



BABLAKE & KING HENRY VIII SCHOOL

Early Years Policy

At BKHS Pre Prep School, learning through play, learning through the environment and learning through meaningful and engaging experiences are key elements that build the foundations for learning.

This policy aims to ensure:

- A caring and stimulating environment is provided where every child feels empowered to develop as a creative and critical thinker and independent learner.
- Dedicated staff ensure 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.
- Opportunities are provided to build upon children's experiences and interests to enable all children to reach their potential in every aspect of their development.
- Quality and consistency exists across teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
- Inclusion is at the heart of our provision at BKHS Pre Prep, ensuring every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

We recognise that starting school is an extremely important time for both the child and the parent. To support the smooth transition into the school we plan to meet the needs of the child and their family through an induction programme to enable a happy entry into the Foundation Stage and beyond to ensure their further development.

We embrace the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021), the principles and commitments. The Early Years Foundation Stage is a statutory document, which details the standards for learning, development and care for all children within the Foundation Stage. At the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, the children's learning and achievement will be recorded by completion of the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and reported to parents and the LEA.

Structure

EYFS at BKHS Pre Prep consists of 3-5 year olds, organised into Nursery and Reception year groups. Children usually enter the EYFS in the September after their 3rd birthday. However, we do receive a small number of entries in the term after the child has turned 3 years old. Full time attendance in Nursery is encouraged but parents may choose to enrol their child for 3, 4 or 5 full days. Half days are not offered within the Nursery to ensure consistency of care and adequate provision to meet expected standards. Children may begin in the Nursery at the beginning of any term. Some children move into Reception on completion of their year in Nursery or in the September after their 4th birthday, if Reception is the point of entry. At this stage, children are full time, 5 days a week. School

fees cover care from 8:30am until 3:15pm (the usual school day). Wrap around provision is provided through our Pre-Care and After-Care provision which is chargeable separately.

A Unique Child

We place high importance on developing children's physical and emotional wellbeing. Our skilled staff endeavour to create an environment in which all our children can thrive.

We recognise that children arrive with a wide range of skills, abilities and particular interests. We understand that each child is a competent learner. We observe each child before planning experiences to intrigue, challenge and extend their learning.

Our Foundation Stage staff and children's parents work together to develop awareness of equality of opportunity and ensure that, where appropriate we celebrate individuality.

It is the class teachers' role to ensure that all new entrants are made aware of important issues such as fire drills, first aid and safety rules. Extra assistance may be needed for some children but all staff will seek to promote and to develop the children's independence. Many issues will be approached through the topic activities during the Foundation Stage.

Enabling Environments

We will use information from parents and other settings to inform our knowledge and understanding of every child. In school we will observe children and take account of what we observe. We will analyse and review what we see or know about each child's development and learning, and then we will make informed decisions about the child's progress. This enables us to plan appropriate next steps.

Planning within the EYFS is based around the individual children's needs and interests. These plans are used and implemented by the Key Worker (in Nursery) and Teacher and Teaching Assistant (in Reception), who have a good understanding of the children.

We currently maintain books, which documents the child's learning journey. These include observations, photos and examples of their work. We encourage children and parents to make contributions to their child's learning journey. We also share the individual books with parents during parent consultations. In our Reception class, we use our knowledge of the children and evidence collected in the children's books, to inform our judgements and to support completion of the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile at the end of the Reception Year.

We provide a rich and varied learning environment as we know this will evoke the children's curiosity and increase their motivation to investigate, explore and to become involved, extending their ideas and experiences. The learning environment comprises of the inside and outside and covered outside areas. All are of equal importance, available to the children and resources reviewed regularly in order to make the best provision for the children's learning and development. Children have the freedom to move between the learning areas during the day.

Curriculum

At BKHS Pre Prep School we believe children learn best through real experiences and active learning. We know children learn at their highest level when at play; therefore, we do not make a distinction between play and work. We provide a daily routine for the children, which provides for Teacher Directed, Adult Initiated and Child Initiated learning opportunities. We support children's learning throughout the Child Initiated and planned play activities and in doing so we ensure children have opportunities to engage and thrive in all aspects and areas of learning.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in Early Years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and interconnected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

Prime Areas:

- Communication and Language (CL)
- Physical Development (PD)
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)

Staff will also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

Specific Areas:

- Literacy (L)
- Mathematics (M)
- Understanding the world (UW)
- Expressive arts and design (EAD)

Planning

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, practitioners 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 challenging and enjoyable experiences. 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.

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice. Staff will give consideration to the following when planning opportunities and interacting with children.

- Communication and Language – The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, story-telling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.
- Physical Development – Physical activity is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives⁷. Gross and fine motor experiences develop incrementally throughout early childhood, starting with

sensory explorations and the development of a child's strength, co-ordination and positional awareness through tummy time, crawling and play movement with both objects and adults. By creating games and providing opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors, adults can support children to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being. Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination, which is later linked to early literacy. Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practice of using small tools, with feedback and support from adults, allow children to develop proficiency, control and confidence.

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development – Children's personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Strong, warm and supportive 9 relationships with adults enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. Children should be supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary. Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently. Through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceably. These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.

There are also four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied:

- Literacy – It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).
- Mathematics – Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. Children should be able to count confidently, develop a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers. By providing frequent and varied opportunities to build and apply this understanding - such as using manipulatives, including small pebbles and tens frames for organising counting - children will develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary from which mastery of mathematics is built. In addition, it is important that the curriculum includes rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures. It is important that children develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, 'have a go', talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.
- Understanding the World – Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range

of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them – from visiting parks, libraries and museums to meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses and firefighters. In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains. Enriching and widening children's vocabulary will support later reading comprehension.

- Expressive Arts and Design – The development of children's artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. The quality and variety of what children see, hear and participate in is crucial for developing their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate through the arts. The frequency, repetition and depth of their experiences are fundamental to their progress in interpreting and appreciating what they hear, respond to and observe. The curriculum is planned through a series of themes that reflect and respond to the children's interests and key texts, offering experiences in all areas of the curriculum and which carry equal importance to provide a broad and balanced curriculum with opportunities for play and child-initiated activities.

The long term plan is currently under development due to the merger of Bablake EYFS and King Henry VIII EYFS. It links closely with the 2021 Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and the Development Matters 2020 document. This is an overarching framework that informs all other stages of planning. It shows the range of experiences and learning opportunities that are available while children are in the early years.

Medium term planning takes the form of a theme based upon the children's interests and around key texts. It is evaluated weekly to respond to other emerging interests that the children may have.

Short term plans select activities based around the medium-term theme as deemed appropriate to meet the needs and interests of the children. Plans are extended and differentiated accordingly.

Planning should provide a clear balance between challenging the most able children in some cases to exceed Early Learning Goals whilst recognising that an attempt to implement the more formal work before a child is ready could damage a child's disposition to learn.

By the end of the Reception year (depending on the cohort), more formal Maths and Literacy lessons will be in place in preparation for children entering Year 1.

Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Practitioners respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

At appropriate opportunities the adults will:

- Promote the children's well-being
- Question, respond to questions and engage the child in extended conversation that support sustained shared thinking
- Extend vocabulary, knowledge and skills
- Encourage independence and responsibility
- Add resources that simulate, motivate and engage the learner
- Demonstrate/model and work alongside children
- Help children to see links in their learning
- Support and encourage
- Encourage children to be problem solvers, problem setters and investigators
- Re-direct play if necessary
- Help children to learn how to negotiate and resolve conflict
- Observe and assess learning
- Record judgements and plan for next steps in learning
- Provide feedback to child/other adult/parents
- Ensure the environment is safe and secure and that safeguarding and welfare requirements are in place.

These include:

- All staff to have a satisfactory DBS check
- All staff to receive regular Child Protection / Safeguarding Training
- All staff to observe parental permission regarding taking photographs of children in the school setting
- All photographs of children enjoying activities to be taken with official school cameras only and staff are not permitted to use personal mobile phones to take photographs.

Children learning EAL

The following best practice principles and guidelines are used to support all children's developing speech, language and communication skills. The following strategies provided for all of our children will also support our children learning EAL:

- All children are entitled to equal access to the whole curriculum.
- Learning and using more than one language is an asset, and is a learning opportunity for both children and adults in the setting.
- Good development of a child's first language has a positive effect on the development of other languages.
- An atmosphere where being able to speak other languages should be truly valued as a positive skill.
- The use of stories, books, rhymes and songs are a vital part of worldwide cultural and linguistic heritage.

We will in practice and provision:

- Ensure we have structures and practice that promotes general best practice in supporting and developing young children's speech, language and communication
- Ask on our application form for home languages and religious cultural information, and find out what sort of learning experiences the child has at home.
- Ensure correct spelling and pronunciation of children's and parents' names.
- Offer a home visit where parents may feel more relaxed and able to talk about their child's strengths and interests, as well as a full range of language skills and experiences.
- If possible, assess a child in their first language, and involve the parents in the assessment process.

- Value children's first language in print, and children's early attempts in mark making in different scripts.
- Recognise that children new to English may need additional adaptations to the learning environment.
- Support staff to find resources, and to find interpreters to support children and families with EAL where necessary. (Eg; google translate for newsletters/information, link with language schools, or other families with the same language).
- Provide lots of experiences and activities that promote language through play, embedding language in the actual and concrete.
- Ensure children learn language in social situations by interacting with adults and other children.
- Offer differentiated and challenging play activities to support language development (storytelling with props). Provide positive imagery ensuring children's home languages and experiences are reflected in the settings resources in order to develop a child's well-being and positive self-image.

For the child, we will:

- Allow children new to English some period of time when they may just listen before they respond, whilst all the time talking to them, observing and monitoring their progress. Understanding is almost always in advance of spoken language; it is important that children should not feel pressurised to speak until they feel confident to do so. It is essential that adults continue to talk to the children, respond to their non-verbal responses and involve them in all aspect of the Early Years setting.
- Plan for children to be included in smaller groups which include children who are fluent English speakers.
- Plan for times when the child can be involved which require little or no English e.g. giving out snacks or drinks at snack time.
- Listen to a child's attempts at communication, and encourage and attempt to interpret what they said.
- Ensure children know survival language. e.g. toilet, hello, goodbye, yes, no, drink, unwell.
- Ensure ALL children have access to all adults (teacher, bilingual workers etc)
- Constantly model language in a variety of situations (formal and informal) and give a running commentary during activities, to support children's understanding and access to appropriate vocabulary.
- Praise ANY attempt by the child to join in conversations (non-verbal, verbal - and give correct words).
- Explain social contexts to children in their own language (through interpreters) so that they feel comfortable with routines and cultural differences when they start at the setting.

For the family, we will:

- Ensure the family still use the home language regularly so that they support their child's learning, well-being and self- image, as well as their developing communication skills in both languages.
- Ensure that parents and families are involved in the setting, community, and share their culture and language with the setting (use bilingual skills for story-telling, labelling, sharing information and artefacts/skills).
- Encourage the sharing of bilingual books between settings and home. Sharing songs and rhymes in home languages reinforces similarities in patterns of languages, and fosters home to settings links. Parents and bilingual staff can help translate favourites such as "twinkle, twinkle, little star" and "heads, shoulders, knees and toes" as well as sharing traditional rhymes and songs.

- Link older siblings so that younger children still have access to their home language within the setting (translation).
- Provide them with information – times, attendance, holidays, lunch/snack, policies, home/setting links – and know that they understand this information.
- Celebrate our children’s families festivals
- Find out about family customs, religion, dress code.
- Ensure we know the pronunciation and spelling of family names.
- Ensure we have an effective method of communication with the family.
- Use the family to gain information to help the child settle – likes/dislikes, routine, strengths/weaknesses (All about me).
- Show properly that they are welcome, and make just as much time for them as we do for English speaking families.
- Ensure parents are given information/made aware of all grant entitlements.

Assessment

At BKHS Pre Prep, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the 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. Practitioners also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

At the end of Reception, 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 or
- Not yet reaching expected levels (‘emerging’)

The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers. Data is also reported to the LA.

Working with Parents

We recognise the huge contribution parents make to their child’s learning and we work hard to develop and sustain a positive partnership. We actively encourage families to be fully involved in the life of the school, offering regular opportunities to visit their child’s class and support the learning which is taking place. This may include sharing a particular interest/expertise and contributing to their learning and assessments.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child’s progress and development. Parent consultations and the EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child’s knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Each child 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 and/or carers in guiding their child’s development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate. We encourage parents to speak to their child’s teacher, key worker or teaching assistant to share any celebrations, concerns or worries.

Safeguarding and welfare procedures

Safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in the School’s Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

We believe that it is vitally important for adults to support children’s learning through play. Practice of all staff is monitored through regular observations, appraisals (alternate years) and Supervision meetings (at least termly). Learning should be personalised by building on the child’s interests and involving them fully in reflecting on what they have learned and

how they may build on their skills. Children will become intrinsically motivated to be lifelong learners.

In accordance with the EYFS Statutory Framework, all staff will be offered a regular meeting (at least once per term) with the Head of Early Years. Supervision meetings will provide opportunities for staff to discuss any issues – particularly concerning children's development or well-being, identify solutions to address issues as they arise and receive coaching to improve their personal effectiveness.

Staffing ratios, supervision and provision

Within the nursery, there are three key groups, each led by a key worker.

Within the Reception, there are 3 classes, two with a full-time teacher and one with two teachers (4 day :1 day split). The teacher takes on the role of the early years key person and is assisted by a class teaching assistant, who all hold a minimum of NVQ level 3 or equivalent qualification).

A very large number of BKHS Pre-Prep School staff hold paediatric first aid qualifications that is approved by the local authority and is consistent with guidance set out in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage. During school hours, from 7:45am until 6:00pm each day, and when any EYFS children are present, there is a trained paediatric first aider on the premises. In addition, a highly qualified trained school nurse is available for contact (based at the Senior School) during peak hours every day of the school term. For all EYFS off site trips and visits at least one qualified paediatric first aider will always be present. A list of staff who hold current first aid qualifications is located by key telephone points and at various other locations around the school.

At all times, staffing arrangements meet the needs of all the children and ensure their safety, including during Pre-care and After-care. Children within our setting are adequately supervised and are usually within the sight and hearing of staff, but always within either sight or hearing. Parents are made aware of staffing arrangements through our introductory evenings for both Nursery and Reception.

During lunchtimes and break times (Reception Summer Term), teachers and other qualified staff are always timetabled for supervision of the children both inside and outside.

Missing Child

Our procedures are designed to ensure that a missing child is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible. If a child was found to be missing, we would carry out the following actions during the working day.

- Check the registers.
- Check with all Nursery/Reception staff and other pupils to see if they know whereabouts of the missing child.
- Check the toilets.
- Check the outdoor area.
- Check with reception staff who will check signing in/out book.
- Inform the senior member of staff on duty – Head of Early Years. Escalate to Head of BKHS PrePrep if Head of Early Years is not present. Escalate to Head of BKHS Bablake Preparatory if necessary.
- Occupy all of the other children in their classroom as necessary.
- Arrange for one or more adults to search the school grounds.
- Take another register to ensure all of the other children are accounted for.

- Inform the Head of PrePrep / DSL.
- Head of PrePrep to ring the child's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. Ask them to come to school immediately.
- DSL/Head of PrePrep to notify the Police.
- DSL to inform local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and the school's Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- School to cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the local authority.
- Head of PrePrep to contact Chair of Governors.
- The school's insurers to be informed.
- If the pupil is found injured, a report would be made under RIDDOR to the Health and Safety Executive(HSE).

During the course of the investigation into the missing pupil, the school, in consultation with the LADO, will decide what information should be given to other parents, staff and other pupils and how press enquiries will be dealt with.

A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the pupil was found would be made for the incident report. If appropriate, procedures would be adjusted.

Uncollected child

If a child is not collected from school by the end of the day, the child will be kept safely within Aftercare provision within the Nursery. Two members of staff will be present and will continue to attempt to contact the child's listed emergency contacts until 7pm. If no contact can be made, the senior member of staff will contact the relevant Local Authority, see pages 2 and 3 of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Mobile Phones and cameras

Schools recognise that the taking of photos is an important part of recording children's educational progress particularly during the coronavirus pandemic when online platforms are being more widely used to connect with parents.

EYFS staff are not permitted to use their personal mobile phone devices or cameras in school to take photographs or videos of the children. Staff must use school mobile phones and iPads to take photographs or videos of the children. Best practice dictates that photographs of pupils taken for a school-related purpose by staff should only be taken on school equipment. Parent consent is gained prior to photographs and videos being done. This is usually done at the start of the first term. The school does liaise with the Marketing team.

The schools don't permit parents or visitors to use mobile devices or cameras to photograph or record pupils. Prior permission must be sought by the Head.

Staff who wish to take and/or use photographs or videos of pupils must satisfy themselves that parental permission has been gained. Staff who act in breach of this may be subject to disciplinary action.

EYFS staff will not carry personal mobile phones while working. They may use their personal mobile phone during break and lunch times in an agreed area not used by children (EYFS staff rooms and main staffroom).

Administering of Medicines

The school will try to co-operate with parents in the giving of medicines where it is necessary during the school day. This facility is intended mainly to help where a child needs to complete a course of medication, i.e antibiotics, or where treatment for ongoing conditions is needed frequently, e.g. use of an inhaler. Medicines can be handed to the class teacher or teaching assistant on arrival at school, these should be prescribed medicines and be clearly named with written instructions confirming dosage and time. This information should also be filled in on an Administration of Medicine form by the parent. Medicines will be stored in a fridge (not accessible by the children) in both the Nursery and the Reception building where required. On administering medicine, staff will complete the school's medical forms stating medicine, time, dose etc and this is then signed by the parents on collection of their child and medicine at the end of the day. Parents are asked to give written permission for the administration of non-prescribed medicines, such as Calpol or Piriton in emergencies. In addition, the school will always telephone the parents of a child who requires this medication to gain verbal permission in this instance.

Severe Allergies

Prescribed, clearly named, EpiPens are kept inside a locked cupboard in the medical room. Care plans must be completed by parents for relevant children.

Confidential and Health Information Forms

Confidential and health information forms are sent out for parents to complete. They ask for details of known medical conditions as well as address and contact numbers. The parent will sign consent at the end of the form for their child to receive lifesaving treatment in their absence.

These forms must go with the child to A+E, doctors etc., if anyone but their parent takes them.

Details are extracted from these forms and written onto class lists to inform staff of any medical information. Forms for the whole school are kept to hand by the Office.

Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by S Robinson (Head of Early Years) every two years.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

Updated by S Robinson (September 2021)

Next update: July 2023