

The Baird Primary Academy

# Early Years Policy

# THE BAIRD PRIMARY ACADEMY

Implemented October 2015

## Early Years Policy

### RATIONALE

The early years of a child's life are crucial to their development as individuals and to successful future learning. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At The Baird Primary Academy, we have a Nursery Class (Puffins) and three Reception classes (Ducklings, Goslings and Cygnets). To support transition into the next phase of learning, we also include Year 1 (Sparrows and Skylarks) within our 'Foundation Academy'.

### AIMS

- To explain how we meet the current (September 2014) requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)
- To ensure a consistent approach where parents/carers and staff work together to give children the best possible start

Our provision and practice is shaped by the four guiding principles of the Statutory Framework for the EYFS:

- 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**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers; and
- **Children develop and learn in different ways and 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.

## Unique Child

### The Academy Code

Our values are Kindness, Excellence, Respect, Responsibility and Independence (KERRI). All members of our community are expected to demonstrate and promote these values. Within Early Years, these values will be exemplified in the following ways:

**Kindness** - Children will be encouraged to help one-another and have 'kind hands' when playing.

**Excellence** - Children's efforts and achievements will be shared and celebrated.

**Respect** - Everyone will say 'please' and 'thank you'. Children will learn to take turns when playing and speaking and to be careful with toys and equipment.

**Responsibility** - Children will share in the responsibility of classroom jobs, such as tidying up, giving out and collecting resources. Children will learn to say 'sorry' if they make a mistake.

**Independence** - Children will be shown how and encouraged to 'try' being independent in a range of age appropriate tasks, such as using the toilet, dressing and undressing (footwear/coats/painting aprons), pouring drinks at the snack table and opening food packets at lunch time.

### Settling in and Transition

We offer 'taster sessions' where children get to know key staff, explore the new environment and meet other children. Every new child receives a home visit from key staff. This supports the positive link between home and school. Parents share important information around needs, milestones/achievements, interests, and routines. For children transitioning from our Nursery to Reception class, there are specific transition meetings between key staff in school to discuss each child as an individual and help the new teacher to get to know the child before the start of term. For children new to our academy in the Reception class, we attend the local network transition meetings during the summer term where we can meet with staff from other Nurseries to share valuable information about each child's learning, needs, interests and experiences to facilitate a smooth transition between settings.

### Child initiated learning

We provide a range of learning experiences, including opportunities for children to direct their own learning experiences and follow their own interests. Each child has a 'Learning Journey' where their learning experiences are recorded and this profile of learning also indicates whether the experience is child initiated or adult led.

*For further information, see 'Enabling Environment' below and our curriculum overview on the website.*

## Positive Relationships

### Safeguarding and 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."

*Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2014*

At The Baird Primary Academy, all children have the right to feel and be safe. The safety of our children is paramount. We encourage the children to take risks in a safe learning environment by helping them to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children.

Within the Early Years, we ensure that our current practice and provision complies with the welfare requirements as stated in the Ofsted Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage.

Our team works collaboratively to:

- Promote the welfare and safeguarding of children;
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill;
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs;
- Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so;
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment are safe and suitable for purpose.
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.

*Please refer to specific Nursery policies on our website.*

### The Prevent Duty

The Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015) places a duty on Early Years providers 'to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. We aim to build children's resilience to extremism by promoting their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and by actively promoting fundamental British Values.

All of our staff undertake accredited on-line Prevent Training, providing them with an understanding of the general risks affecting young children, how to identify individual children who may be at risk and how to support them. Our procedures for protecting children are set out in our existing safeguarding policy.

See Hastings Academies Trust [Safeguarding Children in Education and Child Protection Policy](#)



## British Values

The fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs are implicitly embedded in the Early Years Foundation Stage. **We actively seek to promote these values** through modelling behaviour, challenging stereotypes and behaviours that are not in line with these values, and ensuring that our children receive a rich and varied curriculum.

*Democracy: making decisions together*

As part of the focus on self-confidence and self-awareness, as cited in Personal, Social and Emotional Development:

- Staff encourage children to see their role in the bigger picture, encouraging children to know their views count, appreciate each other's views and values and talk about their feelings, for example when they do or do not need help. When appropriate, we demonstrate democracy in action, for example children sharing views on the theme of their role play area by a show of hands.
- Staff support the decisions that children make and provide activities that involve turn-taking, sharing and collaboration. Children are given opportunities to develop enquiring minds in an atmosphere where questions are valued.

*Rule of law: understanding rules matter*

As part of the focus on managing feelings and behaviour, as cited in Personal, social and Emotional development:

- Staff actively promote the academy code (KERRI) and relate this to daily routines and behaviour, for example collaborating to agree rules for tidying up and ensure that all children understand that rules apply to everyone and are created to keep us safe and happy.
- Staff ensure that children understand their own and other's behaviour and its consequences, and learn to distinguish right from wrong.

*Individual Liberty: freedom for all*

As part of the focus on self-confidence and self-awareness and people and communities, as cited in Personal Social and Emotional Development and Understanding of the World:

- Children are supported to develop a positive sense of themselves. Staff provide opportunities for children to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and increase their confidence in their own abilities, for example through allowing children to take

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risks through an obstacle course, mixing colours, reviewing their Learning Journeys and talking about their experiences and learning.

- Staff encourage a range of experiences that allow children to explore the language of feelings and responsibility, reflect on their differences and understand we are free to have different opinions, for example in a small group discuss what they feel about transferring to the next phase/class.

Mutual respect and tolerance: treat others as you want to be treated

As part of the focus on people and communities, managing feelings and behaviour, and making relationships, as cited in Personal Social and Emotional Development and Understanding the World:

- Staff create an ethos of inclusivity and tolerance where views, faiths, cultures and races are valued and children are engaged with the wider community.
- Children explore similarities and differences between themselves and others and among families, faiths, communities, cultures and traditions and share and discuss practices, celebrations and experiences.
- Staff emphasise the importance of respecting differences, including differing opinions, as part of KERRI.
- Staff promote diversity by providing resources and activities that challenge gender, cultural and racial stereotyping.

### Key Person

**We aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families. A Key Person approach provides a reciprocal relationship between a member of staff, individual child and their family. Families are given clear guidance on the staff they will meet and their role in the setting.**

**The role of a Key Person** is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs, to help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with their parents. They will know the child and support their sense of identity and individuality. They will be aware of the child's and family's needs, preferences and development.

The Key Person will usually welcome the child and carer into the setting and help the child to settle into the session. They are also the main person providing the child's intimate care such as nappy changing, putting to sleep and physical closeness. Information shared with parents is also done mainly through the Key Person.

To enable children to make secure attachments to practitioners and to develop positive relationships, we operate a Co-Key Person system in the Nursery. The primary Key Person is the Nursery teacher and an additional Key Person is allocated to each child. This allows two practitioners to work in partnership to implement an effective Key Person approach which ensures strong relationships with high quality communication and support through the range of attendance patterns. In Reception classes (where children attend full time) the Class Teacher takes on this role, with additional support for children and families as required from a full-time Teaching Assistant.

## Enabling Environments

We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident, secure and challenged. In addition to their classroom environment, all children have access to a range of outdoor learning areas including hard surface play areas, a nature garden with a pond, climbing equipment, bug garden and digging patch. At designated times we offer children the choice to 'free flow' between indoor and outdoor learning spaces.

**We believe that clear expectations and boundaries, within age appropriate routines and structures are paramount to enabling children to feel safe and secure and in facilitating the positive social and learning behaviours which are essential to successful learning and social interactions; we organise our provision based on this premise.**

During the day, children participate in short periods of shared learning (carpet time) led by an adult, followed by periods of more active learning through a range of activities (self-directed challenges alongside structured adult-led learning experiences). Children are encouraged to make choices about their learning activities and to be independent and creative in how they engage with resources. Adults extend children's play and interaction as appropriate and use their observations to enhance future provision and extend learning.

### Curriculum

There are seven areas of learning and development of which three are 'Prime Areas', and four are 'Specific Areas'.

Prime Areas	Specific Areas
Communication and language	Literacy
Physical development	Mathematics
Personal, social and emotional development	Understanding of the world
	Expressive arts and design

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The Prime Areas are essential for fostering early learning skills and are promoted heavily through our planning and provision. Successful mastery of these skills supports children to achieve well in Specific Areas of Learning.

Curriculum Mapping is in place to promote a wide ranging curriculum where children are challenged with new experiences. It is made up of a range of broad themes and across all of these we promote the Characteristics of Effective Learning where children develop their abilities to play and explore, take an active role in their learning and think creatively.

### Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents and carers 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 the children. We promote positive relationships and parental involvement through:

- Home visits prior to starting the setting
- Taster sessions (with parents)
- Weekly coffee mornings
- Encouraging parent helpers/reading partners
- Communication via regular parent information letters
- Regular opportunities throughout the year to encourage collaboration, such as class assemblies, performances (e.g Nativity), stay and play sessions and open afternoons
- Formal meetings for parents/carers at which the Class Teacher and parent discuss the child's progress.
- Termly reports to parents, including pupil voice and parent feedback
- Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress in the final year of Nursery and the end of Reception
- Providing parents/carers the opportunity to celebrate their child's learning and development by completing "WOW slips" to contribute to the Learning Journey
- By providing a quiet and confidential area where parents/carers are able to discuss any concerns or share information
- Encouraging parents/carers to attend workshops around the curriculum and supporting at home
- Sharing curriculum plans on our website that cover topics we will teach during that term, offering a range of activities that support the involvement of parents/carers
- Regular updates through social media

### Home Learning

We understand the impact of high quality liaison between home and school and strive to ensure that our pupils are keen to learn at every opportunity. For this reason, we believe that the extension of learning out of the classroom, including the provision of home learning, is a vital addition to a child's learning.

In Nursery: Parent letters give ideas for extending learning at home. Parents are encouraged to take books home to share with their children.

In Reception: Parent letters give ideas for extending learning at home. All children are expected to read at home with their adult as part of our home school agreement. Homework is given to children weekly which is varied and reflects the learning in class.

Adventure Bear - each class has a bear (name determined by democratic process). Every child will have the opportunity to take the bear home and use his Adventure Book to record and share their home experiences.

### **Assessment**

"Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs and to plan activities and support"

*Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2014*

The Development Matters Bands and Early Learning Goals provide the basis for assessment throughout the EYFS. Children are assessed at their entry point to the Foundation Stage to establish a baseline. Progress is monitored and tracked consistently through shared Learning Journeys and an electronic tracking system.

Practitioners, teachers and teaching assistants make regular assessments of children's learning and these high quality observations are key to the assessment and planning cycle. Next Steps are planned in response to these, shared with parents, then presented on a display so all practitioners have an awareness of ways forward.

There are several summative assessment points throughout the Foundation Stage.

- Two Year Old Progress Checks in conjunction with Health Visitor and parents
- Children entering Reception from September 2015 will undertake a formal Baseline Assessment during the first term.
- A Good Level of Development measure is made at the end of the Reception Year

### **Letters and Sounds**

We introduce children to the names of letters and the sounds they make using 'Jolly Phonics'. This incorporates an action, a song, and a visual cue to support the acquisition of letter/sound correspondence thus supporting a range of learning styles. We also follow the Letters and Sounds Phonics Programme. This is a daily programme of interactive experiences that promote phonological awareness and key skills for reading and spelling. Phase 1 begins in the nursery. Further phases continue throughout the Foundation Stage and into Key Stage 1

See [The Baird Primary Academy Phonics Policy](#)

## Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

### **Learning and Development:**

We recognise that children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. At The Baird Primary Academy we understand that young children achieve well when learning is engaging and well matched to their interests and previous learning.

### **Inclusion in the Foundation Stage/Special Educational Needs and Disability**

All children and their families are valued at our academy. Children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all provision available. All children are encouraged to achieve their full potential and planning is in response to the observed needs of all groups and abilities. Assessments take into account contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential special educational needs is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage and further support can be accessed through our Head of Learning Support, Mrs Jeffries.

In the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children so that they make good progress from their starting points. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds. In order to accommodate the individual's particular learning style, provision will be planned wherever possible in a multi-sensory way so that the various experiences can be accessed by all in the spirit of inclusion.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to 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 language and communication skills;
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

## **Pupil Premium**

We ensure that we identify children who are entitled to both Pupil Premium and Early Years Pupil Premium and rigorously track their progress and achievement. Through baseline and ongoing assessment, we are able to identify areas to provide additional support for individual pupils. Our spending of pupil premium funding is fully documented and the impact is assessed. In line with statutory requirements, this is published on our website.

## **Monitoring**

The monitoring of Early Years provision is the responsibility of all Leaders of Learning, to ensure consistency across all classes and staff and that our high expectations are being met. The Senior Leadership Team and Academic Partner will also monitor, in accordance with the Academy Improvement Plan. Monitoring can take the form of lesson observations, drop-ins, sampling and moderation of work, data analysis, speaking with children and parents and looking at teachers' planning.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Foundation Academy Leader.

**Ms. Tsai Tenn, Principal, The Baird Primary Academy**

**This policy was implemented on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2015**

**Signed (chair of governors)**



**Reviewed .....**