Early Years Policy

Approved by:	LGB	**Date:**	April 2024
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1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- A close working partnership between staff and parents/carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives, so their experiences in early years have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe, and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning provide the foundation children need to fulfil their potential. ('Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework' DfE December 2023)

Our aim at Brownhills West Primary School is to provide high quality care and education for all children, within a happy, safe and stimulating learning environment: where children learn through play, develop rapidly and make exceptional progress from their individual starting points. We strive to create an atmosphere where children feel valued, included and secure

and one where a positive attitude and disposition to learn is encouraged and where children, parents/carers and practitioners work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect. JOY

Our objectives for the Early Years Foundation Stage are that all children will:

- Learn in a caring, enquiring and inclusive environment needed for good early years practice
- Have access to a progressive, relevant and carefully structured curriculum, through the 7 areas of learning outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage Document, building on what they can already do as they enter Nursery and working towards achieving the Early Learning Goals
- Engage with a broad and balanced curriculum in which they can explore, experiment, plan, observe and make decisions for themselves using all of the characteristics of effective learning
- Have their individual needs met through use of on-going and rigorous assessment.
- Be provided with equal opportunities, regardless of race, culture, religion, background, special educational needs, disability, gender or ability
- Be taught by qualified, caring staff, who regularly meet to discuss and assess all aspects of the curriculum and individual needs
- Participate in transition activities to aid a smooth transition from home to Nursery to Reception to KS1

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) for 2023.
This document also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Structure of the EYFS

Our Early Years Unit consists of a 2-year-old Nursery (Bright Beginnings), a 3-year-old Nursery (where we offer 30 hours) and 1 Reception class.

4. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest EYFS statutory framework. The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. 3 areas, known as the prime areas, are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.
The prime areas are:

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

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

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

4.1 Planning

Our staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staff working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.
Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.
Our staff use reflective planning to ensure children learn the progressive skills that they need in order to achieve a good level of development. They do this by taking the children's interests into account and their individual characteristics of effective learning.

4.2 Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.
As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1.

5. Assessment

At Brownhills West Primary School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents/carers.
When a child is **aged between 2 and 3**, staff review their progress and provide parents/carers with a written summary of the child's development in the 3 prime areas. This 'progress check' highlights the areas in which a child is progressing well and the areas in which additional support is needed.
Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).
At the **end of the EYFS**, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child.
The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters guidance) and in partnership with the other Trust schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority upon request.

6. Working with parents and carers

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents/carers.
Parents/carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. The progress check and EYFS profile helps to provide parents/carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Each child, in our 2-yearl-old nursery, is assigned a key person who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents/carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

We recognise that 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 safeguarding and welfare requirements to provide a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence.
We make sure that the appropriate statutory staff: child ratios are maintained in our setting to meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety:

- For children aged 2, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 5 children
- For children aged 3 and over:
    - We have at least 1 member of staff for every 13 children
    - We comply with infant class size legislation and have at least 1 teacher per 30 pupils

We have at least 1 person with a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate in the Early Years Unit and available at all times when children are present, including on outings. This PFA certificate is renewed every 3 years as required.
We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by talking to children about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth

We follow Public Health England guidance on supervised tooth-brushing to make sure that it is evidence-based and safe.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our school's Child Protection and Safeguarding policy.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Early Years Leader every three years.
At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy
Administering medicines policy	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See Fire Evacuation Procedures
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See non-collection of children procedures
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy

Appendix 2. Intimate Care

We recognise that, while we would prefer children to be independent in their toileting, not all children are capable of this at this early stage of childhood. We aim to provide the opportunity for all children to use the toilet independently and to provide assistance for children who require it.
As children enter our Early Years Unit, individual needs, including medical needs, will be discussed and acted upon where necessary. Children will be shown the individual class toilet areas during transition visits and will be assured they are allowed to use them when they need to. This helps to helps to promote confidence and familiarity in a new environment. Children are also taught that this is not a 'social space' where they play. They learn the rule that only one child may go in a toilet cubicle at any time and we respect privacy by shutting doors and not looking underneath or over the top of an occupied cubicle.
Where children are in pull-ups, we will remind them at frequent intervals to use the toilet. If a child is in nappies, these will be changed as necessary. Parents of children who attend Bright Beginnings/Nursery are asked to send children into a session wearing a clean nappy. This may last them the session however where necessary, nappies will be changed. Children attending our Reception class wearing nappies will need changing at least once a day. Where a child is heavily soiled and needs showering/bathing, parents will be informed by telephone and asked to come into school. Not only is this unpleasant for the child, but time away from the rest of the class by a member of staff can impact upon the learning that is taking place or the adult: child ratio within the setting.
If a child has a medical need, a Care Plan is written and put into place after discussion with the Senco and the child's parents/carers. For children who have a disability 'Moving and Handling' guidelines must be adhered to.
Staff will be able to 'potty-train' children in Bright Beginnings and Nursery but not in Reception.
In the event of clothing being soiled, we will endeavour to provide a set of clean, basic clothing but if this is unable to happen, parents will be notified at once and asked to send some to school for the children to wear. Parents are asked to return these as soon as possible in a clean state. Parents may prefer to send their child with a bag containing a clean change of clothes. These clothes will only be used for that child.
For children using nappies /pull-ups, parents must provide adequate supplies including wipes and fresh nappies/ pull-ups for use each day. These items will only be used for that child. Sensitive baby wipes are provided in the classroom and toilet for occasional use as necessary. Parents are updated with their child's progress as appropriate and will be informed when their supplies of wipes, nappies and cream are running low in order to replenish these.

The following procedures are put into place when a child is changed:

- All nappies will be changed using the nappy changing facility in the Nursery toilet.
- Potties are available for children too small to use the toilet, those who feel more confident using a potty or those who are potty-training.
- Staff will wear protective gloves and apron when changing nappies/pull ups. These will be disposed of after each use.
- All used pull-ups and nappies will be disposed of in the nappy bin, securely wrapped in the appropriate bags.
- Where possible, two members of staff will be present when a child is changed. Where this is not possible, the adult changing the child will always inform another member of staff before doing so.

Only staff who have been successfully processed through our recruitment, reference and DBS check process will be authorised to assist the children in the toilet areas. All children will be encouraged to adopt good personal hygiene by washing their hands properly and are regularly reminded to do so.