

Bitham Brook Primary School Foundation Stage offer

What underpins our thinking in the care, development and learning of our youngest children?

Child development

Learning is a rewarding and enjoyable experience in which they explore, investigate, discover, create, practise, rehearse, repeat, revise and consolidate their developing knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes through activities that interest them. We recognise and support children's individual learning and communication styles.

Inclusive practice

We encourage children to recognise their own unique qualities and the characteristics they share with others. We actively promote equal opportunities for all and anti discriminatory practice ensuring all families feel valued safe and included. Where additional support is needed we ask for services or support for children and their families. We help children to make and keep good friends.

Keeping safe

We allow children to do the things they can for themselves, we help with the things they can't quite manage and do the things they can't do for themselves. We demonstrate clear and consistent boundaries and are reasonable with expectations discussing with parents about how they can support this consistent approach. We take action to follow up concerns from or about children.

Health and well being

We find ways to offer care, nurture and learning to match the needs of the child. We work in partnership with all adults who may be able to contribute to this. We acknowledge mobility and movement are a very important part of their development and offer play in safe and secure environments. We have a balance of activity and rest and encourage a healthy interest in their own bodies. We are vigilant for signs of child abuse.

Respecting each other

Discussions between parents and professionals begin prior to seeking admission, where every mutual interaction is based on caring professional relationships and respectful acknowledgement of the feelings of children and their families. This way we can share timely concerns.

Parents as partners

We respect diversity, value communication, and we recognise parents and practitioners can learn a lot from each other. We encourage adults to use friendly greetings in children's own languages, and have an open door policy where parents can talk about their child's progress informally and formally. Where necessary we provide support for parents whose first language is not English. We ask parents for their views on the service we provide.

Supporting learning

We systematically help children to learn so that they make connections in their learning. We encourage perseverance to take risks and make mistakes, and friendly, lively approaches to support children with motivation. We model active listening to children at all times, pitch learning at levels which is always appropriately demanding, identify moments to intervene or leave and model being a learner. We continually strive to update every adult who comes into contact with the children so we are a team of knowledgeable professionals.

Key person

We ensure children make secure attachments to the regular adults who share care for them in the unit. We encourage independence when a child feels happy and secure, although we recognise some children may need to develop a close bond with one key person to begin with. We support children's transition into and out of the unit, meeting individual needs as necessary.

Observation, planning and assessment

Planning for the long term shows how the seven aspects of learning are delivered over the course of a year. Medium term planning focuses on topics which are likely to be of interest to groups of young children although we recognise it is effective practice to build on children's own interests and unexpected events. A balance of independence over their own learning can be maintained whilst control of the curriculum is retained. Each child's learning and development is supported. Regular formative assessment in the form of daily observations show what the children are interested in, what they can do and what they need to learn for further achievement. These regular assessments will involve parents as part of the ongoing process. Summary assessments which gather evidence of observations contribute to the EYFS profile which summarises a child's achievement as they leave FS2.

A C.A.F. (common assessment framework) may be used where a child has additional needs and is a standardised assessment giving a fuller picture of the child's needs at any one time.

Supporting every child

We try to meet every child's physical and emotional needs to provide experiences which are predictable and challenging so they feel comfortable to take on new play and learning opportunities. We plan to provide appropriate realistic first hand experiences that build on children's interests. We maintain a clear view of the learning required by each child and provide extra support or challenge where needed.

The learning environment

Well planned play which supports the children's interests, both indoors and outdoors is a key way in which young children learn with enjoyment and challenge. The indoor, outdoor and emotional environments are interlinked and provide opportunities for children to contribute to the planning of the layout, and discussing behaviour, risk and the safety of others. We acknowledge how each environment supports children's learning and development. We try to provide for free-flow between indoor and outdoor environments daily.

The wider context

Preparing children and adults for transition into and out of the setting is thorough with parents being informed in advance about what will happen. Parents are consulted at all times about decisions which affect their children. Effective relationships are in place with local pre-school providers, and where children come from further afield, ways of effectively communicating with parents/providers are established. The local community is valued and recognised for its contribution to the development of our children. We maintain good relationships with professional outreach services.

Play and exploration

We know children explore, develop and re-enact learning that helps them make sense of the world. Flexible use of physical and human resources to facilitate play and exploration, appropriate intervention, valuing all children's play and different approaches to it are key to enabling all children to access play. Language and communication is developed and extended through adult involvement in the experience and contexts for learning. We provide a balance of adult-directed, adult initiated and child-initiated play, in a secure environment with effective adult support to help children achieve their highest level. During the Foundation Stage, all of the areas of learning are brought together effectively through playing and talking.

Active learning

In the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, so that as many as possible achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage. Some children progress beyond this point. Children are actively involved in their own personalised learning for significant periods each day. Interesting, accessible and attractive resources are available for children's own lines of enquiry so that they have independence and control over their well being and involvement.

Creativity and critical thinking

In the balance of adult led and child initiated activities, and in order to make connections to transform understanding, we value the process as much as the end product. We support to clarify and extend children's thinking, ensuring there is opportunity to think creatively and imaginatively whilst communicating with others as they investigate or solve problems. We expect to see creativity in all areas of the curriculum.

Why do we teach....

Communication and language

We want children to speak and listen in different situations and for different reasons listening and responding with relevant comments, questions or actions, and giving attention to what others say while engaged in another activity. We want them to be able to follow instructions involving several ideas and answer 'how' and 'why' questions about their experiences, or in response to stories and events. We want them to use past present and future forms accurately when talking about past or future events. We want them to develop their own narratives and explanations when connecting ideas.

Physical development

We want children to show good control and co-ordination in large and small movements, negotiating space confidently and how to handle tools and equipment, including pencils, effectively. We want them to know about the importance for good health of physical exercise, a healthy diet and talk about ways to keep safe. We want them to manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs including dressing and toileting.

Personal, social and emotional development

We want children to be confident to try new activities and say why they like some activities more than others. We want them to show they are confident to speak in a familiar group about their ideas and get the resources they need for an activity asking for help when they need it. In managing their behaviour they show they understand why some behaviour is unacceptable and what the consequences are. We want them to talk about their own and others' feelings. We want them to work as part of a group or class, playing co-operatively, turn taking and adjusting their behaviour in different situations taking changes of routine in their stride. We want them to show sensitivity to others ideas, needs and feelings and form positive relationships with adults and children.

Literacy

We want children to read and understand simple sentences using phonic knowledge to decode regular words and their memory to recall common irregular words. We want them to talk about what they have read demonstrating they have understood it. In writing we want them to use their phonic knowledge to write words in ways that match their spoken sounds. They will write some irregular words and simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others.

Mathematics

We want children to notice numbers in the real world and how they are used. We want children to count from 1-20, lay numbers in order, and say which number is one more or less. We want them to use real objects to add and subtract numbers to 9, to solve problems and use the language which will help them communicate their mathematical thinking. We want them to double, halve and share numbers. We want them to understand about size, shape, quantity and measures in real contexts.

Understanding the world

We want them to talk about past and present events in their own lives and those of family members. We want them to know other children don't always enjoy the same things and be sensitive to this. We want them to know what things are the same and different between them, others, families, communities and traditions, places, objects, materials, and living things. We want them to recognise features of their environment and how environments might vary. We want them to make observations of plants and animals explain why some things occur and talk about change. We want them to recognise a range of technology is used in homes and schools and select technology to use for a particular purpose.

Expressive arts and design

We want children to make music, sing songs, and dance and experiment with ways of changing them. We want them to use and safely explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques experimenting with colour, design, texture form and function. We want them to use what they have found out about media and materials in original ways thinking about use and purpose to represent their own ideas, thoughts and feelings through design, technology, art, music, dance, role-play and stories.

We teach this through

- An annual cycle of three main topics linked to whole school themes covering the three prime and four specific areas of learning where all aspects of learning will have a focus during the year.
- Half termly topics based on seven areas of learning of Foundation Stage subject to children's interests and which can be flexible.
- Weekly plans incorporating the seven areas of learning based on objectives from EYFS guidance taught through continuous play provision, child initiated tasks and teacher directed tasks, the balance of which will change as the year progresses.