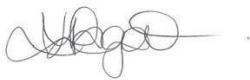


Early Years Policy

Reviewed By	Approved By	Date of Approval	Date of Next Review
Ed Whitehead	 Jo Pagdin	11.07.2024	01.09.2025



Introduction

At Oakworth Primary School the Early Years applies to children from three years of age to the end of the Reception year. This includes a 15 hour Nursery, 30 hour Nursery and 2 form entry Reception. Lead by the Assistant Head, the staff ensure continuity of provision and progression across the Early Years. We ensure that all children learn in a challenging and stimulating environment, in a way that is always appropriate to their age and stage of development. Children join Foundation Stage 1 in September both 15 hour and 30 hour Nursery places are at capacity for the year. In Foundation 2 Reception there is capacity of 60 places.

The Foundation Stage is important in its own right, it is the child's first experience of education and research has shown that it is crucial in setting positive attitudes towards learning and achievement. It is a period of rapid growth and development during which children discover a great deal about the world and themselves. Staff:child ratio meets national guidelines.

The Early Learning Goals set out what is expected of most children by the end of the Foundation Stage.

Principles

The Early Years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- The education of birth - 5 year olds is valid in its own right.
- Young children should feel safe and secure.
- Early years children should have a wide and rich programme.
- Young children learn best through doing and talking.
- Parents of young children are the prime educators.
- Staff teach young children best through communicating and modelling language, showing, explaining, demonstrating, exploring ideas, encouraging, questioning, recalling, providing a narrative for what children are doing, facilitating and setting challenges.
- The right curriculum is based on observing children, assessing what they can do and providing direct experiences which help them to build on their achievements.
- Young children are entitled to full physical, intellectual, linguistic, emotional and social development.
- No child should be excluded or disadvantaged because of his or her race, culture or religion, home language, family background, special educational needs, disability, gender or ability.
- Children are entitled to decent buildings, generous space indoors and out, sufficiently qualified teachers and practitioners and good quality equipment and materials.

Our Philosophy

At Oakworth Primary School we believe that:

- Children are active and independent learners.
- Early years children learn best in a stimulating, exciting and enjoyable environment. One in which they can direct their own learning through carefully planned play experiences and have fun!
- Children should learn in an environment where they can succeed.
- Each child knows that they are valued and that each other's background is understood, respected and reflected in the setting. From this basis every child can maintain and develop a confident and positive self-image, which is the foundation of a happy and successful life.
- Each child is an individual and children are encouraged to share their own experiences.
- Promoting a positive relationship with parents has a positive effect on the child's achievements, gaining insight into the child's abilities by valuing the parent as the child's primary educator.
- Children need to build on what they already know and are given the opportunities to do this.
- Children need the opportunity to develop their imagination and learn through play.
- Adults in the setting are valued as an important resource, and that sensitive interaction, observation and assessment will ensure that the children achieve their potential.
- Oakworth superpowers of resilience, teamwork, discovery, respect, challenge and kindness are key characteristics that we instil in children to prepare them for later in life.

Aims of the Early Years

Our developed curriculum at Oakworth Primary School underpins all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children's:

Prime Areas

- Personal Social and Emotional development
- Communication and language
- Physical Development

Specific Areas

- Literacy
- Maths
- Expressive Arts and Design
- Understanding of the World

Teaching and Learning Style

At Oakworth Primary School we have adopted a free flow provision approach to the classroom organisation. Resources are organised to provide a wide range of areas of provision, each promoting learning opportunities across the areas of learning. These areas of provision form the basis of our Early Years Curriculum.

Throughout the Foundation Stage children are encouraged to play, explore, experiment and find out new things about the world. Children move between areas of provision, both indoor and outdoor, on their own initiative. This reduces the need for adult management and gives staff the time to provide a good balance between adult initiated activities and quality interactions whilst supporting children's spontaneous play. Provision is adapted to meet the children's needs and interests through enhancements to the areas to ensure further learning is addressed.

In Foundation stage 1, children have time to access provision independently as well as access to short class carpet times. This supports children in developing a clear routine, improve their listening and attention skills and confidence to share within their group. These sessions throughout the week consist of maths activities, singing, stories, phonics and time for conversation. Children also have their snack time altogether and complete weekly cooking sessions to develop their PSED skills, health and self-care and communication and language.

In foundation 2 the children are moving towards a day with more structure. Within the first term the children build up to daily Phonics, Maths and Literacy sessions. Throughout the week they have opportunities to show their learning independently in the provision as well as through tasks. The children are also exposed to a range of engaging books, songs, drama and real life experiences.

Inclusion in the Early Years

At Oakworth Primary School we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their potential. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children so that most of the children are achieving the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence.
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs.
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively.
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued.
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping.
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills
- Monitoring children's progress and making reasonable adjustments to the curriculum to provide support as necessary.
- Using our nurture team to support with children and meet their needs where appropriate.

The Early Years Curriculum

The curriculum for the Early Years in our school reflects the areas of learning identified in the 'Development Matters' documentation showing clear progression to the Early Learning Goals which provide the basis for our planning. Our long term plans provide the topic coverage for throughout the year and then feeds into the medium term plans providing more detail into the aspects of learning to create our curriculum. Weekly short term plans then details any enhancements to or any current changes of the areas of provision and adult focused activities relating to literacy, maths and wider curriculum subject activities.

Assessment

At Oakworth Primary School we see assessment in Early Years as a way of gathering information that will help us to enhance the education of the children. We are committed to making this process a positive experience for the child, not a process whereby the child feels tested or 'a failure'. The assessments are gathered during usual classroom routine and are recorded in a positive way to inform staff and parents of the child's achievements.

Our assessment process includes:

Prior to the children starting families are invited to the school to meet staff in an informal setting. At these meetings parents can begin to share their knowledge of the child.

Individual learning journeys are then started after the initial meeting and are ongoing throughout Foundation Stage. Observational evidence is gathered in the form of photographs, narrative and quotes from the children.

All the children's observations are levelled using the EYFS Development Matters. This enables staff to ensure progression is being made across the curriculum. Teaching staff then use their teacher judgment reflecting on their on-going observations to create summative assessments for their class. Classes can be monitored separately or as a whole cohort. Staff can then identify any strengths or areas of development, adjusting our provision accordingly.

On entry assessment

Assessments are gathered as part of everyday practice: observations, interactions and every day activities. These outcomes are levelled against the 'Development Matters descriptors'. In foundation 2 the staff also complete the 'Government Baseline Assessment' following the outlined rules and procedures set in the guidance.

Exit assessment

At the end of foundation 2, the children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals and data is transferred to the local authority within the specified timeline. The data is analysed to identify any strengths and areas of development and reflected upon to support the transition through school. Meetings are held termly with the SLT team to discuss the gathered data is used to identify strengths and areas for development and reflected upon to adjust provision accordingly.

Moderation

Regular internal moderation and moderation between schools in the Bronte Academy Trust takes place throughout the year. Foundation 2 teachers are expected to attend the statutory moderation meetings held each year by the local authority.

The Role of Parents

We believe that all parents have an important role to play in the education of their child. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating children.

We do this through:

- Inviting families to a 'welcome' meetings prior to them starting Oakworth Primary School.
- All parents are invited to spend time with their child in school throughout the year.
- Staff are available every day, particularly at the beginning and end of the session, to talk to parents. This offers regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in the foundation stage. It also ensures that any minor concerns or worries are addressed quickly before they escalate.
- Parents evening sessions are held twice throughout the year.

- The child's individual Learning Journey includes and informs the parent about the child's achievements. They encourage collaboration between child, school and parents by detailing activities that support the child's learning in a way that is appropriate to the child's age and stage of development. Parents are invited to 'drop in' sessions where they can spend time sharing their child's learning journey with them.
- When children leave foundation 1 and foundation 2, parents receive a report on the child's attainment and progress.

Resources

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. Resources are displayed so that children can make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning. Equipment and resources are stored on open shelving in clearly labelled storage. Labels have a range of words and pictures to support with the early stages of reading and support children in developing their independence to tidy up after themselves in the classroom environment. All equipment is regularly checked and cleaned to ensure continued high quality, hygienic and safe.