



Blewbury Endowed C of E Primary School

'Shine your light and share it with the world!'



As a caring Church of England School community, we believe that the ethos of our school should be built on a foundation of core Christian Values. The following four core values reflect our school ethos and vision:

**Community   Appreciation   Perseverance   Forgiveness**

# EYFS Policy

**Headteacher:**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'A. E. Park'.

**Chair of Governors:**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'A. E. Park'.

**Date: May 2022**

**Date of next review: May 2025**

## Introduction

Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their 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 EYFS is based upon four principles:

**A unique child.** We recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. 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 and develop a positive attitude to learning.

**Positive relationships.** We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships and aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families.

**Enabling environments.** We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Through observations we assess the children's interests and stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging and achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning.

**Learning and development.** Foundation stage is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The areas of learning are defined so that children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

It is every child's right to grow up safe, healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and with economic wellbeing. The overarching aim of the EYFS is to help young children achieve these five outcomes.

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Blewbury we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying the secure foundations for future learning and development. However, we also believe that early childhood is valid in itself as part of life. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

The EYFS for children is from birth to five years of age. All children begin school with a wide variety of experiences and learning and it is the privilege of the adults working in the Foundation Stage to accept the task of building upon that prior learning experience. This is done through a holistic approach to learning ensuring that parents and guardians, support staff and the Foundation team work effectively together to support the learning and development of the children in their charge.

## **Aims and Objectives**

We aim to support all children to become independent collaborative learners. We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential. Each child is valued as an individual and teaching and learning is based on the understanding that children develop at different rates.

At Blewbury we aim to:

- Provide a safe, happy, positive, and fun start to their school life in which they can establish solid foundations on which to expand and foster a deep love of learning.
- Provide a stimulating, caring, and sharing environment that is sensitive to the needs of all children.
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant, and creative curriculum that will enable each child through encouragement and high expectations to develop, to the full, socially, physically, intellectually, and emotionally.
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress.
- Enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence.
- Work in partnership with parents and carers and value their contributions ensuring that all children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, gender or ability have the opportunity to reach their potential.
- Keep parents informed of the progress the children are making from their starting points.
- Provide opportunities whereby children experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development.
- Provide experiences for all children, whatever their needs that are inclusive rather than parallel.

## **The Curriculum**

Our early years setting follows the statutory curriculum requirements as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2021. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum that covers the statutory aspects as well as other knowledge and skills to support pupils' personal development, prepare pupils for their next stage of education and develop the whole child.

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are seen as important and interconnected but three areas are seen as particularly important for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, for building their capacity to learn and form relationships and thrive (DfE 2014: 1.3), they support children's learning in all other areas, they are known as the prime areas.

**The prime areas are;**

- Communication and Language – Listening, Attention and Understanding, and Speaking
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development – Self regulation, managing self, building relationships
- Physical Development – Gross motor skills, Fine motor skills

The specific areas of learning develop essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society.

**The specific areas are;**

- Literacy – Word Reading, Comprehension and Writing
- Mathematics – Numbers, Numerical Patterns
- Understanding the World – Past and Present, People, Culture and communities, The Natural World
- Expressive Arts and Design – Creating with Materials and Being Imaginative and Expressive

### **Characteristics of Effective Learning**

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning. Reception teachers plan activities within the reception classroom with these in mind. They highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them.

The three characteristics are;

- Playing and Exploring – children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- Active Learning – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- Creating and Thinking Critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

### **Learning through play**

Learning through play is an important part of our Early Years classrooms. We believe children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them. Using children's interests as a starting point, we provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning to help them make sense of the world. They have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own. They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experience at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests and inspire those around them. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. We believe it is important that adults take an active role in child-initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating and extending their play. Getting the balance right between child-initiated play, which is controlled, and adult led activities is very important to us.

### **Observation, Assessment and Planning**

Our practice focuses on considering the individual needs, interests and development of each child in our care. There is an on-going cycle of observing, assessing and planning. We use our professional

knowledge and observations of a child to plan and provide experiences and opportunities that closely match their needs.

We continually listen to the children and observe them during their learning and play. We take careful note of their emerging needs and interests (this information may come from the children themselves or their families) and this enables us to create 'next steps' for each of them, which are implemented either through our planning, teaching practice or intervention programmes. When watching the children, we look closely at the way in which they learn. We look at the characteristics of effective learning to help shape teaching and learning experiences for each child.

Assessment comes primarily from practitioner knowledge along with observations, individual work, floor books and teacher records. The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) takes place in the first six weeks in which children start Reception. Formative assessment is ongoing. It is an integral part of the learning and development process. Information is responded to daily and is used to aid planning and provision. If a child's progress in any area gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents or carers and agree on how best to support them. This may also include a discussion with the school SENCO and involve outside professionals. Summative assessment takes place in the final term of the academic year. Each child's levels of development are assessed against the ELG's. Practitioners indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development or not yet reaching expected levels. This is the EYFS profile.

Parents and carers are informed about their child's progress through regular dialogue and consultation meetings. At the end of the academic year a written report is provided to parents/carers on their child's year in Reception alongside the EYFS profile. Parents are made aware that they can discuss their children's development at any point during the year.

### **Home and school links**

We recognise that parents and carers are a child's first and most enduring educators and we aim for the school and parents and carers to work closely together. This can have a very positive impact on a child's development but relies on a two-way flow of information and knowledge.

We develop working relationships between school and parents and carers as follows:

- We conduct transition visits to the local pre-school
- We invite pupils starting in September to 'stay and play' session in the July before they start
- We outline the school's expectations and curriculum on offer via the school website.
- We hold parent consultation meetings twice a year to discuss and share progress via children's learning journeys.
- We send home challenges - reading and maths activities to be completed by parents and carers with their child.
- We publish a curriculum overview on the school website.
- We operate an open door policy that will allow parents and carers to discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner. Conversely if staff have concerns about the progress of a child, they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss them.
- Children take home a reading diary each week, parents are also welcome to contribute to the reading diary.

## **Reading**

Reading and story play an important part of childhood. We want to make sure our children have a love of books and will leave the EYFS with a bank of stories they know well, both traditional and modern classics. We make sure there is always time for whole class story at the end of the day but also that there are many opportunities to enjoy books at other times. Every child is given their own book bag and has a designated day when they will have one-to-one time sharing books with an adult although it is fine for others to listen too.

## **Intimate care**

This is any care that involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. However, depending on the age and stage of a child's development, they may need some support, for example, dressing, wiping their bottom after using the toilet and changing underwear and clothes following an accident.

Parents inform staff of those children likely to require such care and a discussion takes place regarding how their needs can be met as closely in school as they would be met at home. Parents provide clean clothing and are always informed when a child has needed such care.

Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child.

Intimate care is given to children who need it in line with our school policy. Parents are always informed when this care is given.

## **Child protection and safeguarding**

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. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance (2017)

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 Oxfordshire County Council Safeguarding Policy. Members of staff do, however, use school iPads to take photographs as evidence to support the regular observation assessment cycle 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.

## **Inclusion and equal opportunities**

Children with special educational needs will be supported as appropriate to enable them to access the curriculum fully. This includes children that are more able and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities.

In line with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy, we will provide all children regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability with equal access to all aspects of school life to ensure that every child is valued as an individual. All staff are role models and are aware of the influence they have in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical attitudes.