

EYFS Policy



BANKFIELDS
Primary School

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Bankfields Primary School Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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1 - Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) extends from 0-5 years. Entry into our Foundation Stage (Nursery) is in the Autumn term after the child turns 3 and ends at the end of the Reception year. At Bankfields, we offer 15 hours provision in Nursery for children aged 3 or 4 under the 'universal offer'. These 15 hours are provided over 5 sessions – 8:40-11:40 daily. Most of our Nursery children start as N2 age (4 years olds), with a small number of N1 (3 year olds) each academic year.

From September 2026, we are able to offer some 30 hours (full-time) Nursery places to parents and carers who meet the eligibility criteria set out by the government. These places are limited and offered on eligibility and then a first come, first served basis.

Entry into our primary school is at the beginning of the school year in which the children are 5 (although compulsory schooling does not begin until the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday).

The Foundation Stage is important in its own right, and also in preparing children for later schooling. At Bankfields, we follow the government 'Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework'.

The early-years education we offer our children is based on the following 'Principles of the EYFS':

"A Unique Child" – we build on what our children already know and can do.

"Positive Relationships" - our children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving, secure and respectful relationships.

"Enabling Environments" – our children enjoy a rich and stimulating environment which supports their learning and development. It gives them the confidence to explore and learn in secure, safe yet challenging indoor and outdoor areas.

"Learning and Developing" – we provide a variety of opportunities for our children to develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

2 - Our Vision and Values for EYFS at Bankfields– our intent

At Bankfields we recognise that:



Our curriculum in the EYFS aims to:

- To establish the foundations that underpin all future learning enabling our children to become confident, motivated and happy learners.
- To provide a well-structured, secure, caring and well-resourced learning environment, both inside and out which offers our children a rich, engaging and challenging environment in which to learn.
- To develop independence and individuality, whilst fostering respect and tolerance for others irrespective of ability, race, creed, gender or background.
- To place speech, language and communication at the heart of learning
- Promote personal, social and emotional well-being.
- To develop and lay the foundations of early reading, writing and mathematical skills and concepts.
- To offer children first hand experiences and interaction with the world in around them so that they can develop skills and understanding of the world that they live in.
- To develop children's creativity and imagination through the exploration of media and materials around them.

3 - The EYFS Curriculum, including Characteristics for Effective Teaching and Learning – our intent

The EYFS Curriculum, which precedes the National Curriculum for Key Stages 1-4 (5 to 16 years), consists of seven areas of learning - three “Prime” and four “Specific”. These seven areas of learning and development shape educational programmes in EYFS. All the areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

The ‘**Prime areas**’ are fundamental, work together, and move through to support development in all other areas. They are:

- Communication and Language
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development

The ‘**Specific areas**’ include essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society. They are:

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

Educational Programmes

The ‘Educational Programmes’ for EYFS (taken from the Statutory Framework for the EYFS, September 2021) are as follows:

Communication and Language

The development of children’s spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children’s back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children’s language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, story-telling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Children’s personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Strong, warm and supportive 9 relationships with adults enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. Children should be supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary. Through adult modelling

and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently. Through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceably. These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.

Physical Development

Physical activity is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives. Gross and fine motor experiences develop incrementally throughout early childhood, starting with sensory explorations and the development of a child's strength, co-ordination and positional awareness through tummy time, crawling and play movement with both objects and adults. By creating games and providing opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors, adults can support children to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being. Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination, which is later linked to early literacy. Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practice of using small tools, with feedback and support from adults, allow children to develop proficiency, control and confidence.

Literacy

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).

Mathematics

Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. Children should be able to count confidently, develop a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers. By providing frequent and varied opportunities to build and apply this understanding - such as using manipulatives, including small pebbles and tens frames for organising counting - children will develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary from which mastery of mathematics is built. In addition, it is important that the curriculum includes rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures. It is important that children develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, 'have a go', talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.

Understanding the World

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them – from visiting parks, libraries and museums to meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses and firefighters. In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains. Enriching and widening children's vocabulary will support later reading comprehension.

Expressive Arts and Design

The development of children's artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. The quality and variety of what children see, hear and participate in is crucial for developing their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate through the arts. The frequency, repetition and depth of their experiences are fundamental to their progress in interpreting and appreciating what they hear, respond to and observe.

Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning (CoETL)

The Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning and the prime and specific Areas of Learning and Development are all interconnected. The focus of the CoETL is on how children learn rather than what they learn i.e. process over outcome. Underpinning the CoETL is the understanding that during their earliest years, children form attitudes about learning that will last a lifetime.

At Bankfield, we ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

Playing and exploring - Children will have opportunities to investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'. Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world around them. They practise and build on their own ideas and those presented to them. They learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own and how to communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

Active learning - Children will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements. Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence, they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Creating and thinking critically - We encourage and support children to have and develop their own ideas, make links between them and develop strategies for doing things. Children should be given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning. Adults can support children's thinking and help them make connections by showing interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open ended questions. Children can access resources and move around the classroom freely and purposefully to extend their learning. This learning allows children to develop their abilities to play and explore, take an active role and think creatively.

4 - Planning, Teaching, Learning and Play in the Foundation Stage – our implementation

At Bankfields Primary School the Educational Programmes are delivered through the 7 areas of learning. Planning is divided into long term, medium term, and short term.

- Long term plans state the topics to be covered each year and show each strand of the curriculum. Where possible we make links with the subject areas taught in the rest of school.
- Medium term plans illustrate objectives being taught each term including key core texts.
- Short term or weekly plans show specific activities and planned for objectives for the cohort of children. These will include a variety of adult-led activities and provision to inspire and support child-led learning. Staff ensure that all children are encouraged to experience all areas of activity throughout the week. This is carefully monitored and altered as the year progresses and we begin to support children's transition into Year One.

Planning Process

Good planning is the key to making children's learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive. Effective learning builds on and extends what children know and can already do. Our planning shows how the principles of the EYFS are put into practice and is informed through observations we make of the children within our environment. All staff who are in the EYFS team are involved in the process of planning to consider current interests, development, and learning needs within the cohort.

The planning within the EYFS is based around the children's interests but also reflects that some of our children have had limited experiences before joining our school. These plans are used by the whole team as a guide for weekly planning. However, we may alter these in response to the needs and interest of the children which helps create a high level of motivation for their learning.

Planning our environments

At Bankfields Primary School, we know that the learning environment plays a key role in supporting and extending a child's development. Our classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn safely and securely. Each classroom has defined learning areas where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. These areas can be active, quiet, creative, imaginative etc. The shared areas promote the importance of early reading and language. It is important that the environment is stimulating and engaging, with resources that enrich learning opportunities and challenge young minds. We ensure that both the indoor and outdoor working areas reflect the needs, interests, culture and ability of all children as well as promoting play, exploration and collaboration.

The outside area is important within our Foundation Stage and children access this area in small groups. Being outdoors offers the children opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when inside. As well as offering opportunities for physical activity, freedom and movement and promoting a sense of well-being. They can explore, use their senses, develop their language skills and be physically active. We plan activities and resources for both indoor and

outdoor environments, enabling children to develop all areas of their learning within both environments.

5 - Monitoring, assessment, record keeping and reporting – our impact

At the start of the year

During the first term in Nursery and Reception, class teachers assess the ability of each child using our own school baseline assessments. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children. Baseline assessments are made watching the children play, by completing play-based activities with them and by seeing what they know. Staff will talk with parents as appropriate/when needed to discuss a child's strengths or areas for development. Children in Reception, will also undertake the Government's statutory Reception 1:1 Baseline assessment within the first 6 weeks of entering fulltime school, measuring their early literacy, communication, language, and mathematics skills. Parents will also be invited into school during the Autumn term for a parent's evening appointment.

Government Statutory Baseline Assessment (RBA)

Every child entering fulltime school, will take part in a national, statutory 'Reception Baseline Assessment' which will be completed alongside our own teacher devised baseline activities. The statutory baseline will be completed with each child individually and will usually take 20 minutes. The activities will be play based and will use digital resources, practical equipment and pictures. Teachers will ask the children different questions and the children will be expected to point, show or say their answer. Teachers and pupils use an iPad to record a yes/no answer for each activity. The baseline assessment activities are 'routed'; this means that it prevents the children accessing too many activities where they may be unsuccessful. (I.e. the assessment stops if it becomes too difficult). All children must complete the RBA. Scores for each child are automatically calculated and sent to the Standards and Testing Authority (STA). School does not have access to these scores/data until the cohort reach Year 6, when the data can be used as a progress measure. This means we will be unable to discuss the scores/data from the RBA.

Throughout the year

Assessment in the foundation stage takes the form of both formal and informal observations, photographic evidence, and planned activities. Assessment is completed regularly and involves all staff within the EYFS setting. The collection of assessment data allows staff to adapt planning to suit the needs of the cohort.

At Bankfields, we keep progress records and learning journals, to include some examples of children's work, as a range of evidence to be shared with parents at each parent consultation meeting. Tracking grids are updated at key points throughout EYFS and moderated carefully by Early Years staff. The data collected is shared with Senior Leadership Team. In Reception, parents receive a mid-year verbal report and targets at a parent consultation meeting in March.

At the end of the year

End of year assessments in Nursery are shared with the next class teacher and with parents during parent consultation meetings.

At the end of Reception, the EYFS requires practitioners to complete the Foundation Stage Profile. The Foundation Stage Profile consists of Early Learning Goals. The Early Learning Goals (ELG) are:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
 - ELG – Self Regulation
 - ELG – Managing Self
 - ELG – Building Relationships
- Communication and Language
 - ELG - Listening, Attention and Concentration
 - ELG - Speaking
- Physical Development
 - ELG – Gross Motor Skills
 - ELG – Fine Motor Skills
- Mathematics
 - ELG – Number
 - ELG – Numerical Patterns
- Literacy
 - ELG – Comprehension
 - ELG – Word Reading
 - ELG – Writing
- Understanding the world
 - ELG – Past and Present
 - ELG – People, Culture and Communities
 - ELG – The Natural World
- Expressive arts and design
 - ELG – Creating with materials
 - ELG – Being Imaginative and Expressive

The Profile is an assessment tool for teachers to record their observations at the end of the Foundation Stage and to summarise the progress made by individuals towards the Early Learning Goals. During the summer term a summary of these assessments are sent to the local authority for analysis. This data is also shared with the next teacher and with parents during parent consultation meetings and in the child's end of year report.

6 - Inclusion in the Foundation Stage

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

In the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations matched to the needs of our children, so that our children work towards achieving the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage. We help them to do this by planning to meet the needs of both boys and girls, of children

with special educational needs, of children who are more able, of children with disabilities, of children from all social and cultural backgrounds, of children from different ethnic groups, and of those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build on and extend the children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- using a variety of teaching strategies that are based on children's learning needs;
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children, and to help them to learn effectively;
- offering a safe and supportive learning environment, in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- seeking advice from the school SENDCo and other professionals as needed;
- employing resources that reflect diversity, and that avoid 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 providing support (such as speech therapy) as necessary.

Please also see the school 'SEND/Inclusion policy'

7 – Transition

Transition into Nursery

At Bankfields we recognise that a child's first experiences of Nursery are often the first time that they have spent time away from their parents/carers – and that this can sometimes be a difficult time for parents/carers too. Nursery children usually start in the Autumn term. They are invited in in small groups (2-3 children at a time) after visit with their parent/carer.

In the summer term before a child is due to start, parents will be invited in to meet the teacher and to complete the relevant paperwork we need in school. In this meeting, Nursery staff will share important information and will answer any questions that parents may have.

Transition into Reception

New reception parents and their child are invited to attend a workshop and meeting in the summer term to provide them with essential information for the next academic year.

During the summer term prior to the children starting school the following September, the transition process will include the following:

- Your child's class teacher will visit your child in nursery to meet them and discuss your child as a learner with staff.
- Pictures of staff and social stories will be provided in order to support transition.
- Children will have transition days in their new class during the summer term (during their normal Nursery session) in order to ensure they become familiar with staff, routines, and environments before settling into a full-time start.

Transition into Year 1

During the summer term we begin to prepare children for transition into Year 1 and the Key Stage 1 curriculum.

We have put provision and opportunities in place to support this transition period. These include:

- Story sessions held by their new class teacher and a question and answer opportunity to get to know them better.
- 'Meet your new teacher days,' during transition week for all children to move into their new class in the final summer term in Reception. This allows children to meet staff and gain confidence in their new classroom environment.
- A thorough hand-over between teachers ahead of the summer holiday.
- Early Years staff to visit children into their new environment, where needed, during the first week of year one.

8 – Safeguarding

At Bankfields, we understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements as stated in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework

Key Workers

Children are assigned 'Key Workers' during their time in EYFS. Take from the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2021, a Key Worker's role is:

'to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs (in accordance with paragraph 1.16), to help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with their parents'.

At Bankfields, Key staff are as follows for 2026/27:

Nursery – Mrs Tilling (Teacher) Mrs Kerrison and Mrs Kidd (TA's)
Reception – Mrs Ward (Teacher) Mrs Oxley (TA) Miss Porritt (TA)

The Key Workers work closely with the children to ensure that they settle well into school and can achieve their full potential. Key workers also foster good relationships with parents and carers.

Keeping Safe

In the Early Years we recognise the importance that all children are 'safe'. Our curriculum and learning environments help children to learn boundaries, rules and limits and aim to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. We encourage children to take risks and highlight the importance of keeping themselves safe by teaching them how to recognise and avoid hazards.

Our PSHE scheme teaches the children about keeping safe.

We regularly have visits or assemblies from the Police and Fire Service.

Good Health

All children are provided with a healthy snack (fruit) and milk each day at snack time. In Reception all children are issued with a water bottle and have access to water throughout the day. All children are fully supervised by qualified Paediatric first aid trained EYFS staff when eating and drinking both at snack time and lunchtime.

As part of our Science and PE curriculum we cover keeping healthy, exercise and making healthy lifestyle choices. Children across the EYFS take part in a daily toothbrushing scheme and teach the importance of looking after our teeth.

Children in Reception are offered a daily healthy school meal under the Universal Infant Free School Meal scheme. Children are encouraged to try different and new foods and we work hard with parents and children to make school lunch time a positive experience.

We recognise that some children may struggle with toileting during their time in EYFS. We support and work with parents and their child to toilet train, referring to the school nurse if appropriate.

9 - Working in Partnership

We highly place the benefits of working in partnership and understand the huge impact this has on the effectiveness of our EYFS setting.

We value our partnerships and endeavour to actively maintain these by sharing information, ideas, expertise, and our knowledge within our team and with parents, carers, colleagues, and other professionals.

Within our role of enabling partnerships we:

- Meet regularly as an EYFS team to discuss assessments, planning, individual children, research
- Hold regular parent workshops on relevant areas of their children's development e.g. maths, reading, phonics
- Work closely with SRAT moderation groups to share practice and support colleagues across the local area.
- We moderate work with Nursery and Year 1
- Attend moderation and networking opportunities provided by the local Authority and within our Trust
- Liaise with external agencies, providers and professionals to support our children and families.

The role of parents

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

- meeting with and talking to parents before their child starts at Bankfields Primary;

- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts Nursery and then again when their child starts Reception class;
- arranging for a staggered start to Nursery (where appropriate) over the first few weeks of term, so that the teacher can welcome each child and parent into our school;
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress;
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns;
- offering a range of activities and Family Learning sessions, throughout the year, that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents;
- Offering parent consultation meetings at key point throughout the year.
- End of year reports