



# Early Years Policy Statement

Balfour Primary School

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**Date approved by Full Governing Body :**

## BALFOUR PRIMARY SCHOOL EARLY YEARS POLICY STATEMENT

"Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to reach their full 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."

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. The EYFS is based upon four principles; A Unique Child, Positive Relationships, Enabling Environments and Learning and Development.

Our Early year's curriculum is based on the "Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage". We assess the children on entry using our own baseline assessments and build on the progress made in the child's previous setting. The curriculum is broken down into 6 areas of learning;

- Personal, social and emotional development
- Communication, language and Literacy
- Problem solving, reasoning and number
- Knowledge and Understanding of the World
- Physical Development
- Creative Development

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 creative 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 taking action to provide support as necessary.

### **Admission and Induction Procedures**

Prospective parents visit the school in the spring term for a general presentation on our aims and ethos and a tour of the school. Parents who accept a place are invited to a Welcome Afternoon when the Head Teacher explains admission procedures, and gives information on the foundation stage curriculum and a day in the life of a reception child. Carers and children visit their new classrooms and meet their teachers during an after school session in the summer term. During this visit information packs are given out and each child receives an 'All about Me' booklet which parents are encouraged to fill in with their child.

The children are staggered in to school over a period of two weeks in September to ensure that each child can be welcomed into school in as individual a manner as possible. The current process for admissions is that all children will be eligible to start school full-time, regardless of their birth date, from September. There will be a programme to stagger the induction process with smaller groups of children and they will have an opportunity to experience morning and afternoon sessions as well as lunch time routines.

### **Planning**

Planning is reviewed yearly, termly and weekly and consists of:

- Long term-plans for the 6 areas of the curriculum outlining learning intentions for the reception year.
- Medium term-these plans outline termly topic based objectives and include topic webs.
- Short term- for the six areas of learning showing learning intentions, activities, resources and differentiation.

The Early Learning Goals establish expectations for most children to reach by the end of the reception year. The QCA guidance identifies Stepping Stones of Progress towards the Early Learning Goals and these are used to inform our planning at all levels. We recognise that some pupils might be working beyond the goals and planning is differentiated appropriately.

## **Teaching and Learning**

(See school policy)

## **Equal Opportunities and Inclusion**

We aim to provide a safe and supportive learning environment where the contribution of all children is valued and where racial, religious, disability and gender stereotypes are challenged. We use a wide range of teaching strategies, we differentiate the curriculum to meet children's individual needs and we carefully monitor children's progress. Children with English as a second language are assessed by SEAL and supported by a bilingual teaching assistant if appropriate (see also school policy)

## **Assessment and record keeping**

(See Assessment Policy)

All observations and assessments are an integral part of teaching as they inform future planning for the child's needs.

All children are assessed during the first half term of school using our own baseline assessments. All practitioners carry out planned observations on a weekly basis. These are used to assess individual progress and inform weekly planning. The practitioner on a daily basis assesses children working in a focus group. Individual assessments are recorded in each child's Foundation Stage Profile and evidence is kept in the children's learning journals and annotated where appropriate. The Foundation Stage Profile provides an on going record of achievement in all areas of the curriculum. Writing and maths are assessed three times a term using the Foundation Stage Profile. A phonic check is carried out in the first half term and is checked and up dated throughout the year. Children's progress in reading is highlighted on their reading progress sheet and the colour band of their books is recorded each half term.

## **Parental Partnership**

Reception practitioners work hard to build up open and productive relationships with parents and carers. Partnership with parents is of great importance and parents are acknowledged as the child's prime educator so that shared understanding and mutual respect will hopefully develop.

There are opportunities for parents to chat informally with practitioners at the end of each day. Parents can also make an appointment for a private more formal discussion with the class teacher at the end of a session. Parents receive monthly newsletters and a 1/2 termly topic web giving an overview of what the child will be

learning. Parents are welcome to come and help in school once they have received their CRB check.

There is a 'Meet the Teacher' morning in September and Parent Consultations are in October and May. All parents are invited to the Christmas Performance in December and a celebration of work in the Summer Term. The Parents Association (FAB) also arrange social events throughout the year.

### **Community Links**

- Children attending our feeder nurseries are invited to watch the Christmas Performance.
- If appropriate the Year Group Leader will visit a child in his/her pre school setting.
- We invite the feeder nurseries to come and visit the school in the Summer term to help ensure a smooth transition from nursery to school.

### **Governors**

There is a designated Early Years Governor whose responsibility is to liaise, support and monitor Early Years provision.

### **Resources**

The school is well resourced. There are central supplies of construction, small world and role-play equipment which are shared between the four classes, shared area and outside. There is an outside play area, which incorporates a large sandpit, vegetable garden, stage, role play house and train, bikes and opportunities for independent play. Outside play equipment to support the 6 areas of learning is stored in labelled boxes in 1 outdoor shed. There is a wide range of resources for each area which are either stored centrally or in labelled draws and containers in the appropriate area.

Children have an opportunity to access the curriculum through our shared area, the classroom and our outdoor area. This is organised so that every child has time to access all areas of learning.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Foundation stage co-ordinator monitors planning, classroom organisation and practice to ensure there is consistency across the year group and that policy is being implemented. Weekly planning is reviewed constantly to incorporate new ideas and thinking and improve the quality of learning. The year team has half termly meetings to moderate work and review progress across the year group.

## **Staff Development**

All reception practitioners attend courses to further their professional development. Training needs are identified through the School Improvement Plan and Performance Management and addressed through school based INSET. There is some peer group observation and team teaching. Staff are supportive of each other and share ideas and resources.