

Curriculum Policy Document (Statutory)

Document Name: Early Years Policy

First Written Date: February 2022

Review Date: February 2023

Reviewed By: All Staff Ratified



Bramhope Primary School

Early Years Policy

“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.”

Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, Department for Education 2021

Our intent at Bramhope

Our **primary intent** is to **teach children** how to become **readers, writers and mathematicians**.

However, our curriculum is **broad** and we want to **inspire children** to become **artists, geographers, musicians, scientists, designers, historians' linguists and sportsmen and women**

Outside of the classroom, we want to teach children to become **good citizens**.

Our school motto reflects our school philosophy. It has **three core aims** which are woven through our lessons:

Belong

- **Treating all children equally**
- Ensuring children feel that they belong in our school community
- Enabling children to contribute to our local community
- Helping children learn about the global community
- Ensuring equality and diversity is woven through the curriculum
- Building a love of the outdoors

Be Your best

- **Putting challenge at the heart of every lesson**
- Having high expectations of academic achievement
- Demonstrating a positive attitude to learning
- Building resilience and independence

Be Bramhope

- **Developing leaders**
- Creating high aspirations for the future
- Enabling children to make responsible, healthy choices

Implementation

Structure of EYFS

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. Our EYFS accommodates children from the age of 4 to 5 years.

In our school, we have two Reception classes of 30 children. Each Reception class has a reception teacher and teaching assistant. The two classes work as a unit to enable free flow across both classrooms and outdoor environment. All staff work together as a team.

The Curriculum

Our reception classes follow the structure outlined in the EYFS framework. The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are seen as important and interconnected.

Three of the areas are referred to as **prime areas**. These are particularly important for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships, and thriving (Early Years Framework 2021).

The prime areas are:

Communication and language	Listening, Attention and Understanding Speaking
Personal, Social and Emotional Development	Self-regulation Managing Self Building Relationships
Physical Development	Fine Motor Gross Motor

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through the **specific areas**:

Literacy	Comprehension Word Reading Writing
Mathematics	Numbers Numerical patterns
Understanding the World	Past and present People, culture, and communities
Expressive Arts and Design	Creating with materials Being imaginative and expressive

We enrich the Early Years Framework with our Bramhope curriculum. Our curriculum enhances the experiences and opportunities available to our pupils. This includes:

- Weekly small group cooking sessions in our reception kitchen
- Weekly school garden visits to observe pond life, plant vegetables and look for mini beasts
- Weekly visits to the school library for a story session and to choose a book to share at home

- Weekly visits from a 'mystery visitor' (parent or unknown adult) who either introduces the world of work or explains about a broad range of festivals, hobbies, or interests from first-hand experience

Teaching

We ensure there is a balance of adult-led teaching and child-initiated learning


There are set routines that we follow each day. Pupils are taught in their classes for Maths, Phonics and Literacy and mix between classes for continuous provision. We refer to continuous provision as discovery learning as children are provided with resources which enable and encourage them to discover more about all areas of learning. In addition, pupils have adult-led sessions to support specific areas of learning such as internet safety or healthy relationships.

We adapt our timetable throughout the year and have longer periods of adult-led teaching as the year progresses. Here is an example of a spring term timetable:

Timetable

- 8:40am – 8:55am Settle into school
- 9am Register and Phonics
- 9:30am continuous provision
- 10:45am Literacy
- 11:30am lunch and outdoor play
- 12:35pm handwriting
- 12:45pm Maths
- 1:15pm continuous provision
- 2:45pm adult-led session
- 3:10pm home time

- Monday : PE
- Tuesday : mystery visitor
- Wednesday: cooking
- Thursday : library time
- Friday : welly walk and visiting the school garden



Phonics and reading

Phonics is fundamental to the development of pupil's reading and writing. We currently follow 'Letters and Sounds' to provide systematic synthetic phonics teaching and will be moving to ReadWriteInc in September.

From October, every child receives two reading books a week. These books match their phonics level. In school they will share this book with an adult either on a one-to-one basis or within a group. Each week, pupils also select a book to share with a parent or carer from the school library. **We**

expect parents to read daily with their children. Please see our commitment to reading document for more information as to how reading is taught at Bramhope.

Literacy

From reception, children are exposed to a wide range of both fiction and non-fiction texts to provide them with opportunities to hear and use new vocabulary. We have a wide variety of quality key texts which are a mixture of classic and more recent books, as well as non-fiction and poetry. Many of our children at Bramhope live in a small village community and therefore our books are selected to broaden their knowledge and understanding of how other people might live in their localities and around the world. Such texts are part of our Equality and Diversity programme. They stimulate discussion and support our PSHE.

We believe reading and sharing stories inspires children to write. One of the ways we do this is through ‘**helicopter stories**’. Initially, children gather in a taped-out stage and stories are acted out. As the year progresses, the stories move from being written by an adult, to the children being encouraged to write parts of their own stories. Children are motivated to become an author, tell their story and are proud to see their story being acted out by their peers.

As children start to form letters, we teach them the **Nelson handwriting** script. This matches ReadWriteInc and is used throughout school.

Maths

We teach Maths daily as an adult-led teaching session. We follow White Rose Maths scheme of work and integrate NCETM maths mastery.

White Rose Maths underpins the Educational Programme for Mathematics (DfE March 2021) which supports us to deliver a curriculum that embeds mathematical thinking and talk. White Rose Maths is divided into ten phases and provides a variety of opportunities to develop the understanding of number, shape, measure, and spatial thinking.

NCETM Mastering maths ensures pupils acquire a deep, long-term, secure, and adaptable understanding of the subject. The phrase ‘teaching for mastery’ describes the elements of classroom practice and school organisation that combine to give pupils the best chances of mastering maths. Achieving mastery means acquiring a solid enough understanding of the maths that has been taught to enable pupils to move on to more advanced material.

To develop conceptual understanding of number, we teach children to use manipulatives such as Numicon, 5 and 10 frames, dice, counters and unifix.

Continuous provision – discovery time

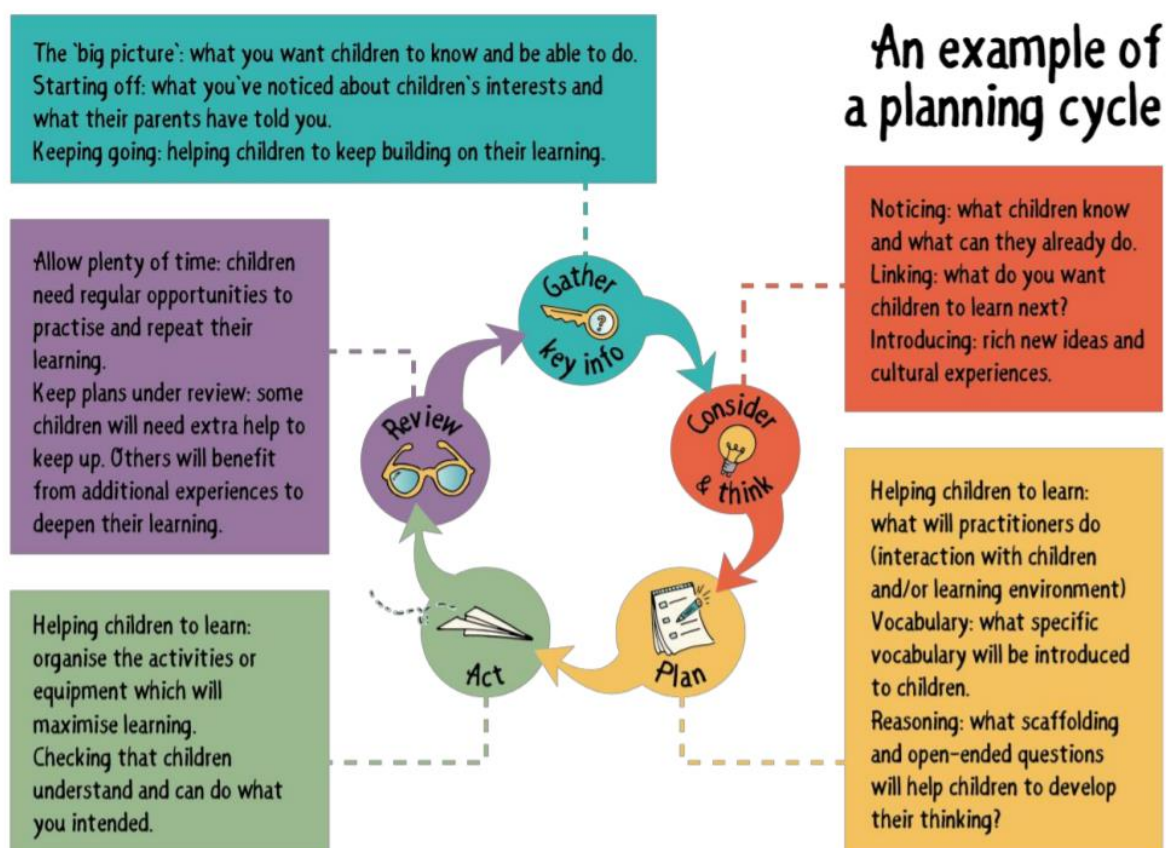
Play supports teaching and learning within the foundation stage. Each learning area has cross-curricular resources, which children can access independently throughout the day. Continuous provision provides children with stimulating, active play to encourage creative and critical thinking alongside other children, as well as on their own. Children can practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experiences at their own level and pace. Play provides children with the opportunity to pursue their own interests and consolidate their understanding and skills. Children

learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate, and ask questions. Adults take an active role in child-initiated play through observing, modelling, questioning, and commenting to develop vocabulary. They find opportunities to teach and extend play through using language such as 'have a go', 'I wonder', 'tell me' and 'next time I will...'

We understand that outdoor play is of equal importance as indoor play and that the outdoor classroom offers children 'bigger,' 'louder' and 'messier' experiences. We therefore offer prolonged periods of free-flow access to our outdoor learning areas throughout the school day.

Planning during continuous provision

During our continuous provision, we plan 'in the moment.' This means we plan the next steps of an individual child's learning spontaneously, using what the child is interested in.



Characteristics of effective learning

The EYFS includes the 'Characteristics of Effective Learning' (C.O.E.L.) These help staff identify a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them.

The three characteristics of COEL (Characteristics of Effective Learning) are:

- **Playing and Exploring**- children investigate and experience things and ‘have a go’
- **Active Learning**- children concentrate and keep trying if they encounter difficulties, they enjoy achievements
- **Creating and Thinking Critically**- children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

At Bramhope, adults model and discuss how to develop these learning behaviours. We encourage children to learn from each other and celebrate where we see these characteristics of learning being shown.

Assessment

Ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes at Bramhope. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are then used to inform future planning. Through our focus child system, observations are recorded in paper-based learning journals to show their progress over time. Each term, staff assess more formally to see if pupils are on track to meet the E.L.G. (early learning goals)

At the end of the EYFS (end of Reception), staff complete the EYFS profile (Statutory requirement) for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- On track - meeting expected levels of development
- Not on track - not yet reaching the expected levels of development

Parent partnership

We acknowledge that education is a shared responsibility between school and home. We work very closely to ensure that parents/carers are involved in their child’s education and provide them with a weekly learning page on the school website detailing what we are learning and how they can support their child at home.

We ensure that parents/ carers are kept up to date with their child’s progress and development, through parents evening, termly reports and verbal feedback. Parents contribute to their child’s learning journey on a termly basis. At this point, parents/carers are encouraged to share anything significant happening in their child’s life and given an opportunity to ask us about their child’s progress and development.

Children’s development levels are assessed as the year progresses. If a child’s progress in any of the prime areas gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child’s parents/carers and agree how best to support the child.

We offer workshops to provide parents with an insight into how we teach specific areas of the Early Years Curriculum and demonstrate ways they can support their child’s learning at home. These workshops include information on reading, writing and Maths.

Transition

From nursery to Reception

Children come from several different nurseries and transition information is gathered in July through nursery visits, phone calls to nursery staff and written profiles. Children are given opportunities to visit the school through play and stay sessions so they can familiarise themselves with the teachers and environment. We provide parent information evenings in the summer term prior to the children starting school.

Reception to Year 1

In summer, prior to the children starting Year 1, children visit their new classroom so they can familiarise themselves with the new Y1 teachers and the new learning environment. Parents are invited to meet staff and all parents are invited to a curriculum information evening in September.

Impact

We recognise that every child is unique; they develop and learn in diverse ways and at varying rates. By the end of Reception, we strive for our children to be curious, resilient, willing to share ideas and able to solve problems independently. They will have built positive relationships with peers and adults and will be able to transfer their skills into their next stage of their education.

At the end of Reception, we aim to see:

- Happy, positive children who love to learn
- Independent children who take advantage of the wide range of opportunities offered to them
- Children who have met the Early Learning Goals
- Children that have the skills needed to begin the national curriculum in KS1