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# Early Years Foundation Stage Policy 2022-2025

## **Turn your ear to wisdom and apply your heart to understanding (Proverbs 2:2)**

Broadwater is a Christian School. We will enable children to become wise, confident, successful learners with the motivation, skills and responsibility to make a positive difference in God's world. Our vision is underpinned by the values we live by.

*The Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things! Galatians 5:22*

It is this fruit that, in partnership with parents, we will instil in the children of our school.

# Early Years Foundation Stage Policy 2022-2025

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to reach their full 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. When parents choose to use early year’s services they want to know the provision will keep their children safe and help them to thrive. The Early Years Foundation Stage is the framework that provides that assurance.”

## **Introduction**

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. It is not just a preparation for the next stage but is vitally important in itself. For young children there is no distinction between work and play. Learning for young children is a rewarding and enjoyable experience in which they explore, investigate, discover, create, practice, rehearse, repeat, revise and consolidate their developing knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes. During the foundation stage, many of these aspects of learning are brought together effectively through playing and talking.

## **Aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

In EYFS we believe that all children are entitled to the best possible start in their school life, both intellectually and emotionally, in order to enable them to develop their full potential. We aim to support each child’s welfare, learning and developmental needs by:

- Recognising that all children are unique and special.
- Understanding that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates - physically, cognitively, linguistically, socially and emotionally.
- Providing a safe, secure and caring environment where children feel happy and know that they are valued.
- Fostering and nurturing children’s self-confidence and self-esteem through their developing awareness of their own identity and role within the community.
- Teaching them to express and communicate their needs and feelings in appropriate ways.
- Encouraging children’s independence and decision-making, supporting them to learn through their mistakes.
- Developing children’s understanding of social skills and the values and codes of behaviour required for people to work together harmoniously.
- Supporting children to develop care, respect and appreciation for others, including those with beliefs, cultures and opinions which differ to their own.
- Understanding the importance of play in children’s learning and development.
- Providing learning experiences in play, which reflect children’s personal interests and areas of curiosity in order to encourage and develop their natural desire, interest, excitement and motivation to learn.
- Providing experiences, which build on children’s existing knowledge and understanding in order to challenge, stimulate and extend their learning and development.
- Providing effective learning opportunities in a range of environments, inside and outside.

## **The Early Years Foundation Stage framework**

Teaching in the EYFS is delivered in accordance with the government’s statutory document ‘The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage’ (March 2021). This document is a principled approach to Early Years education, bringing together children’s welfare, learning and

development requirements through four themes: 'A Unique Child', 'Positive Relationships', 'Enabling Environments with teaching and support from adults' and 'Learning and Development'.

The curriculum is centred on 3 prime areas of learning:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Providers must also support activities through four specific areas, which strengthen the prime areas. These are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

These Areas of Learning and Development address children's physical, cognitive, linguistic, social and emotional development. No one aspect of development stands in isolation from the others as all Areas of Learning and Development are all closely interlinked. This ensures the delivery of a holistic, child-centred curriculum, which allows children to make lots of links between what they are learning. All Areas of Learning and Development are given equal weighting and value.

At Broadwater Primary School all children are provided with an equal opportunity to thrive, by ensuring that all children are able to access high quality early education. We pay particular attention to children from disadvantaged backgrounds to ensure that the gap is narrowed. Our curriculum is inclusive to all children at their own level, as we know that children all develop at their own pace.

Children's special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are identified quickly and effective support put into place promptly to ensure they continue to progress, working in partnership with parents and carers. Children with SEND or additional needs are provided with opportunities to have regular in-depth conversations to ensure targets and progress are shared.

## **Active Learning through Play**

We organise the day to provide a balance between the following:

- Child Initiated Activities - children make choices from within the learning environment to meet his/her outcome for learning.
- Adult Initiated Activities- practitioners provide the resources to stimulate and consolidate learning.
- Adult Directed Activities – Children engage in planned activities to meet specific learning outcomes.

At Broadwater Primary School we recognise that young children learn best when they are active. We understand that active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods. Therefore, we believe that Early Years education should be as practical as possible and our EYFS setting has an ethos of learning through play. We recognise the importance of children's play. It is an essential and rich part of their learning process, supporting them in all areas of development. Play is a powerful motivator encouraging children to be creative and to develop their ideas, understanding and language. We ensure that all activities support and encourage language development including for children who English is not their first language. Play is also flexible and able to suit the preferred learning style of the child. It can provide multiple ways for children to learn a variety of different skills and concepts.

We provide a well-planned stimulating learning environment in both our inside and outside classrooms. The outside classroom is open throughout the day and children are able to free flow

across the year group. The provision is linked to our ambitious curriculum and allows the children to lead their own play and stimulate their own interests. In providing these active learning opportunities through play, we understand the central position of play within the EYFS framework. This is essentially a play-based curriculum and pedagogy as the provision of play opportunities underpins its delivery. We promote a love of learning through real life experiences and opportunities to build on prior learning.

## **Assessment and Record Keeping**

The main EYFS assessment method is through practitioners' interactions and observations of children in different teaching and learning contexts, including both adult focused activities and child initiated play. Observations take place on a daily basis (both formally and informally). Practitioners make time to carry out observations of individuals and groups of children, regularly playing alongside, scaffolding their play or directly teaching new skills and ideas.

They also make spontaneous observations in order to capture significant moments of children's learning. All practitioners are involved in observing children and are responsive to the children ensuring they develop effective and positive relationships with the children. Practitioners use their observations to support their developing knowledge of individual children. It informs them of children's abilities, needs, interests, play schemas and learning styles. Observations are evaluated, children's learning priorities are identified and relevant learning opportunities are planned to support children to make the next steps, develop independence and make progress.

Learning Journals record children's progress over the academic year in all Areas of Learning and Development of the EYFS framework. Samples of children's work are gathered, along with some photographic evidence and observations on the Interactive Learning Diary. (ILD)

The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is a short statutory assessment, taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts reception. There is continuous monitoring and assessment of each child's development using the new Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (2021). At the end of the year it provides a summary of every child's development and learning achievements. Judgments made on children's development in the Profile are based on practitioners' evidence of children's behaviour observed independently and consistently in their self-initiated activities across all Areas of Learning and Development.

## **Planning**

The EYFS framework provides a long-term plan to follow by ensuring that all Early Learning Goals are covered throughout the academic year. Medium term planning is created and takes into account the individual children's learning and developmental needs. Our overriding school emphasis on a topic-based approach to learning and creating learning that is 'Deep and Irresistible' is ideally suited to the EYFS. All Areas of Learning and Development are planned for and available to access within the setting. The learning opportunities provided include a range of adult focused and child-initiated activities indoors and outdoors. The setting makes use of the outdoor environment whenever possible. Early learning of phonics is an important strand at our school and a high quality systematic phonic scheme is started soon after the children school.

## **Parents as Partners**

At Broadwater Primary School we recognise the importance of establishing positive relationships with parents, as highlighted by the EYFS framework. We understand that an effective partnership between school and home will have a positive impact on children's learning and development. So, practitioners endeavour to encourage the regular sharing of information about the children with parents.

We value the role of parents as children's primary educators. We encourage parents to share their unique knowledge of their child, providing further insight into the child as an individual (e.g. characteristics, interests, experiences, likes, dislikes). By getting to know the children and their families it enables us to offer support as needed. It also provides practitioners opportunities to establish interesting and stimulating learning experiences, responding to children's needs and interests.

Parents are kept informed of what is happening in the setting through regular emails, access to the ILD, C.A.P.E.R. Diary and informal chatting at the beginning and end of the day. This also gives suggestions of how parents can support their children's learning at home; consolidating and building on what has been covered in the setting. Whole school newsletters are also sent home via email.

Curriculum news meetings take place at the beginning of each term to inform parents of the planned Learning journey and creative curriculum. Parents are invited to attend parents' evenings during the course of the academic year providing opportunities for practitioners to share children's learning, development and well-being. Other meetings are held throughout the year to help parents support their children's learning including amongst others our Reading, Writing and Maths meetings. End of year reports celebrate children's progress and achievements.

Parents are also invited to get involved with school life. There are opportunities for them to help with activities such as educational visits, as well as offering their particular skills (e.g. cooking, gardening, art, music) to support children's learning. Parents may be invited into the setting on other occasions such as class assemblies where children show them their work. The setting has a friendly, open-doors ethos and practitioners are available to talk to parents informally at the beginning and end of the day. For more formal meetings or detailed discussions an appointment can be arranged, either via the office or directly with the class teacher. Parents are always welcomed into school and encouraged to discuss any concerns they might have.

## **Admissions and Induction**

Broadwater Primary School provides full-time Early Years education for children in the Reception Year. This is for children who enter school from September of the academic year in which they will turn five years old.

Before children start at school in the setting, all children are offered a series of transition sessions during the summer term. The purpose of these initial visits is for the children to meet their new practitioners and start to become familiar with the environment. Children will be given a book to take home, which familiarises children with the school. Practitioners will converse with the pre-school setting to support and develop our knowledge and understanding of each child in order to make the transition period to school as smooth as possible.

In the summer term parents are invited into school for an induction evening. At this meeting information regarding the induction process and what goes on in the school is shared. There is also time for informal chat and parents' questions. Information packs will be distributed to parents at this meeting, detailing school routines and expectations. Chartwells, our school meal providers are also on hand to supply information about the free school meals that all children in Reception, year 1 and year 2 are entitled to.

In September, with the agreement of parents, we operate a short phased entry period to ensure transition into school runs as smoothly as possible. We recognise that this is a big step for all children and parents and historical practice has identified this as the best way for children to attend school full-time happily. **Parents can opt for their child to attend part-time should they see fit.** Every effort is made to make children feel safe, secure and happy. There is a relaxed

and open ethos in the setting. Established routines, a calm atmosphere and encouraging talk are some of the strategies practitioners use to maintain children's positive feelings about school.

### **Monitoring and review**

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teachers to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Leadership Team will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.