



Bentfield Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Introduction

At Bentfield Primary School the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) consists of all the children within the Nursery and Reception. Within the Nursery, children are able to start the term before they are three, and can have full time or part time places (which can either be self-funded or when parents are in receipt of free childcare funding for three-year-olds). We offer five places for those in receipt of funding for two-year-olds; these sessions take place in the afternoon sessions. The children in Reception start school in September of the academic year they turn five. We have a two-week staggered start for our children in Reception and then the children attend full school days. Children can join the EYFS at any point if places are available; for reception places parents must enquire through Essex County Council admissions.

Principles

Within the EYFS there are four overarching principles:

- A Unique child
- Positive relationships
- Enabling environments
- Learning and development

A Unique child

At Bentfield Primary School we recognise that all children are **consistently learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured**. We are aware that every child develops in individual ways and at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration/sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of differences. All children at Bentfield Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school; we believe that all our children matter.

In the EYFS we give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking into account our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning. We ensure that we meet the needs of different genders, 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 taking action to provide support as necessary

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to help children understand why boundaries and rules exist using the school rules 'Ready, respectful and safe'. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children (see our school's Child Protection Policy).

Welfare

At Bentfield we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2025.

We understand that we are required to:

- implement policies and procedures to safeguard children
- promote the welfare of children
- promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill
- manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs
- ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so
- ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
- ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs
- maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

Positive relationships

At Bentfield Primary School we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our Nursery or Reception Class
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts Nursery and Reception classes
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our Nursery and Reception Classes during parents evening or on request
- sharing photos and clips of their child's learning through Tapestry, where parents are provided the opportunity to comment on their child's development
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents, e.g. Glitter Morning, assemblies, picnics, visits, sports day etc.

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 our school the teachers and teaching assistants/nursery nurses act as a 'Key Person' to all children in the Foundation Stage.

Enabling Environments

At Bentfield Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning. There is also a key focus on preparing our children for the next stage in their learning and development.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. These observations are recorded on Tapestry or within their books using observation stickers. There are opportunities for parents to comment on these.

The EYFS framework provides a long term plan to follow by ensuring that all Early Learning Goals are covered throughout the academic year. Long term planning has been created within school to make sure all children receive a broad and balanced curriculum throughout their two years within the EYFS. Curriculum planning within Key Stage One has also been considered so children are prepared for their next steps in their school journey. Medium term planning is created and takes into account the individual children's learning and developmental needs.

At the end of each EYFS academic year, we provide a written report to parents, reporting their progress against the 7 areas of development and recommending next steps towards their development. When making the transition to KS 1 indication will be made to whether children are either meeting expected levels of development or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). This is the EYFS Profile. We give a reasonable opportunity for the parents to discuss these judgements with the teacher.

Learning and Development

At Bentfield Primary School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are interconnected.

Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning 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

There are seven areas of learning and development. 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. These three areas, the prime areas, are:

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social and emotional development

We also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

- literacy
- mathematics
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design

All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

The Learning Environment

The EYFS classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The classroom is set up enabling children to be able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. Each EYFS classroom has its own enclosed outdoor area. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children opportunities to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all 7 areas of learning.

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play alongside both child and adult initiated activities. We believe that play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults.

Teaching and Learning Style

We ensure that the features of effective teaching and learning are inherent throughout our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in the EYFS just as much as they do to the teaching in Key Stage 1 and 2. Features that relate to the EYFS are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement
- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching
- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations
- the relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school and when moving on to their next setting

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teachers to follow the principles stated in this policy. There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. This Governor will discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners regularly and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion. The Head teacher and Senior Leadership Team will carry out regular monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.