



Benson C of E Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Adopted by school:	Benson C of E Primary School
Date:	January 2024 Reviewed and approved by Full Governing Body July 2025

Rationale:

At Benson C of E Primary School we endeavor to deliver an Early Years Curriculum which allows children to explore and learn in an environment that is inclusive of all children, secure, safe, yet challenging. We listen to our children and follow their interests to help guide our planning and assessment cycle. We work in partnership with parents to encourage independent, happy learners who thrive in our school and reach their full potential. Children will leave the Early Years Foundation Stage being able to learn through playing and exploring, active learning, being creative and thinking critically.

Aims:

The aim of this policy is to outline our approach to achieving the requirements and goals through the delivery of the statutory requirements for EYFS.

At Benson C of E Primary School, we aim to:

- Give each child a 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.
- Offer each child a wide range of new and exciting experiences and give them the opportunity to consolidate, explore and test them out along with their own, individual experiences.
- Enable each child, through encouragement and high expectations, to develop, to the full, socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally.
- Offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited opportunity for development.
- Encourage children to develop independence within a loving, secure and friendly atmosphere.
- Support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing;
- Help each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and developing the confidence to work towards personal goals.

The Curriculum:

Our EYFS team consists of a Nursery and Reception classes. All classes follow the curriculum as outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework 2021 (EYFS) document. Due to 45 PAN, some years may include Reception and Year 1 classes. In this case, curriculum for Reception children will still follow the EYFS framework.

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

The prime areas:

- Communication and Language – Listening, Attention, Understanding and Speaking.
- Physical Development – Gross Motor Skills and Fine Motor Skills .
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development – Self-Regulation, Managing Self and Building Relationships

The specific areas:

- Literacy – Comprehension, Word Reading and Writing – Rocket Phonics Scheme
- Mathematics – Numbers and Numerical Patterns
- Understanding the World – Past and Present, People, Culture and Communities and 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. The Nursery and Reception teachers plan activities within their classrooms 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.

Teaching strategies

We ensure that there is a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities across the day. Although much of the time is spent with children self-selecting tasks, the interaction between the adult and child is essential as the adult's response to children builds understanding and therefore guides new learning. The adult's role is to continually model, demonstrate and question what the child is doing. In some cases, the adult will ask a child to come and complete a task or game with them; at other times they will participate in a child's activity, extending it where possible.

We include direct, carefully planned, adult-led experiences for children in the form of structured adult led teaching and adult-led group activities. These are particularly important in helping children to learn specific skills and knowledge and it is often through children's play that we see how much learning the children have understood and taken on. Each day we use a flexible timetable with 'set' routines in place. This looks quite different in the Nursery and Reception classes. We set aside times each day when the children come together to be taught in the more traditional sense, gathered together on the carpet as a class. In these slots we focus on our topic work, maths, literacy, phonics, and

stories. These sessions help to develop vital habits of learning: learning as a group, listening to the teacher, taking turns to answer, concentration etc.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

Across the EYFS, planning is based around half-termly themes which feed into the whole school curriculum. These themes have been carefully chosen to reflect the cultural capital of children attending Benson C of E Primary School. All planning across Nursery and Reception also reflects children's individual needs and interests. It is aimed at helping children to achieve their next steps in their learning. These plans are used by the EYFS teachers as a guide for weekly planning; however, the teacher alters these in response to the needs (achievements and changing interests) of the children. We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of observation in Nursery and in the form of observation and individual writing and maths books in Reception.

Both Nursery and Reception use Floor Books to show collaborative learning in a chronological order of learning. Relevant snapshot observations and photographs of work are added to Tapestry to create an individual Learning Journey for all children. This information then supports practitioners to monitor the learning of each individual child.

Parents as Partners

We believe that parents and carers are a child's first educator and therefore work very closely to ensure they are involved in their child's learning at school. We want parents to feel they can speak to us about their child at any time and feel comfortable in our setting.

We endeavour to actively engage our parents in the following ways:

- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school.
- Giving the children the opportunity of spending quality time in the setting with their parents/carers before starting school.
- Inviting all parents to a series of induction meetings during the term before their child starts school.
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's class teacher if there are any concerns.
- Formal parent meetings in the Autumn and Spring terms at which the class teacher talks to parents individually about their child's progress and attainment.
- Parents receive a written report on their child's attainment and progress on leaving Nursery and at the end of the Foundation Stage.
- Subject based meetings: Reading, phonics, mathematics to support parents on how they can help their child at home.
- Suggested home learning, sent to parents via tapestry.
- Encouraging parents to contribute to the assessment record of their child through Tapestry observations.
- Open classrooms.
- Class teacher being available for parents to meet with any question, concerns or queries. All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them.

At the end of EYFS, we expect that our children:

- Have strong communication skills, both written and verbal. Our children also listen respectfully and with tolerance to the views of others.
- Take pride in all that they do, always striving to do their best.
- Demonstrate emotional resilience and the ability to persevere when they encounter challenge.
- Develop a sense of self-awareness and become confident in their own abilities.
- Are kind, respectful and honest, demonstrate inclusive attitudes and have a sense of their role in our wider society.