



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy and Procedures

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1. Our Vision and Aims

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.”

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, Department for Education, 2012

At Bowmansgreen Primary School, we value the importance of giving children the best opportunities to develop their learning as soon as they begin their education in with us. Our aim is to teach children how to become excellent learners from the beginning of their education through a vibrant, exciting and motivating Early Years curriculum.

Our school Vision is *‘for all pupils to flourish, succeed and achieve their potential,’* by providing a high quality early years education which gives children a secure and confident start to their school life and nurtures a lifelong love of learning. We do this through:

- A mixture of adult-led activities and child-initiated activities
- High-quality indoor and outdoor provision
- Planning that is influenced by the children’s interests and their development
- Herts Essential Maths
- Daily phonics teaching
- Daily stories and writing activities
- Reinforcing our school rules: *Be kind, be safe, be respectful*

2. Curriculum

At Bowmansgreen Primary School, our curriculum is at the heart of our learning journey. We plan in accordance with the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework (2021) which details the knowledge, skills and understanding that young children should have acquired by the time they reach the age of five and have completed their year in Reception.

There are three **Prime Areas**, which underpin children’s learning and ability to engage well with the curriculum. They ignite curiosity and enthusiasm for learning and build children’s capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. They are:

- Personal, social and emotional development
- Communication and language
- Physical development

There are also four **specific areas**, which focus directly on the curriculum and the skills, experience, and opportunities to broaden children's knowledge. These are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Achievement of prime and specific areas of learning is achieved through the **characteristics of effective learning**, which are:

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically

The curriculum is taught through a combination of adult-led, structured and directed learning and child-initiated learning, which is directed by children, their play, and their interests. We understand that each child is unique and the way in which each child learns and makes progress is at the centre of our curriculum. We, therefore, give all children opportunities to learn in both the inside and the outside environment and plan activities to develop the children's learning and skills daily, identifying activities that interest them and excite them to learn.

Our curriculum entails:

- challenging, engaging and real-life problems
- learning that happens within a child-centred approach
- providing challenges for all levels of learners
- resources and apparatus are available to support learning at every stage of a child's development
- all areas of learning are regarded with the same level of importance and are interlinked
- fundamental British values to teach children a sense of self and belonging, enabling them to learn and stay true to the values that make people good citizens
- appreciating and celebrating the multicultural area in which we live in
- daily phonics, maths, and stories linked to what the children are interested in and are currently learning.
- whenever possible, we welcome visitors in to tell us more about our topics or we visit places in our local area.

3. Planning, Teaching and Learning

Teaching is delivered in a range of ways including to the whole class, in small groups and on a one-to-one basis. We encourage the children to play an active role in shaping their learning

experience at Bowmansgreen. Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, think about problems, and relate to others. All our lessons and activities encourage the children to apply the characteristics of learning, learn through play and explore their environment. We teach through a mixture of child-initiated learning, which is directed and led by the children's interests, and adult-led learning which is pre-planned and directed by an adult.

At Bowmansgreen, we have created a curriculum which is exciting, and engaging and allows us to be led by what the children are interested in. Our topics are directed by the children's interest and help us to link stories, role play and a range of exciting activities to what the children find interesting, making it possible for us to broaden their knowledge and understanding. Our continuous provision is influenced by the observations we make of the children in their play. The staff in the EYFS use their observations to identify achievements and next steps so that the children are constantly challenged, and their learning is always progressing through questioning, participation or problem-solving.

We understand that some learning must be directed by the adults and so, alongside planning by the children's interest, the teachers will plan lessons and activities that are adult-led. The aim of these lessons is to either introduce something new to the children, provide a broad and balanced curriculum, or to challenge and extend the children's skills.

Phonics

At Bowmansgreen, we use FFT "Success for All" Phonics, a scheme which has been validated by the Department of Education, to teach phonics. Over the course of the three terms in Reception, the first fifty sounds in the developmental progression first established in Letters and Sounds 2007 are taught. During Term One, children learn on average three or four new GPCs per week, with the final day of the week being reserved for review and consolidation. Starting in Term Two, children begin to learn vowel digraphs at a pace of one per week. During Term Three, children continue to learn vowel digraphs along with common alternative spellings. Children learn Common Exception Words, alongside the GPCs. Every phonics lesson follows a consistent daily structure. Each lesson lasts approximately 25 minutes and follows the sequence of:

- Review of previously taught GPCs (10 minutes)
- Teach, practice and apply new GPC (15 minutes)

In addition to phonics lessons, the children will have daily shared reading lessons. FFT "Success for All" Phonics has 68 'Shared Readers' which are fully decodable texts in a wide range of genres that include familiar characters, settings and topics relevant to the age of the children. Each Shared Reader is carefully aligned to the daily phonics lessons and progression of sounds. This allows children to practise reading the new and recently taught GPCs and the Common Exception Words that they have been introduced to. We believe that it is fundamental that pupils can apply their phonics knowledge to the skill of reading if they are to become fluent readers.

Writing

Writing is taught through our stories and is modelled by the teacher. The children will take part in an adult-led writing activity on a regular basis and in between these activities, the staff

encourage the children to practice writing independently so that they can practice and improve their skills. The adult-led writing activity:

- Enables children to use their phonics
- Enables children to develop and practice their skills in writing words and understanding sentence structure
- Includes pre-planned sentences and words that can be written phonetically and high-frequency words that have been taught so far
- Is planned weekly by the class teacher
- Is written in the children's workbook

Upon entry in Reception, all the children write words, sounds and their name in their book to gather a baseline for their writing. All children take part in the writing activities that are planned from the Autumn term, these activities are differentiated according to the children's current skills and abilities.

Maths

We plan maths using the Herts Essential Maths resources. The scheme focuses upon the use of language and the application of mathematical skills through practical activities which include the use of different resources to reinforce skills. The teachers use and adapt the resource each week to plan differentiated lessons and activities which are delivered daily to the children.

EYFS Workbooks

All children in Reception have their own workbook called a Learning Log. This is used to record or store pieces of independent work that the children create across the curriculum. It is in this book that the children carry out their writing activities each week. For some pieces of work, children are encouraged to reflect on their learning or to talk about their work - this is when the adult scribes what the child has said.

Short Term Planning

Short-term planning and continuous provision are evidenced in a weekly planning grid. These plans show the learning opportunities that will be available over the week, including differentiated adult-led experiences for all curriculum areas, as well as showing how the learning environment will be enhanced in response to the previous week or day's observations of the children. When activities have been influenced by children's next steps, child-initiated activities or the children's interest, the names of the children are written beside the activity.

4. Learning Environment

The EYFS classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. We encourage pupils to take ownership of their classroom and take responsibility for their learning, equipment and resources. Practitioners regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the learning zones and make adaptations as necessary. They ensure that signs and labels are clearly displayed for the children to see and that the resources are regularly restocked to enable independent choice.

There are areas where the children can be active, independent, collaborative and loud or engage in more quiet, independent activities. The classroom is organised into learning and activity areas which are well organised and clearly labelled, where children can find and locate equipment and resources independently.

All pupils engage in outdoor learning – it is an essential part of the Bowmansgreen curriculum. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers children the opportunity 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 seven areas of learning.

5. Observations and Assessments

On-going formative assessment is at the heart of our effective Early Years practice. We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs and challenges. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of long, short, photographic and video observations, involving all members of staff in the Reception classroom. All observations are documented onto Tapestry, an online learning journal, personalised to each child with access for all parents and carers. Any pieces of work produced on paper are stuck in each child's workbook with a scribed comment from an adult of what was said and achieved by the child. This combination provides us with a rounded and well-informed picture of what each child can achieve each term in Reception.

All adults have a shared responsibility to gather evidence of the children's learning and achievements. Spontaneous observations of the achievements the children make are done regularly and are what we call our 'Wow Moments'. In conjunction with these observations, six children are focused on each week by all members of staff. The observations carried out for these six children are detailed and informative, aimed at helping children make progress in their learning and to plan their next steps. Assessments of these children prior to their focus week are essential as we identify gaps in their learning and try to support this by planning for and directing their learning that week. The observations are a mixture of adult-led, child-initiated, short snapshot observations and long narrative observations. These observations play an important part in the daily planning as staff will meet and discuss the following day's continuous provisions by what they have observed each day.

Baseline:

In September, the teachers spend a long time settling the children in their new school and reinforcing our rules and routines. Each child will also take part in a Baseline Assessment which is carried out by a teacher on a one-to-one basis.

Termly Assessments

Each term, teachers reflect upon the observations and the work that has been produced for each child to level and identify how much progress they have made. These are then discussed with a Senior Leader during Pupil Progress Meetings.

The results of the termly assessments and the EYFS Profile are shared with parents and carers and there are opportunities for them to meet their child's class teacher to discuss this information throughout the term. This information is also shared with the Year One class teacher to ensure a smooth transition into Year One and to assist with the planning of Year One activities.

Early Years Profile

At the end of the Reception, the teachers complete the EYFS profile for each child. Children are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Working towards age related expectation (Emerging)
- Working at age related expectation (Expected)

The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and carers. The results of the profile are then shared with parents and carers and with the Local Authority. The EYFS profile helps to provide parents and carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding, progress and achievements and to identify key areas for children to develop.

6. Working with Parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers. It is essential that your child is happy at Bowmansgreen, and we want to work with you to ensure that this happens. We encourage parents to visit Tapestry regularly to see what their child has been learning but to also share events and learning that is done at home.

Parents and carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development throughout the year. As well as attending the formal parent consultation meetings, there are many opportunities to meet with staff more informally. Parents are invited to the half-termly Curriculum Evenings where some of the children's learning is on display for children to share with parents. There is also an Open Morning in the Autumn Term - all parents are welcome.

7. Home Learning

Please refer to our Home Learning Policy.

8. Inclusion and Safeguarding

At Bowmansgreen we recognise that our children's diverse backgrounds are a highlight. We ensure that our pupils show a positive attitude towards diversity and difference and support all children's backgrounds and needs. We ensure that:

- All children have access to a well-planned curriculum
- All children are challenged and extended in their learning

- Visual pictures are used to support our pupils' language development
- Many opportunities for open-ended activities and open-ended questions are planned
- Children's challenges are discussed regularly with the EYFS Phase Leader and supportive strategies are introduced.

Please also refer to our school's SEN Information Report and Child Protection policy.