

Early Years Policy



"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. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up."

*"Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage",
Department for Education, 2021*

EARLY YEARS POLICY

1. Strategy

- 1.1 At Blakedown CE Primary School, we are committed to providing a high-quality Early Years Education, which gives children a secure and confident start to their school life and nurtures a lifelong love of learning. We are fully committed to the purpose and aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework.

2. Staffing and Organisation

- 2.1 At Blakedown CE Primary School, we have one Reception class that has the use of a large classroom and dedicated outdoor area. The classroom has a carpet area and the rest of the space is organised into learning zones for the children to access. There are two part time teachers, supported by one full time teaching assistant. Other teaching assistants may be deployed in Reception based on the needs of the children. The children have weekly access to a specialist teacher for Music and PE.
- 2.2 Staff are organised to support the children in a balance of adult led (focus) and child-initiated experiences throughout the day. Most sessions include free flow access to the outdoor area. Practitioners are aware of the need to be flexible in order to respond to unplanned events that the children are interested in.

3. Planning

- 3.1 The Early Learning Goals are the knowledge, skills and understanding which young children should have acquired by the time they reach the end of their Reception year. There are three prime areas of learning:
- 3.1.1 Communication and Language
 - 3.1.2 Physical Development
 - 3.1.3 Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- 3.2 In addition, there are four specific areas of learning:
- 3.2.1 Literacy
 - 3.2.2 Mathematics
 - 3.2.3 Understanding the World
 - 3.2.4 Creative Development
- 3.3 Our planning has a sharp focus on the children's needs, their interests and their stages of development. We recognise that the seven areas of learning cannot be delivered in isolation and seek opportunities to make links between them. We aim to deliver the curriculum through planned, purposeful play and present new concepts in meaningful contexts that enable the children to build on what they already know.
- 3.4 **Long Term Planning**
Our long-term planning shows our aims and values, demonstrates how our continuous provision meets the EYFS requirements and promotes learning within the areas of

learning and development, tracks the learning objectives that have been covered and highlights any key events to be included.

3.5 Medium Term Planning

At Blakedown CE Primary School, we deliver a creative curriculum, which is based around a new topic approximately each half term. Medium term planning shows the key learning experiences for each area of the curriculum. Practitioners use this flexibly, choosing learning experiences to meet the needs of the children. At the beginning of each topic, practitioners lead the children in discussion to identify areas that they are particularly interested in. These ideas are incorporated into the medium-term plan.

3.6 Short Term Planning

Short term planning shows the learning opportunities that will be available over the week. It includes differentiated adult led experiences for all curriculum areas, as well as showing how the learning environment will be enhanced in response to the previous week's observations and assessment of the children.

4. Effective Teaching and Learning

4.1 We encourage the children to play an active role in shaping their learning experiences. Adults engage in discussion with the children about what they are interested in, which skills they would like to develop further and which resources they need to support their learning.

4.2 We aim to provide an attractive, challenging learning environment that offers high quality opportunities for the children to learn through play, both indoors and outdoors. There is a range of "continuous provision" available in the classroom, that is designed to offer open-ended, practical learning opportunities. Children are supported to think creatively and imaginatively and explore how resources can be adapted. Each week, the provision is enhanced with additional resources, based on the previous week's observations.

4.3 Adult led activities are practical in nature and based on first hand experiences wherever possible. The children are supported to develop problem-solving skills through open-ended tasks and opportunities to share their thinking with others. The number of adult led activities that the children take part in increases throughout the year, as their concentration develops.

5. Observation and Assessment

5.1 At Blakedown CE Primary School, we use a range of strategies to gather information about the children's learning and development and use this information to ensure that our planning meets the needs of all learners. During child-initiated activities, practitioners make observations of 'Wow Moments' recorded on a digital programme called Evidence Me. These observations form a half termly Learning Journey, this is emailed to parents and carers who can also contribute to their child's observations.

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- 5.2 For the first six weeks in school, staff undertake the statutory baseline assessment. This is an activity-based assessment of pupils' starting points in, language communication and literacy and mathematics. This data will only be used at the end of Year 6 to form the school-level progress measure.
- 5.3 From the second half of the Autumn term onwards, the Reception teachers use their knowledge of each child to decide which band of 'Development Matters' they are working on in each area of the curriculum. This allows learning opportunities to be pitched appropriately and also provides a baseline of the children's attainment. This information is closely monitored to ensure that all children are making good progress.
- 5.4 In the summer term, practitioners consider the 17 ELGS in the EYFS Profile to decide whether each child is meeting the level of development (expected) or have not yet reached the levels (emerging). Judgements against the ELGs are based on ongoing observation; all relevant records; discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.
- 5.5 The results of the Profile are shared with parents and/or carers, and there are opportunities for them to meet their child's class teacher to discuss this information.
- 5.6 At the end of the year, Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This helps to create a smooth transition and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1.

6. Working in Partnership

- 6.1 We recognise that children may access EYFS provision through other providers throughout the week and that all providers have an equally important role to play in their early years experiences. We seek information about the other settings that our children attend so that we can establish communication about their learning and development.

7. Learning Environment

- 7.1 We aim to create an attractive, welcoming and stimulating learning environment which will encourage children to explore, investigate and learn through first-hand experience. Resources are clearly labelled and organised into learning zones, enabling the children to access them with a high level of independence. Practitioners regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the learning zones and make adaptations as necessary.

8. Parent Partnerships

- 8.1 We value the contribution that our parents and carers make to their child's learning and take every opportunity to work in collaboration with them. Parents are also invited to half termly Stay and Play sessions with a different focus, again these sessions support parents with what their children are experiencing and support any home learning. In the autumn and spring terms we hold parents'

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consultations and in the summer term we send home detailed reports. There are regular opportunities for parents to view their child's progress through the use of the school on line tracker. The children take reading books home to share. Throughout the year, there are parent's meetings and workshops where parents can find out how their child learns in school and how they can support them at home.

9. Community Links and the Wider World

9.1 Over the year, we arrange visits from members of the local community to support our topic work. The children take part in several educational visits linked to their topic work. Film clips, non-fiction texts and artefacts are also used to introduce new concepts in real-life contexts. We aim to develop the children's awareness of other cultures by exploring different countries and celebrations.

10. Arrival and Collection of Children

- 10.1 Children can enter school from 8:40 and must be accompanied by their parent/carer. Each child is marked in on the day's register by the class teacher. Parents/carers use the external classroom doors when collecting their child(ren) at the end of the school day. If a child needs to be collected during the school day, parents report to the school office.
- 10.2 Under no circumstances is a child allowed to leave with anyone other than those named on the child's registration form, unless the parent has given verbal or written permission. Parents write a list of people who are able to collect their child. If there are queries regarding a child's collection, the class teacher will contact the child's parent/guardian to discuss the situation with them.

11. Outings

11.1 Written parental permission to take the children into the local environment is sought upon admission to the school. Further permission is obtained for any other outings. Risk assessments are completed for each type of outing.

12. Transition from Pre-school to Reception

- 12.1 We work closely with our feeder settings to ensure that the children make a smooth transition to school. We have contact with the settings throughout the year and invite them to visit us on a regular basis. In the summer term, we organise opportunities for each setting to bring groups of children to visit. School staff make additional visits to talk to pre-school staff.
- 12.2 We hold a transition meeting for new parents in the summer term, where we outline daily routines and expectations. Children are invited to attend three 'taster' sessions. The Headteacher and Early Years teacher also offer home visits to develop a rapport with the children and parents.

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13. Transition from Reception to Year One

13.1 In the Summer term, we begin a programme of transition to support the children with their move to Year One. This involves visits to the Year One classroom, discussion with current Year One children, walks to look at where they will enter school and opportunities to ask any questions about the next year. The school holds a 'Transition' morning, giving the children a taste of their new class and also arrange a transition meeting for parents.

14 Food and Drink

14.1 A range of healthy snacks are available, supplied by "The School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme". Fresh drinking water is available at all times and in hot weather.

15. Illness and injury

15.1 Parents and carers are asked not to send their child to school if they are unwell and to inform the school office of their absence. Parents/carers are asked to inform staff if their child is suffering from a minor ailment so that appropriate care can be given. Children must not return to school within 48 hours of a bout of sickness or diarrhoea.

15.2 If a child becomes unwell whilst at school, a member of staff will:

15.2.1 Phone the parents/carers, explain that their child is unwell, explain the symptoms noted and ask them to collect their child.

15.2.2 Sit with the child in a quiet place away from other children, if possible, until the parents arrive.

15.2.3 If the child has had sickness or diarrhoea, explain the policy of at least a 48-hour clearance of either symptom before the child may return.

15.3 In the case of an injury, appropriate first aid will be administered by a qualified first aider. A first aid kit is kept in the Reception classroom and its contents are in accordance with advice from the Health and Safety Executive and the Community Health Physician. First aid cover is provided at playtimes and lunchtimes. All accidents are recorded in one of the school's accident books and signed by the member of staff who dealt with the incident. The staff member dealing with the incident is responsible for completing an accident slip and this is sent home with the child at the end of the day. Parents/carers may be contacted by telephone to inform them of an injury if deemed necessary.

15.4 We ask for written parental consent to seek any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment in the future when the children are admitted to school. In the case of a more serious accident to a child, the practitioner/school will contact the parent/guardian to agree a course of action if time permits. If the parent/guardian cannot be contacted the practitioner/school will seek appropriate medical attention or treatment for the child. The child should not be given anything to eat or drink. If a child or adult needs to be transported to hospital, every effort should be made to use a car with fully comprehensive insurance including business use. Two adults must accompany the child, and one adult must accompany a member of staff. Should an

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ambulance be required, one adult must accompany the child or adult. The child's registration form must be taken to the hospital with the child.

16. Medicines

16.1 Only drugs/medicines prescribed by a registered Medical Practitioner will be administered to children. Parents should complete and hand in a Medication Consent Form, along with medicine, to a member of staff. Drugs/medicines must only be administered to the child for whom they are prescribed and all drugs/medicines must be kept in the original container stating whom they are prescribed for and dosage information. Unwanted or unused medicines must be returned to the parent for disposal. A record of the drugs given should be made indicating the time, dosage and signed by the person administering the dose. The child's parent should sign this each day that medicine is given.

16.2 Training for prescribed medication that is invasive i.e. EPIPENS etc is available via the school nurse. If an individual child requires a care plan, this will be drawn up in partnership with parents and the school nurse.

17. Photography and use of images (including hand held devices)

It is important to note that members of staff do not use their mobile phones or personal handset devices in the classroom and are prohibited from taking photographs with their personal handsets.

This is in line with school's Safeguarding Policy. Members of staff do, however, use school iPads to take photographs as evidence to support the regular observation assessment in the EYFS. These photographs are used in children's portfolios, in class displays and on the school website. All parents are asked to state if they give permission for their child's image to be used on the school website through the paperwork in their initial starter packs.

18. Monitoring

The Headteacher and Early Years teacher will monitor the effectiveness of this policy on a regular basis. The Headteacher and Early Years teacher will report to the governing body on the effectiveness of the policy at least annually and if necessary make recommendations for further improvements. Governors will also monitor the effectiveness of this policy through school visits.

19. Linked Policies:

Behaviour, Safeguarding, Inclusion, Equality, SEND, Complaints, Appropriate Use of Images.