



Bethersden Primary School

Dedicated to Excellence

EARLY YEARS POLICY

November 2019

Date of ratification by the Governing Body:

Date for review: November 2020

Dates of review: No changes November 2020

1. Aim

At Bethersden Primary School we adhere to the guidance stated in The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage April 2017. As stated in the framework we seek to provide the best possible start in education including quality and consistency, a secure foundation, partnership working including parents and equality of opportunity. In addition to this, here at Bethersden Primary School we are '*an inclusive learning community Dedicated to Excellence*' and in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) we strive to support, nurture and inspire children to achieve their own personal excellence understanding that in order for a child to make good progress in their learning we must ensure that their wellbeing is supported in a nurturing environment.

2. Curriculum

According to the 'Good Practice in Early Education' Research Report, January 2017, good practice in relation to curriculum planning includes approaches that are:

- Tailored to individual needs
- Capitalise on children's interests in order to achieve excellent learning outcomes
- Flexible and responsive so that plans are changed or adapted to follow the interests of the children and respond to external events
- Informed by on-going assessment
- Grounded in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework.

All of these approaches support our vision and values:

'A community where all members are valued equally and treated fairly according to their needs; cultural, religious or social background and are given the richest possible opportunities to develop their own personal excellence.'

The EYFS Framework

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development.

Specific Areas:

Literacy: *Reading and Writing.*

Mathematics: *Numbers, Shape Space and Measure.*

Understanding the World: *People & Communities, the World, and Technology.*

Expressive Arts and Design: *Exploring & Using Media and Materials, Being Imaginative.*

Prime Areas:

Personal, Social and Emotional Development: *Making relationships, Managing Feelings & Behaviour, Self-Confidence & Self-Awareness.*

Communication and Language: *Listening & Attention, Understanding, Speaking.*

Physical Development: *Moving & Handling, Health & Self-Care.*

Reading Writing Excellence

At Bethersden Primary school we are very proud to be able to provide our very own phonics scheme titled 'Reading Writing Excellence'. Based on the Ruth Miskin programme Read Write Inc Reading Writing Excellence is a tailored, flexible and responsive phonics scheme to support children on their reading and writing journey.

"The more you read the more things you know. The more that you learn the more places you'll go." - Dr Seuss, I can read with my eyes shut!

3. Continuous provision and outdoor learning

At Bethersden Primary School we aim to ensure that we provide a continuous provision of learning opportunities both inside the classroom and our outdoor learning space with opportunities to demonstrate all three characteristics of effective teaching and learning identified by the EYFS Framework. These characteristics are:

- Playing and Exploring- *engagement*
- Active Learning- *motivation*
- Creating and Thinking Critically- *thinking*

These characteristics underpin learning and development across all areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner

We aim to ensure that children are provided with a learning environment that:

- Is safe and supports each individual child's wellbeing encouraging them to be willing to 'give it a go' and where a child knows that mistakes made can be turned into opportunities of learning and growth.
- Allows children to extend and deepen their understanding of the EYFS.
- Facilitates independence and supports curiosity.
- Enables children to explore recent learning, practice new skills and follow their own interests.
- In which staff do not control the continuous provision but instead enhance continuous provision through careful intervention and care.
- Is carefully chosen and organised with high quality resources and experiences some that are familiar to the children and others that are new and unique allowing children to broaden their experiences.
- Is well cared for and valued. The children will be encouraged to care for their environment and the resources. Ensuring resources are tidied and played with with care and respect and with the understanding that the environment is not just a space for learning for one child but for all children and that it is a whole class responsibility to care for our classroom and everything in it.

At Bethersden Primary School we value outdoor learning as much as the learning that takes place within the classroom. We believe that a playful outdoor approach in the early years can help support our vision as a school, provide meaningful learning experiences and allow children to engage with their hands, hearts and heads supporting them on their journey to personal excellence and becoming long life learners.

“Being outside enables connections to be made between the hands, heart and head, laying the foundations for more complex work as children grow, develop and learn. The natural build worlds provide dynamic and constantly changing environments, offering an endless supply of patterns textures, colours, quantities and other attributes that underpin much of the necessary early maths experiences.”- Juliet Robertson, Messy Maths.

4. Transition from Nursery to Reception

Our aim is to ensure children have a smooth and happy transition from their nursery to Reception. In the EYFS at Betersden Primary School we value parents and families as essential in their child’s education and so provide many opportunities for them to be involved in their child’s education. This is something we continue throughout their child’s year in the EYFS continuing to provide many opportunities for them to join us in our learning environment.

We provide an induction meeting for parents, families and staff to assist with all of the necessary information and support needed when taking the big step of starting school. We also provide parent sessions for children and their parents to come into school and spend time with their new teacher and learning support staff and play in their new classroom. In addition we provide stay and play sessions in which children come, play and learn with their new teacher and staff whilst their parents have a cup of tea or coffee in another part of the school supporting the children in their independence when starting school. Furthermore we provide one afternoon at the end of the summer holidays where the children and their families are invited to a Teddy Bear picnic at the local park to allow time with their teacher and staff after the long summer break.

All of these sessions take part before the September start to ease the transition, build confidence and prepare children and families in the very best way possible. At Betersden Primary School we also do home visits to support this transition. Home visits are an important induction for families and staff and allow us to find out about the needs and interest of the children who will be joining the Betersden Primary School family. If the child is part of our neighboring playschool our transition begins in January where the playschool rising 5s come over one afternoon a week to begin their transition.

As well as all of our transition opportunities before September we also adopt a staggered approach to starting school. The children will attend school only in the mornings and then will move onto whole days after a few weeks. We do this based on the needs of the children starting school and to minimize any inconveniences caused to normal family life

5. At the end of EYFS

The national expectation is for children to achieve a ‘Good Level of Development’ (GLD), at the end of EYFS. GLD is when a child achieves ‘expected milestones within all strands within the prime areas of learning as well as all strands within literacy and maths’.

However, every child is unique. Some will exceed this expectation, while others may still be working towards it.

Our aim is for all children to progress to their own personal excellence (and at least make good progress from their unique starting points).