

St Bede's School

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

1 Transition

- 1.1 At St Bede's School our aim is to establish a smooth and successful transition into our EYFS environment.
- 1.2 This is facilitated with a carefully planned programme that begins in the Summer Term prior to a child starting school.
- 1.3 This allows a handover of Foundation Stage goals and an opportunity for the child to meet with their new teacher in a familiar setting.
- 1.4 Following a meeting with all parents, children may attend a taster session with their parents helping them to familiarise themselves with the environment along with the other children.
- 1.5 Children may attend part-time for a week upon entry into Reception, with their time spent at school increasing during this time, before beginning full-time attendance.
- 1.6 If a child is finding full-time Reception attendance difficult, it would be possible for them to attend school on a part-time basis until they feel more ready for full-time.

2 Four guiding principles

- 2.1 We adhere to the Statutory Framework of the EYFS.
- 2.2 There are four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings:
 - A unique child
 - Positive relationships
 - Enabling environments
 - Children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates

3 A unique child

- 3.1 At St Bede's School we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- 3.2 We recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates because they are all individuals.
- 3.3 Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others - we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.
- 3.4 Inclusion
 - We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'.
 - All children at St Bede's School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities - all children and their families are valued within our school.
 - In our school we work hard to 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 providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued.
- We use resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping, plan challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills, and monitor children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.
- 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 - we believe children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

4 Positive relationships

4.1 At St Bede's School we recognise that children learn to be strong & independent as a result of secure relationships.

4.2 We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

4.3 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 - we do this through:
 - Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school
 - Giving the children the opportunity to spend one morning as a whole class in our Reception class during the half term before starting part time school
 - Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school
 - Inviting parents to take the opportunity to participate in 'Stay and Play sessions' in the environment
 - Encouraging parents to always talk to the child's teacher or any member of staff if there are any concerns
 - Having an open-door policy regarding parent consultation as well as offering more formal sessions
 - Providing regular reviews and a full report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage

4.4 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 child led opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively

4.5 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.

4.6 At our school the EYFS teacher and Teaching Assistant act as a 'Key Person' to the children in EYFS, supported by other staff who provide specialist sessions.

5 Enabling environments

5.1 At St Bede's School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development.

5.2 Through observation we assess the children's interests, stages of development and learning needs, before planning challenging, achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning within their environment.

5.3 Observation, assessment and planning

1. The planning within the EYFS is structured as long term, medium term and weekly – with six themed blocks over the year.
2. However, the teacher will alter these in response to the needs, achievements and interests of the children.
3. We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs.
4. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation and informal testing which are recorded in a variety of ways.
5. Teachers, parents and other adults within the school setting are encouraged to contribute and discussions take place to ensure a clear understanding of where a child is in their development and what their next steps are.
6. Significant observations of children's achievements are collated in their own personal learning journey
7. Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress based on their child's development against each of the 17 Early Learning Goals - emerging, expected or exceeding.
8. This will also be discussed with the Prelim (Year 1) teacher and the Director of Studies, highlighting stages of development and learning needs – this will assist subsequent planning to ensure an effective transition.

5.4 The learning environment

1. The Early Years Foundation Stage is contained within one area of St Bede's School, although they access most facilities that the school offers.
2. There is an EYFS practitioner who is a Qualified Teacher, and a professional Teaching Assistant.
3. The environment is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely.
4. It reflects the EYFS curriculum and is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.
5. The environment has its own enclosed outdoor area and 'free-flow' is enabled both inside and outside the classroom.
6. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers the children further opportunities to explore, use their senses, develop their language skills and be physically active.
7. We plan activities and resources both inside and outside, including the use of the school's extensive grounds, pony club, the temple gardens, tennis courts, gym, stage, swimming pool and woods.

6 Children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates

6.1 At St Bede's School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and rates and have their own learning styles.

6.2 We value all of the areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are often linked.

- 6.3 Other documents (which can be found on the School's website) go further into our policies regarding effective teaching and learning – however, features that particularly relate to the Early Years Foundation Stage include:
1. the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement
 2. the understanding that staff have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching
 3. the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions, and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication
 4. the carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS
 5. the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities
 6. the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and resilience
 7. the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment
 8. the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations
- 6.4 In the Early Years Foundation Stage we encourage all of our children to develop the individual characteristics of effective learning which can be identified throughout all of the areas of learning.
- 6.5 As outlined in EYFS documents, there are three characteristics of effective learning which run through and underpin all seven areas of learning and development – these support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner:
1. Playing and exploring (engagement)
 - a. Through play children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world.
 - b. They have the opportunity to practise skills, develop ideas and think creatively alongside other children as well as individually.
 - c. The children communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.
 - d. They have the opportunity to express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.
 2. Active learning (motivation)
 - a. At St Bede's we believe children need to have some independence and control over their learning.
 - b. As children develop their own individual confidence they learn to make decisions.
 - c. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction and deepens the quality of learning as they take ownership of it.
 3. Creating and thinking critically (thinking)
 - a. At St Bede's we understand that children should be given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts.
 - b. Adults can support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions.
 - c. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

6.6 Special Educational Needs (SEN)

- The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator for St Bede's School, including the EYFS unit, is Mr Andrew Platts who meets with EYFS staff regularly for discussion which includes identification and response to SEN.
- If applicable, appropriate strategies will be put in place to cater for children with communication/interaction, cognition/learning, social/emotional/mental health and/or sensory/physical needs.
- Where a child appears to be behind expected levels, information will be gathered to create a graduated response to individual needs of the child – this may involve outside agencies.
- Further information can be found in the SEND policy.

7 **The EYFS curriculum**

7.1 At St Bede's School we plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve and exceed the early learning goals.

7.2 All of the seven different areas of learning and development are significantly important and inter-connected.

7.3 Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive - these three areas are the **prime** areas:

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

7.4 Children are also supported through the four **specific** areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied:

- **Literacy**
- **Mathematics**
- **Understanding the World**
- **Expressive Arts and Design**

7.5 All areas are delivered through both adult-led and child-initiated activities.

7.6 In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELGs) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

8 **Monitoring and review**

8.1 It is the responsibility of the Early Years Foundation Stage practitioners to follow the principles stated in this policy.

8.2 The Director of Studies carries out monitoring of the EYFS through observation and discussion, and the Headmaster reviews provision as part of the whole school appraisal schedule.