- Through careful observation and assessment, we identify the special needs that individual children have and make provision for them through our planning.
- If differentiation alone is not sufficient then we work with the Inclusion Manager in accordance with the SEN Code of Practice and the LEA audit system implementing the school policy and guidelines.
- Parents are kept informed at every stage.

5. The planning process

All planning in the Early Years Unit starts with the child, who is a unique and valued individual. All of our pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum, which takes account of their needs.

5.1. Long Term Planning (LTP)

This planning provides the broad framework for the coming year. It operates on a cycle which ensures we cover all of the areas of learning as outlined in the Early Years. The curriculum we offer is topic based, which allows staff creativity in their approach and ensures that the curriculum on offer is always exciting and innovative.

5.2. Medium Term Planning (MTP)

We start each half term by explaining the coming topic to the children and brainstorming to find out what they already know and what they need to be taught – based both on what they would LIKE to find out, and the next steps we judge appropriate from the prior knowledge and skills they have. Then we review assessment information to identify next steps for individuals and groups across all areas of the curriculum.

Using this information we plan interesting and stimulating activities to move the children's learning forward based around the topic as designated on the LTP.

5.3. Short Term Planning (STP)

Short term planning allows us to be more precisely reactive to the children's needs – each week's activities, although likely to follow broadly the activities outlined in the MTP, are based carefully on the observational assessment of children's performance and progress the previous week.

One way to share these observations is the weekly moderation meeting (Big Think), however practitioners constantly share information and adjust working and resourcing to meet the needs of the children on a daily and less formal basis too.

6. Observation, Assessment and Record Keeping

- In Early Years, we monitor, observe and assess individual children on a daily basis.
- Observations are crucial to ensuring we meet the needs of all our children.
- The team use a combination of:
- Snapshot quick observations – this is when the child does something of note for that child
- Focussed planned observations – an area of learning, or specific objective is identified, specific activities and opportunities within the continuous provision are planned and children are invited to access these. Their dialogue and working is then captured and analysed.
- Learning Stories which capture a child working in different areas or at different activities across the day.

- Photographs are used extensively.
- Observations are analysed to extract learning. Next steps are planned for at the weekly 'Big Think'.
- This information is collated in Learning Journey folders to build up a picture of the individual child's learning and all staff are equally involved in this process.
- All new staff are introduced to observation and supported to understand why we value and observe play as well as focused tasks.
- Capturing observations of children's play and working should not at any time interfere with high quality teaching interactions between adults and children.
- Children's progress is monitored regularly in order to support those children not making expected progress, and to ensure that all children are challenged and make good progress.
- Analysis and collation of all data relating to the FS is available in EYs leader's office. Detailed statistical analysis shows trends of achievement across the FS year on year.

7. Equal Opportunity

- All staff ensure that all children are treated equally
- All children have access to the Early Years Curriculum
- Children who have English as an additional language are given bi-lingual support where necessary
- We as a school pride ourselves on being totally inclusive

8. Admissions

- Refer to school website
- Prior to children starting in Nursery or Reception, staff do home visits to meet parents and children. All children and parents are invited to visit the setting before they start.
- Reception has one intake each year in September. Parents are invited to a meeting with the Reception Teachers to find out about expectations within their child's new class, and to meet their child's new teacher.
- Reception places are allocated centrally by Sheffield Council Admissions
- Nursery places are allocated by school using criteria which align with those used for places throughout school. Catchment criteria do not apply. Having a place in Nursery cannot guarantee a place in Reception. Children can attend Nursery as soon as they are three.
- School reserves the right to amend its admissions policy to allow for cases of need

9. Transition

Nursery to Reception as outlined in the admissions section

Early Years to Key stage1

- Visits by the children to new classroom, new teachers spend time working in F Stage getting to know their new children.
- Reception staff pass on all records to Year 1 teachers and discuss the children's strengths, likes, friendships and learning styles.
- Opportunities for parents and carers to visit new class and meet teachers

Where possible and practical these transition arrangements are also offered to children from other settings.

10. Parental Partnership

- We value enormously our relationships with parents and actively encourage this bridge between home and school.
- We acknowledge the children's experiences at home and appreciate that these are highly significant to their achievement in school.
- All staff are available at the start and end of each day establishing partnership with our families. Parents and carers are welcomed into the classroom both in Nursery and Reception, to settle their child, stay for a short time if they wish, and speak to practitioners about anything they feel they wish to share or ask about.
- A letter is sent home each half term to explain what we will be learning about and to offer parents tips for helping their child at home, and for making and strengthening the links between learning in school and experiences outside school.

11. Liaison with other agencies

We have very established links with other agencies and pride ourselves on these links. We actively liaise with:

- Speech and Language Therapists
- School Nurse
- Health Visitors
- Social workers
- Family workers
- Occupational Health
- Multi-agency Support Team (MAST)
- Educational Psychology
- Learning Support accessed through the Family of Schools.

12. Health & Safety

To ensure the children are safe:

- they will be supervised by staff at all times following LEA guidelines
- staff will discourage and intervene in unsafe play

- staff will familiarise themselves and children with procedures in the event of a fire
- staff will be conscious of security, ensuring doors and outdoor play gates are locked are secure when children are present
- staff will ensure children are collected by known adults who have written permission to collect
- staff will encourage personal hygiene
- staff will monitor children's welfare and wellbeing and in cases of doubt liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Designated Safeguarding Deputies. Each class teacher is responsible for the compilation of a Profile of Need which summarizes the particular characteristics of the class they are responsible for.
- staff will ensure all areas of the unit inside and out are clean, safe and free of hazards (outdoor play area checked each morning for any items)
- staff will ensure all equipment and resources are clean and safe
- all Risk Assessments are accurate, shared with all staff and updated regularly
Monitored by EYs Leader, Nicola Husbands.
- in accordance with our statutory duties we always have at least one person who has a current paediatric first aid certificate on the premises at all times when children are present. We also ensure that at least one person on all EYs outings has a current paediatric first aid certificate. We also have 12 additional staff members who hold a valid First Aid qualification throughout school.

APPENDIX

This policy should be read in conjunction with other school policies, in particular:

Parent/Carer Contact Details

When a child starts in our setting all parents and carers are required to complete a form giving contact information for parents and carers so that there is always someone we can contact should we need to. Parents are expected to maintain an up to date contact number with the office, and inform us when they change telephone number.

Behaviour Management

In line with the rest of the school, we operate a whole school positive behaviour management policy which involves all adults seeking to 'spot' and praise 'wanted' or 'good' behaviour. Children are given raffle tickets for anything positive and each class has a raffle winner at the end of the week. Expectations for behaviour for children are explained clearly and calmly, so that all children know what is expected of them, and children are asked to 'choose to do the right thing'. Where behaviour falls short of those standards expected adults explain to children why their behaviour is not what is required, and how the behaviour should be modified. In class all children's names are displayed on a green smiley face at the start of the day. In the event that all attempts at explanation are unsuccessful, or in the event that safety continues to be compromised, for example in the event that a child continually climbs on a book shelf, adults will explain calmly and clearly what the unwanted behaviour is and why it is not acceptable, and after one warning the child's name will be moved to the first amber face and age appropriate sanctions will be put into place – for example, a short time away from play. Continued inability to behave as expected will require the child's name to be moved to the next amber face and finally to the red face which is very sad news. It is quite unusual in early years to reach this point.

Illness

In the event of a child becoming ill while in school, following checks by qualified first aiders, we will contact one of the authorized contacts immediately so that the child can be cared for and taken to the doctor if necessary. While waiting for collection practitioners will keep children as comfortable as possible, and minimize infection risks by segregation where appropriate.

In the event of an accident in school there are at least two Qualified Paediatric First Aiders within the setting as well as two more within the wider school. A qualified Paediatric First Aider always accompanies our EYFS children if they leave the site for a trip or visit. We also have 12 additional staff members who hold a valid First Aid qualification throughout school.

Collection of Children

Children should only be released to designated adults, and parents and carers are asked to notify school IN WRITING if there is change to the collection arrangements, as well as when there is a person whom they do not want to collect their child. When an unknown person arrives to collect a child, contact should be made with the usual adult who collects or someone else appropriately authorised to ascertain whether the child may be allowed to leave with the 'new' adult. In an emergency, parents can contact the school office and ask

for a password which the person they have asked to collect their child must give to the staff releasing the child.

Left Children

In the event that a child is not collected after 10 minutes practitioners will make repeated attempts to contact the authorized adults for that child, however if we are unable to make contact with anyone and arrange collection within an hour, it is our policy to approach Social Services and the Police for their help.

Lost Children

Children are counted at the start of session, and the number of children present is recorded visibly in class.

If it becomes apparent that a child is missing, the children are to be brought together in a carpet area for a story. They will be counted to check; practitioners and other adults within school will mount a search of likely places. The Principal will be informed. If the child cannot be found on school premises after a thorough search, parents will be contacted to find out if the child has been collected by an adult who has not followed normal procedures. Our policy is to contact the police after we have been unable to account for the child for 15 minutes.

Toileting Issues

When changing children it is our policy that practitioners should offer the child a degree of privacy, while ensuring that no adult is alone with a child when changing them, to protect everyone.