



Early Years
Foundation Stage
Policy

January 2021

Aims in EYFS:

To give each child a happy, positive, fun and educationally exciting start to their school life in which they can establish firm foundations to achieve and flourish as they develop a love of learning.

To offer a range of new and exciting experiences and opportunities to develop, explore, risk take and challenge, and learn new skills both in a group and individual basis.

To enable each child with support, encouragement and high expectations, to be the best they can be and reach their full potential.

To encourage children to be independent learners and set standards for this as they move along the school.

To support children in building secure and positive relationships with peers and adults through the development of social and communication skills.

To identify, support and make each child aware of their own strengths and achievements and to instil confidence in all to promote self-esteem from a young age.

EYFS Curriculum:

The Foundation classes follow the curriculum as outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) document.

The framework includes seven areas of learning and development, with the three prime areas including:

*Communication and Language – Listening and Attention, Understanding and Speaking

*Physical Development – Moving and Handling, Health and Self Care

*Personal, Social and Emotional Development – Making Relationships, Manage Feelings and behaviour and Self-confidence and self-awareness

The four specific areas include:

*Literacy – Reading and Writing

*Mathematics – Number and Shape, Space and Measure

*Understanding the World – People and communities, Technology, and The world

*Expressive Art and Design – Exploring and using Media and Materials, and Being Imaginative.

Teaching Strategies:

As children enter Foundation Stage at Beckers Green there is a big emphasis on Continuous Provision for all children, encouraging their independence and free choice in accessing all areas of the classroom and learning environments. Children have free choice to move around the class and what they access and adults will encourage independence in this, ensuring there is a balance of child led and adult initiated activities and tasks across the day. Adults may ask children to complete a task with them and other times adults will join in with a child's game or play to support, build on and further their learning and understanding. Teachers and learning support assistants will carry out observations to assess children's learning, these take place during adult guided tasks and children's play within continuous provision.

More formal focus teaching for Maths and Literacy will start after October half term and will gradually increase so that by the end of the Summer Term the teaching will include full focus mornings and continuous provision in the afternoons in preparation for transition in to year one.

Play:

Learning through play is an important part of the EYFS curriculum at Beckers Green. Children will learn best and in more depth through activities and tasks which are of interest to them and which excite and give desire for the children to use. Where possible, children's interests will be a starting point for learning and activities and experiences can be planned as a result of this. Children are also advised of new topics, asking for their prior knowledge so that teaching can be adapted for each child depending on their previous knowledge.

Through play, children build upon their previous knowledge and skills learnt, improve social and communication skills, develop problem solving and risk taking skills and broaden their understanding of new topics and experiences. It is important that adults take an active role in child initiated play by observing, modelling, scaffolding and being involved and extending children's play.

It is important that the activities on offer in the EYFS classrooms are inspiring, inviting, exciting and engaging, and we believe the opportunities should be hands on and exploratory, allowing children to become fully involved in activities as a way of ensuring they learn to their full potential. Children will engage in hands on practical activities such as peeling, cutting and tasting fruits and vegetables when learning about The World, making lotions and potions when they become mini scientists, and

building their own obstacle courses to blow pompoms round when they become the Big Bad Wolf within the Traditional Tales topic.

Teaching:

Teaching includes both direct and indirect experiences and an appropriate balance of focus and continuous provision learning is carefully planned to support all needs of the children in the class. Focus tasks will be differentiated to meet learning needs and related to what areas and stages each child is working at within the EYFS curriculum. A daily timetable is set in each class with routines in place to ensure all children feel safe and secure in the classrooms, knowing what to expect and when. This will set times for certain activities and learning opportunities to take place, for example focus learning such as writing, maths and art and phonic sessions. These may be in small groups or as part of a whole class learning opportunity. These group sessions support learning habits such as sitting quietly on the carpet, learning as a group, listening to the teacher for example, all things needed as they move across the school, which can be built upon in EYFS.

Stories and books are shared throughout the day and at the end of each school day, we feel it is important to spend this time delving in to a story book and exploring different tales. It is important that children have the opportunities to read and to listen to different stories, traditional, fiction and non-fiction and this will support a love of stories as a prelude to other areas of learning. Each child has their own book bag for taking home their reading book and sharing story book and we have a vast amount of books to enjoy in our designated reading areas in both classes, along with high quality picture books in the school library.

Reading and phonics:

Children in EYFS will begin their journey of learning to read when they start school. They take part in activities that allow them to play with different sounds and words, including rhyme and alliteration. Children take part in a daily phonics lesson, learning sounds, knowledge and skills that they need to learn to read. We follow the Letters and Sounds phonics programme and children learn to orally blend and segment as they learn the sounds that letters of the alphabet make. As they become confident with these new skills, they explore reading cvc words, building up their confidence and competence to read captions and simple sentences. Our Bug Club reading scheme compliments the structure that we use to teach phonics and the two go hand in hand – children practice their new skills on a daily basis through formal teaching and continuous provision activities. It is so exciting to see children start their reading journey, the successes of learning letter sounds, reading words, having their first reading book and finally, becoming an early reader. Children will bring home a weekly sharing picture book to share with someone at home, along with a reading activity based on their reading journey – this begins with picture cards to practice their oral blending and then segmenting skills, activities to practice initial sounds, and

then word cards to develop skills of reading words linked to the sounds they have learnt in phonics. As confidence, skills and ability develop, children will move on to the reading scheme and will bring home reading books to share and practice with at home. Again these books will contain sounds that the child has learnt in school, as a way of developing and mastering the sounds they have learnt. Children also have access to books linking to their stage in phonics via the Active Learn reading website to use online books and quizzes at home.

Outdoor Learning:

We are incredibly lucky to have a wonderful Copse on the school site, and children in EYFS have access to weekly sessions throughout the school year with our Outdoor Learning lead. Children will go out in all weathers (aside from high winds as per risk assessments) and will take part in open ended, nature activities, which can include minibeast hunts, bird spotting, den building but also includes rolling down the muddy ditch, running across the bridge, climbing the tree house and swinging on the rope bridge! We ask that children bring in a change of clothes and wellies to allow them to become at one with nature and not worry about getting clothes or shoes muddy. At Beckers Green we say there is no such thing as bad weather, but rather bad clothing!

Planning:

Topics are a great way of engaging children in their learning and to encourage them to reach their full potential, learning new information and to embed their current knowledge. Each half term the foundation classes have a new topic and these range from 'All about Me' to "Animals and Creatures and 'Traditional Tales'. Children are encouraged to give ideas as to what they would like to learn about and teachers take these into account when planning, including any prior knowledge as a way of developing individuals, after all children learn best when they are involved and excited to learn.

Teachers plan for the indoor and outdoor classrooms on a weekly basis and this includes any observations and focus learning opportunities that will take place. Topic webs can be found on the school website and are available to parents to give information on what their child will be learning and experiencing within the half term to allow collaborative learning at home and at school. Input for planning is encouraged from all staff in the Foundation Stage team, including teachers, LSA's and PE staff. A cross-curricular approach takes place, for example linking Outdoor Learning sessions to the weekly or half termly topic.

Visits and Visitors:

Where appropriate, we invite visitors into our school and plan school trips to support the topics we are learning about. This could include visits from the a mother and baby when learning about 'The World and Growing' or a school trip out to a local

farm to link with 'Animals and Creatures'. These opportunities help to support and widen children's experiences in the real world and supports learning through the use of concrete objects and real experiences. We may seek parental support on trips out to ensure we adhere to a ratio of 1:4. Trips out may be awarded as a reward within school, for good behaviour and PE awards for example. Prior notice is always given and parental permission will be needed before any child is taken off of school premises. Full risk assessments are carried out to ensure high quality safeguarding for all children and adults attending.

Classroom Organisation:

The foundation stage classes have defined learning areas within them and resources and equipment are clearly labelled to ensure they can be easily accessed by staff and children, to encourage independence in children's learning, and to ensure children develop respect for learning materials and the classroom. Each class is set up appropriately for the children's needs and includes well resourced self select writing and maths area, art and craft areas, book corners full to burst with high quality materials, an engaging role play area linked to the half termly topic, a small world area, funky fingers and Practical Life area to develop fine motor and manual dexterity and construction area. The outside area also reflects the indoor classroom where larger scaled equipment is used to reflect indoor practice. Each day is planned for and different, high quality and exploratory activities and resources are set up in the different learning areas. Children are encouraged to be involved in the setting up of areas and activities, for example, role play and small world areas, and are encouraged to be responsible in keeping the classroom safe and organised for all to work in.

The outdoor area is a vital part of the EYFS curriculum and we believe it is important that children have ample opportunities to spend as much time outside as they can. We operate a free flow system where children can choose to be inside or outside for as long as possible and across the two classrooms via the bifold door. The outdoor area can be used to reflect the indoor classroom and the activities on offer, often using large scale materials and resources to widen knowledge and understanding and offer as many learning opportunities as possible, and most importantly, developing their gross motor movements and muscles, upper arm muscles for example needed for writing. Each child has their own labelled tray and coat peg within the cloak room and we encourage children to take responsibility for keeping their items, clothing and book bags safe.

Assessments and observations:

Observations are an integral part of the daily routine in the Foundation Stage and play an important part of understanding each child's achievement, learning and development within all areas of the EYFS curriculum. Specific observations are set

by the class teacher and include the teacher and LSA observing children on an individual and group basis within different areas of the classrooms, depending on the curriculum area being observed. The observations build up a picture of each individual child and these are uploaded to Tapestry, an online Learning Journey, in which parents have access to, and can add their own observations from home.

When children start at school, a baseline assessment is completed to gauge their entry level within the EYFS curriculum and helps to plan for all children's individual needs, understanding what stage of development they currently are at and how they can be fully supported to develop during their time in EYFS. At the end of Foundation stage, all children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals and the teacher sets whether the child has met the Early Learning Goals: emerging, expected or exceeding according to statements set by the Government. This information is passed on to the next teacher to allow a smooth transition and understanding of their educational needs, to ensure individual learning needs are met and continued as they move throughout the school.

Parents and Carers:

We believe that a strong and positive relationship with our parents is key to supporting each child in school and we encourage parents to be involved in their children's learning, progress and development within the Foundation Stage. Teachers and LSA staff are available at the beginning and end of each day to communicate with parents, pass messages on and give information on each child, but are able to communicate via the telephone for those parents who are unable to drop off or pick up their children. Tapestry is also used to communicate appropriately with parents and allows parents an insight in to their child's learning and development during their days at school. Parents are encouraged to take an active role in their child's time in EYFS and visits in to school and uploads to Tapestry by parents and carers are encouraged.

Transition meetings are held before starting the school, along with nursery and home visits to meet the class teacher to ensure a positive relationship is forming from the start - starting school can be an exciting but apprehensive journey for parents and carers and so supporting adults is something we feel is as important as supporting children to settle. This allows children and parents to feel comfortable and at ease as they join Beckers Green, allowing a smooth transition in to school and the first part of their educational journey.

We encourage parents to join their child in class each half term for Outcome Afternoons, when time is given for them to take part in the daily routine with their child, sharing activities and resources and having the opportunity to look at their children's books and meet with teaching staff in an informal manner. All parents, carers, grandparents and family members are encouraged to attend these afternoons.

Parent's evenings are held twice a year to discuss the learning and progress of each individual child and these are arranged at a time to meet the needs of all parents. Parents and Carers are encouraged to attend sporting events, Christmas shows and Fayre's throughout the school year, including Mother's Day afternoon tea and Father's day Outdoor Learning event.

Health and Safety and Safeguarding:

To meet their full potential in school, it is vital that children are learning in a safe environment and this is something which we take very seriously at Beckers Green.

Risk assessments are carried out within the school to ensure that any potential risks and hazards are taken into account and appropriate safety measures are put in place to safeguard the children and staff within the Foundation Stage team. We encourage children to risk take both inside and outside, and this is done under supervision to ensure children are kept safe at all times.

Members of staff do not use their mobile phones in the classroom and all have appropriate health and safety, first aid and safeguarding training and this is kept up to date. Staff take photos of the children on the class Ipads to support observations and assessments. These photographs are used within their individual learning journeys and class displays. All parents are asked to give permission for their child's photos to be used on the school website for example on entry to the school. Photographs are not used elsewhere without consent from parents.

Our school is a healthy school and this is reflected in the snacks on offer to the children. The foundation stage classes operate a rolling, self-service snack system, in which both classes have a snack area for 4 children to sit at, at any given time. The self-service snack is open throughout the morning and afternoon sessions and allows for children to access this, which contains milk, water, and a different snack each day, when they wish to, depending on their own personal needs. We believe this is important so as not to interrupt children's flow of learning and play by dictating when snack time is, and to meet the needs of all children by allowing them to eat and drink when they wish to. Practical skills are taught as children start at school, such as pouring their own drinks, cutting their own fruit and spreading their own crackers and bread and independence in these skills are encouraged by all members of staff. Children are shown how to use equipment safely and appropriately, and the skills needed to keep themselves safe, cleaning up spillages for example. Children take such pride in their own successes of making their own snack and this is delightful to see.

We take accidents seriously and parents are informed via phone call or a school ping if a child bangs their head. We have named first aiders in both EYFS classes, including both EYFS teachers, and they are always available throughout the day in case of an emergency.

If a child has a toileting accident they will be changed in an open area with two members of staff present to ensure children and staff are safeguarded and protected. Parents are informed of any accidents .

Play and learning equipment are checked daily to ensure it is of high quality and safe for all children to use and access. Materials and resources are replaced when needed.

Fire drills occur regularly to ensure children understand the routine in case of an emergency. Children are supported and encouraged to become aware of the fire drill routine to keep themselves and others safe.

We follow a separate policy for Child Protection and all members of staff are trained in this.

Jan 2021