



WISDOM~TRUST~FRIENDSHIP

**Birch C of E (VA) Primary School**  
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## **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy 2024-2025**

**The Policy was formally adopted by the  
Governing Board on:**

**Date: 18 September  
2024**

***"The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life."***

(Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage, 2023)

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the age of five (i.e. the end of their Reception year). The EYFS is based around four key principles:

- A unique child
- Positive relationships
- Enabling environments
- Learning and development

### **A Unique Child**

At Birch C of E Primary School, we recognise the uniqueness of every child within our care. We understand that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. We acknowledge that children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others. We therefore use praise and encouragement, alongside achievement/sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage our children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

### **Inclusion**

All children at Birch C of E Primary School are treated fairly regardless of their race, religion and/or ability. Children and families of all faiths and backgrounds are made to feel welcome and valued at all times.

Within the EYFS, we give the children every opportunity to achieve their full potential through the belief that all children matter. We do this by taking the children's varying life experiences into account when planning for learning to take place. We set realistic yet challenging expectations that meet the needs of all children. Planning for the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities,

children from varying social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups as well as those from diverse linguistic backgrounds enables us to achieve this. Further evidence of how we meet the needs of all learners includes:

- planning opportunities that build on and extend the children's existing knowledge, experiences and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on the children's learning needs;
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support our children and 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 communication and language skills;
- monitoring the children's progress and providing further support where necessary.

It is important to us that all of the children feel safe and free from harm. We aim to educate the children on boundaries, rules and limits and help them understand why they exist. The children are provided with suitable 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 our children.

### Safeguarding and welfare

At Birch C of E Primary School, we understand that we are legally obligated to comply with the safeguarding and welfare requirements stated in the Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage (2023). We understand that we are required to take all necessary steps to keep our children safe and well through:

- rigorous safeguarding procedures to safeguard all children;
- ongoing training to ensure all staff have up to date knowledge of safeguarding issues in line with statutory guidance;
- ensuring all adults who care for the children or who have unsupervised access are suitable to do so;

- limiting the size of infant classes to 30 pupils per school teacher (subject to permitted exceptions);
- promoting good health by following the school's procedures and working closely alongside parents/carers to prevent the spread of infection and take appropriate action when children are ill;
- ensuring at least one person who has a current paediatric first aid certificate is on the premises and available at all times, including accompanying the children on off-site outings;
- providing healthy, balanced and nutritious snacks and considering any dietary needs;
- ensuring fresh drinking water is available and accessible to the children at all times;
- ensuring a first aid kit is accessible at all times with appropriate content for use with children. *Further policies and procedures regarding first aid are followed in line with a whole-school approach.*
- managing behaviour effectively and in an appropriate manner;
- ensuring that the premises, including any outdoor spaces, are safe and fit for purpose;
- taking reasonable steps to manage risks;
- ensuring arrangements are in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including support from outside agencies.

### Positive Relationships

At Birch C of E Primary School, we recognise that children learn to be resilient and independent through positive relationships with others. We aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with all children and their families.

#### Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents/carers are children's first and most enduring educators. We value the continuous contributions that they make to their child's learning and development. We further acknowledge this through:

- offering parents/carers a home visit before the children start school;
- adopting an 'open door policy' after school, which encourages parents/carers to talk about their child's progress and highlight any queries and/or concerns;

- offering two formal parent consultation meetings throughout the school year, which allow the class teacher to further discuss the children's progress with parents/carers;
- organising a range of activities for parents/carers to attend throughout the school year e.g. sharing/achievement assemblies, sports day, open afternoons etc;
- inviting parents/carers to attend workshops/open classroom events to help support the link between the children's learning experiences at home and school;
- enabling parents/carers to access and contribute to their child's online learning journal.

### **Enabling Environments**

At Birch C of E Primary School, we recognise that the environment plays a fundamental role in supporting and extending the children's learning and development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their needs and interests. Stimulating activities and/or experiences with an appropriate degree of challenge are then planned to help extend/support the children's learning and development.

The EYFS classroom is carefully organised to allow the children to explore and learn safely within the comfort of their surroundings. The classroom has specified learning zones, where the children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. Resources are clearly labelled for ease of access.

An enclosed outdoor area is also part of our EYFS provision. This further enables the children to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. The activities and resources planned encourage the children to access the outdoors and support their learning and development in all seven areas of the EYFS curriculum.

### **Learning and Development**

At Birch C of E Primary School, we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are interconnected.

The EYFS comprises of seven areas of learning and development:

**Prime areas:**

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

**Specific areas:**

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

All seven areas are delivered through a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. The planning within the EYFS follows the school's long-term plan and medium-term plans, which are based around half-termly/termly themes. The EYFS teacher uses these plans as a guide for their weekly planning. However, the teacher may alter any long-term/medium-term plans in response to the needs, achievements and interests of the children. These changes would be made clear on any subsequent planning.

The Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage (2023) highlights the importance of reflecting on the different ways in which children learn and subsequently embedding these in practice. Detailed examples of how the three 'characteristics of effective learning' are implemented within our practice is outlined below:

1. Playing and Exploring

Through play our children explore and experience learning opportunities, which help them to attempt to make sense of the world. They are encouraged to elicit their own ideas and learn how to develop a sense of self-control and discipline. They are given opportunities to think creatively and solve problems alongside other children as well as on their own. They express fears and/or relive anxious experiences in a controlled and safe environment.

2. Active Learning

Active learning occurs when children are motivated to learn and enjoy achieving. We ensure to provide our children with opportunities to develop their independence and resilience by allowing them to take ownership of their

learning. As the children's confidence begins to flourish, they learn to make decisions for themselves and take purposeful risks.

### 3. Creativity and Critical Thinking

The children are given opportunities to be creative through all areas of learning, not just the arts. Adults support the children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open-ended questions. The children can access resources freely and have the freedom to move them around the learning environment to help facilitate and extend their learning.

#### Assessment

We carry out regular assessments of the children's learning and development and use this to ensure that future planning reflects their individual needs. Ongoing assessments, including formal and informal observations, are carried out by all EYFS staff. A summary of the children's experiences and learning each week is uploaded onto the children's online learning journals. Parents/carers have access to a personalised log-in which enables them to view and comment on these updates via the internet or free app. They also have the option to upload their own observations of activities their children have carried out at home. The children's completed learning journals are available for parents/carers to download at the end of the academic year.

At Birch C of E Primary School, we use 'Insight' to record holistic, best-fit judgements against the EYFSP. The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is a short assessment, undertaken by each child within the first six weeks of them starting school. This forms part of their entry-level (or baseline) data and acts as an overview of the children's learning and development on arrival at school. Progress is closely monitored and updated throughout the academic year.

During the final term, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. A copy of the child's Profile report, together with a short-written commentary outlining their skills and attributes in relation to the 'characteristics of effective learning', is sent home in July. Copies of the children's Profile reports are also available for the Year 1 teacher/s to enable a professional dialogue to take place in support of the children's transition to Key Stage 1. We acknowledge that our EYFSP results must be passed onto our local authority on request.

## **Transition**

We have very good links with Caterpillars Pre-School on our school site. During the summer term, opportunities are planned for the EYFS teacher to visit Caterpillars Pre-School and meet and play with the children that will be starting school in September. Planned visits are also provided for the children to come and spend time in their new EYFS environment, alongside Pre-School staff. The EYFS teacher also makes every effort to contact other Pre-Schools, arranging transition phone calls/visits where at all possible. In addition, the new intake is invited to attend two 'move-up' sessions prior to starting school and parents receive a detailed 'welcome booklet' by email. During the move-up sessions, they are introduced to staff and are able to explore their new classroom and outdoor learning area. Parents/carers are also allocated a time for a home visit, which takes place before the children start school.

## **Continued Staff Development**

The EYFS teacher regularly attends courses and cascades training to staff where appropriate. The EYFS team meet regularly to discuss the children's learning and development, consider next steps and carry out professional judgements regarding assessment. The EYFS teacher works closely alongside other Early Years practitioners within the local consortium, attending termly CPD meetings.

## **Monitoring and Review**

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teacher to follow the principles outlined within this policy. At the start of the academic year, the EYFS teacher presents the EYFS School Improvement Plan to the Governing Body. The Headteacher monitors the EYFS as part of the whole-school monitoring schedule.

Reviewed by S Vinters Sept 24

Review Sept 25