

Bushey Heath Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

A vibrant school inspiring children to realise their potential

1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life.
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
- Close partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers.
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

2. Legislation

At Bushey Heath Primary School we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning. We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent learners. We value the individual child and work alongside parents and carers to help every child reach their full potential. As outlined in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) that applies from September 2021.

‘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.’

We adhere to the ‘Statutory Framework of the EYFS’ and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings:

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- Importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn at different rates.

The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

3. Structure of the EYFS

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to the learning and development of all children from birth to the end of the Reception Year. We offer 15 hour and 30 hour provision in our Nursery and the nursery is staffed by a qualified teacher and two qualified nursery nurses. The year following the Nursery known as Reception has capacity for 30 children that join us at the beginning of the school year in which they turn five. (Compulsory schooling begins at the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday.) Reception is staffed by two-part time teachers, and two part time qualified nursery nurses.

The early learning goals, which summarise the knowledge, skills and understanding that all young children should have gained by the end of the Reception year.

Each child is assigned a key member of staff who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person works with the class teachers to support parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home.

4. Curriculum

Our Early Years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2021 statutory framework of the EYFS.

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, three areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

- Communication and language.
- Physical development.
- Personal, social and emotional development.

The four specific areas:

- Literacy.
- Mathematics.
- Understanding the world.
- Expressive arts and design.

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS framework, across the seven curriculum areas, using play as the main focus for learning. Activities are adult initiated, child initiated and adult supported.
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support.
- Work in partnership with parents and carers.
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by staffs' knowledge of the children, observations and assessment. Activities are also led by the children's own ideas and interests.
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and outdoors.

4.1 Planning and Teaching

The Early Years curriculum has been carefully developed by early year's staff to ensure it meets the needs of our pupils and the community we serve.

We promote a practical, playful approach to learning, based on the needs and interests of our pupils. Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful firsthand experiences in which they can explore, think creatively and be active. The curriculum is delivered mainly through topic-based planning where a book is the core focus of the topic.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care and use this information to plan challenging and enjoyable experiences. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

1. Playing and exploring - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.
2. Active learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties.

3. Creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

At the beginning of each topic the children are encouraged to share their ideas for learning. These ideas are then used to inform our short-term weekly planning, alongside our observations which identify areas to focus on. We always remain flexible to allow for unplanned circumstances and children's responses. Our planning is continually evaluated by all staff to ensure that children's individual 'Next Steps in Learning' and personalised learning needs are met. Children will engage in whole group and small group activities alongside their independent learning. There are also allocated times for whole class daily 'carpet learning sessions'.

We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those which are planned by adults. During children's play, the adults in class interact when appropriate to stretch and challenge them further. We create a stimulating learning environment to encourage children to free-flow between inside and outdoors as far as possible.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1.

5. Assessment

At Bushey Heath Primary School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Practitioners also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

Within the first six weeks that a child starts reception, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child. The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters guidance) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to Hertfordshire County Council.

The new EYFS Framework recognises the importance of staff interactions with the children, and here at Bushey Heath our staff ensure they spend more time playing, talking and enhancing their play. Alongside these interactions we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform our future plans.

Throughout their time in Early Years, parents/carers are welcomed in to share their children's learning; both informally through our 'open door' policy and more formally during parent/teacher consultations.

6. Working with parents

We recognise the central importance of parents/carers as children's first educators. We believe they have a significant role to play in the lifelong education of their child. We strive to create and maintain partnerships with parents/carers as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child's learning.

Each child is assigned a key person who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person works alongside the class teacher to support parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate in their child's education and care in numerous ways.

- Holding information evenings before the children start school;
- Talking to them about their child's interests and needs during our 1:1 meetings in school carried out each June/July for Reception and home visits for Nursery;
- Being welcoming and approachable and having an open-door approach for parents to voice concerns/ask questions;
- Inviting parents into school every Thursday to look at the children's work and classroom;
- Inviting them to a parent consultation in the Autumn, Spring and Summer Terms to discuss how their child has settled and share progress and next steps for learning;
- Valuing parents' contributions to learning journeys;
- Inviting parents/carers into school to join our Phonic and Maths workshops for parents;
- Encouraging parents to read with their child at home and make comments in their diaries;
- Welcoming parents as volunteers into our school;
- Providing parents with an annual report in the Summer term;
- We also draw on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on outings and inviting members of the community into our setting to talk about their lives, work and experiences.

7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

In the Early Years we provide a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to take risks, follow rules and stay safe. We comply with the welfare requirements set out in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage and understand that we must:

- Promote the welfare of all children;
- Promote good health;
- Manage behaviour effectively and appropriately;
- Ensure all adults working with children are suitable to do so;
- Ensure that the environment is safe and all equipment and furniture is fit for purpose;
- We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general. We provide nutritious fruit snacks, access to water throughout the day, afternoon sandwich making in Reception, allocating significant time for physical development, visits from the dentist, school nurse and following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident.

Staff and visitors are prohibited from using their mobile phones in our classrooms, only the class iPads are used to photograph children (for Tapestry observations and assessment purposes) and children must be appropriately dressed in photographs.

At our School we have robust systems in place to ensure that all practitioners who have regular contact with children are suitable for their role. All staff are Pediatric First Aid trained in our Early Years. The statutory requirement of the EYFS is to ensure one member of staff is Pediatric first aid trained on the premises.

The Child Protection Policy is in place to ensure the safety of all stakeholders at our School. Staff have access to 'CPOMS', the safeguarding system to log any concerns regarding any aspects of safeguarding and behaviour. All staff are vigilant in reporting concerns.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

8. Monitoring arrangements

We are committed to providing the best possible experiences for our children. The EYFS Leader is responsible for monitoring provision, teaching and learning and children's progress. Information is shared with the Headteacher, Governors and Foundation Stage team as appropriate and any necessary actions are taken.

All adults in the Early Years team have a key role in children's learning and development. Therefore, they are required to be knowledgeable and skilled in the EYFS curriculum. Any training needs for existing or new members of staff are identified and addressed as part of performance management targets.

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Early Years Lead and Headteacher every year. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

9. Transitions

Transitions are carefully planned for and significant time is given to ensure continuity of learning and care. At times of transition, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child and other settings.

Parents/carers must attend a 1:1 visit to school (with the Class Teacher and Nursery Nurse). This is a valuable time to talk 1:1 with them and answer any concerns/queries they may have.

At the end of the EYFS, our Reception teacher meets with the Year 1 teacher to liaise with them and discuss the individual children and their specific needs.

Children spend a number of sessions towards the end of the school year in the Year 1 classroom OR with the Year 1 teacher to ensure that they are familiar and comfortable with their new teacher and are 'Year 1 ready'.

Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See Health and Safety Policy
Administering medicines policy	See Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See Health and Safety Policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See Child Protection and Safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See Complaints Policy

Date Policy Reviewed/Amended:	December 2025
Chair of Governors:	James Hughes
Headteacher:	Penny Barefoot
Review Date:	December 2026
Reviewed by:	Full Governing Body