

BOLNEY C.E.P. SCHOOL

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Introduction – the best possible start

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Bolney CE Primary School we greatly value the important role that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. The EYFS is for children from birth to five years of age. The final year of the EYFS is referred to as the Reception Year.

At Bolney School our practice reflects the guidance set out in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2017) and the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Handbook (2014)

EYFS Principles

The EYFS principles, which guide the work of all practitioners, are grouped into four distinct, but complimentary themes. These themes are

1. A Unique child
2. Positive relationships
3. Enabling Environments
4. Learning and development
5. Observation and Assessment

This policy states how each of these principles are established at Bolney School.

We aim to enable every child to meet the Early Learning Goals in all seventeen areas by the end of the Reception year unless a specific disability prevents this.

1. A Unique Child

In our school we believe that **every** child is special.

Equal opportunities

At Bolney School we aim to provide all pupils, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability, equal access to all aspects of school life and work to ensure that every child is valued fully as an individual. Practitioners, as role models, are aware of the influence of adults in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical ideas.

Inclusion

We meet the needs of all learners through:

- Working closely with our families through home visits, questionnaires, informal discussions in order to establish what their children's individual needs are.
- Liaising with relevant outside agencies to get the best advice to support all learners where appropriate.

- Ensuring children have daily opportunities to engage in self-initiated learning so that children have opportunities to explore their own interests and skills, knowledge and understanding and that all adults have opportunities to observe these.
- Creating individual 'next steps of learning' plans for all learners in the EYFS that are shared and discussed with their families - all adults involved with the child.
- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence.
- Being flexible – adapting what we do in response to the children's needs using a wide range of teaching strategies.
- 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.
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide further challenge or support as necessary.

Children with special educational needs will be given support as appropriate to enable them to benefit from the curriculum.

Individual Learning Plans identify targets in specific areas of learning for those children who require additional support in line with the school's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy. The EYFS teacher will discuss these targets with the child and their family. The SENDCo is responsible for arranging external intervention and support where necessary.

Welfare

"Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them." (EYFS framework 2017)

When parents choose Bolney School we want them to be confident that we will keep their children safe and help them to thrive.

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 wellbeing of all children.

At Bolney School we understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2017. We understand that we are required to:

- Take all necessary steps to keep children safe and well.
- Be alert to any issues for concern in the child's life – see safeguarding policy.
- Ensure that people looking after children are suitable to fulfil the requirements of their roles.
- Ensure practitioners are not under the influence of alcohol or any other substance which may affect their ability to care for children.

- Ensure all practitioners have appropriate qualifications, training, skills and knowledge and a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities.
- Staffing arrangements must meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety.
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- Obtain information about any special dietary requirements, preferences and food allergies that a child has and any special health requirements – see Food policy.
- Accident and injury – see First Aid policy.
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children’s stage of development and individual needs – see behaviour policy.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment are safe and suitable for purpose.
- Provide a non smoking policy.
- Provide suitable risk assessments for activities both on site and off site
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.
- Provide a clear procedure for dealing with complaints.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

2. Positive Relationships

At Bolney School we recognise that children learn to be strong independent learners from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners/home school links

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 their children. We work closely with our families through:

- inviting all parents to an induction meeting with EYFS class teacher and the head teacher during the term before their child starts school.
- providing a ‘Starting School’ booklet that outlines our curriculum and our approach to learning, activities and procedures;
- talking to parents about their child through home visits;
- inviting children to spend time in their new class before starting school during 2 induction sessions;
- operating an open door policy offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child’s progress in our reception class ;
- sending curriculum overviews home each term as well as their child’s individual next steps of learning plan to keep parents informed of their child’s curriculum and learning needs;
- holding a formal meeting for parents in the Autumn and Spring term at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child’s progress. Parents receive a report on their child’s attainment and progress at the end of each school year;

- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents. E.g. educational visits, healthy eating workshops, nativity plays, celebration of work, sports day etc;
- providing curriculum workshops that inform parents about teaching methods and resources that are used in school. They also give parents ideas on how to support their child at home.
- providing space in the children's 'Learning Journals' for parents and children to add comments relating to the children's / their achievements.

Preschool relationships

During the summer term the EYFS teacher visits the child and parent/s or carers in their home and visits the local playgroup to meet with staff and observe the children in a familiar environment. The preschool staff provides the EYFS teacher with detailed notes and Learning Journals about each child.

Transition into KS1

The Reception and Key Stage 1 teachers plan and work very closely together following the same topic cycle. Additionally the Reception teacher and the Year 1 teacher meet to discuss individual children. The child's attainment against the 17 ELGs and short summary of their characteristics of effective learning are given to the Year 1 teacher.

3. Enabling Environments

At Bolney School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. The process of developing the environment begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities, experiences and the environment.

The Learning Environment

We aim to create an attractive, welcoming and stimulating learning environment which will encourage children to explore, investigate and learn through first-hand experience. We also aim to make it a place where children feel secure and confident and are challenged to develop their independence. Activities are planned for both the inside and outside. At certain times children have the freedom to move between the indoor and outdoor environment. The learning environment is divided into variety of different 'learning areas.' These areas are carefully arranged to encourage quiet areas and more active areas within the environment. Children are encouraged to become independent learners and to take some responsibility for initiating their own lines of enquiry and investigation.

4. Learning and Development

There are seven areas of learning and development that shape the educational programmes at Bolney School. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

The Prime areas of learning:

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

The specific areas of learning:

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

Characteristics of effective learning

The characteristics of effective learning describe factors which play a central role in a child's learning and in becoming an effective learner. They are vital elements of support for the transition process from EYFS to Year 1. The characteristics of learning run through and underpin all seven areas of learning and development, representing processes rather than outcomes.

The learning characteristics:

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically

Playing and exploring – engagement

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations. We promote play and exploration by:

- Providing a balanced day, everyday, where children have space and time to play both outdoors and indoors and access the whole curriculum.
- Planning and resourcing a challenging environment to stimulate children's play and ideas.
- Practitioners extending and developing children's language and communication in their play through observation and intervention.

Active learning – motivation

At Bolney School we believe active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. We promote active learning by:

- Continuously developing our environment to ensure that it is interesting, attractive and accessible to every child so that they can learn independently.
- Daily opportunities for self initiated play – balanced with adult led opportunities – giving time for children to follow interests and lines of enquiry.
- Planning activities and an environment that reflects their interests and patterns in their play.
- Consistently providing opportunities for the children to build upon their first hand experiences.

Creating and thinking critically – thinking

We believe that children should be given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. We promote creativity and critical thinking by:

- Planning open ended activities.
- Enabling the children to generate new ideas.
- Encouraging the children to use what they know to learn new things.
- Enabling children to choose ways to do things and find new ways.
- Modelling being creative – encouraging children to help solve problems and communicate ideas in different ways (through movement, dance).

5. Observation, Assessment and Planning

Good planning is the key to making children’s learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive. Effective learning builds on and extends what children know and can do. Our planning shows how the principles of the EYFS are put into practice and is always informed by observations that we make of the children, in order to understand and consider their current interests, development and characteristics of learning. All practitioners who work in the EYFS are involved in this process.

- **Long term planning** - We have created a framework for the school year which gives structure and coherence to the curriculum. Our long term plan for the year outlines the key opportunities for the whole class each term and takes into account the calendar year (festivals, seasonal changes).
- **Medium Term planning** – We address particular aspects of the curriculum in more detail for each term. Learning objectives, assessment opportunities and activities and experiences for each area of learning and development are identified. These plans are supported by individual ‘next steps of learning’ plans for each child.
- **Short term planning** – we identify specific learning objectives (based on the Early Learning Goals and Development Matters Documents), activities, differentiation, deployment of adults and resources, to meet the learning needs of the children on a weekly or day to day basis. It allows for flexibility in response to children’s needs and interests and for revision and modification, informed by on-going observational assessment.

Assessment and recording

We undertake assessment for learning. We observe our children and then analyse and review what we know about each child’s development and characteristics of effective learning and then make informed decisions about the child’s progress and next steps. An assessment proforma based on the Development Matters document is used to highlight if children are working within, above or below age related expectations. This document is used to track children’s progress across the Reception Year. Data is entered into a grid upon entry and then again at the end of October, February and May. All practitioners who interact with the child contribute to the assessment process.

The attainment of each child is assessed in relation to the 17 ELG descriptors, together with a short narrative describing the child’s three learning characteristics. The child is judged as meeting the level of development expected at the end of the Reception Year (expected), exceeding this level (exceeding), or not yet reaching this level (emerging).

The primary purpose of the EYFS profile is to provide a reliable, valid and accurate assessment of individual children at the end of the EYFS. The class teacher participates in school, locality group as well as county led moderation activities in order to ensure that judgements are accurate.

Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written report that informs parents about their child's development against the ELGs and the characteristics of their learning. We give parents the opportunity to discuss these judgements with the EYFS teacher.

Formative assessment

This type of assessment informs everyday planning and is based on ongoing observational assessment of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles. Formative assessment may take the form of focused observations, adult led one to one observations, annotated samples of work, photographs and information from parents.

These observations are recorded in children's individual 'Learning Journal' files. Each child's individual progress is tracked against the 'Stages of development' taken from the Development Matters Document so that we can track and monitor progress carefully.

Summative assessment- The EYFS Profile

The EYFS profile summaries and describes children's attainment at the end of the EYFS. It is based on ongoing observation and assessment in the three prime and four specific areas of learning, and the three learning characteristics.