

BASTON CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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Introduction

The Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of Reception. At Baston CE Primary School children may join us in the academic year following their fourth birthday but compulsory schooling begins at the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday. The Foundation Stage is important in its own right, recognising the significance of childhood. The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile sets out what is expected of most children by the end of the Foundation Stage. However, we recognise that all children learn differently and at different pace.

We recognise that children join school having already learnt a great deal. Many have been to one of a range of settings that exist in our community. We therefore offer our children an early years education based on the following principles:

- it builds on what our children already know and can do
- it ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged
- it offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children and activity that provides opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors
- it provides a rich and stimulating environment where children may challenge themselves safely and learn new skills
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Aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage

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- "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."
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- (Statutory Framework for the Early Years Early Years Foundation Stage)

The Early Years Foundation Stage underpins all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children's:

- personal, social and emotional development
- positive attitudes and dispositions towards their learning
- social skills
- listening skills and perseverance
- language and communication
- reading
- writing
- mathematics
- understanding the world
- physical development
- expressive arts and design

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- At Baston CE Primary School we believe that all children are entitled to the best possible start in their school life, both intellectually and emotionally, in order to enable them to develop their full potential.

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Play in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them to make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and 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. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

At Baston CE Primary School we provide both structured and unstructured play opportunities both inside and outside. These activities are designed to engage children in practical, first-hand experience, develop their personal interests and areas of curiosity and help them to make sense of the world around them as they begin to understand specific concepts. In providing these active learning opportunities through play we understand the central position of play within the EYFS framework.

Teaching and learning style

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage just as much as they do to the teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2.

The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the Early Years Foundation Stage are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being, involvement and achievement
- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching
- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication through continuous provision
- the carefully planned learning opportunities that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage
- the provision for children to take part in playful activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities
- the support and encouragement of good listening skills
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are regularly shared with parents
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school
- the clear aims for our work, and the regular monitoring to evaluate and improve what we do
- the regular identification of training needs of all practitioners working within the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inclusion in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

In the Early Years Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We plan to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups, children in receipt of Pupil Premium and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning an environment and opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs and through the children's play
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from 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 taking action to provide support as necessary
- a transition programme into Year 1

The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum

Learning and Development

There are seven areas of Learning and Development which are interconnected with three of these being Prime Areas, which are crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The three Prime Areas are:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development – children develop confidence and self-esteem, learn how to manage feelings and respect others.
- Communication and Language – children have opportunities to speak and listen in a range of situations and experience a rich language environment.
- Physical Development – children have opportunities to be active and develop co-ordination (both gross motor and fine motor); they learn about healthy choices.

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through four Specific Areas:

- Literacy – involves children learning how letters link to the sounds and begin to read and write.
- Mathematics – children have opportunities to develop counting and calculation skills, to use numbers in everyday activities and recognise and describe shapes and measures.

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- Understanding of the World – children have opportunities to find out about people and communities, the environment and technology.
- Expressive Arts and Design – involves exploring feelings and ideas through music, dance, role play and design.

The Early Years Foundation Stage at Baston CE Primary School reflects the areas of learning identified in the Early Learning Goals. The experiences that our children meet often enable them to develop a number of competencies, skills and concepts across several areas of learning.

Planning

The EYFS framework provides a long term plan to follow by ensuring that all Early Learning Statements and Goals are covered throughout the academic year. Medium term planning takes into account children's learning and developmental needs. All Areas of Learning and Development are planned for and available to access within the school.

The learning opportunities provided include a range of adult-focused and child-initiated activities indoors and outdoors. We value all areas of learning and development and understand that they are inter-connected. Child-initiated learning is an important part of our daily routine and whenever possible adult-directed activities are play based, active and related to the children's interests. We aim to help children with their learning through observing, taking part in their play, supporting their thinking and asking open questions.

Educational visits within the local community and further afield are also planned to support our children's learning. Children and parents/carers are encouraged to be involved in their child's learning by contributing to their child's online learning journal and through parent/carers consultations.

Assessment

A baseline assessment is carried out for the first few weeks of the academic year. Judgments made on a child's development are based on practitioners' observations and gathered evidence from self-initiated and adult-supported activities across all Areas of Learning and Development.

Regular assessments are made of every child's learning. The information is then used to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage is gathered through teacher and parental observations and book work.

At the end of the child's reception year a record of each child's attainment level is made. The Year 1 teacher then uses this information to make plans for the year ahead. We share this information with parents via an end of year report.

In the main, records of pupil's work and pupil assessments are made via an online journal (Tapestry) which contains a very wide range of evidence that we share with parents every day.

Parents are invited to an individual consultation twice a year to review the progress and next steps for each child. Parents receive an annual report that provides information regarding their child's progress in all areas of learning. It also highlights the child's strengths and development needs and gives details of the child's general progress.

The role of parents/carers

We believe that all parents and carers have an important role to play in the ongoing education of their child. To support this philosophy we:

- hold an induction evening and talk to parents about school life and what to expect using a visual presentation and live speakers
- visit the child in their home setting prior to them starting school to alleviate any worries of both parents and children
- visit our local feeder nurseries to observe the children in a familiar setting and meet with their nursery keyworkers to discuss transition
- hold a Transition Day for the whole school so that all the children in school can spend time with their new teacher before starting school in September
- offer parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our reception class, using our "open door" policy
- encourage parents to talk to their child's teacher if there are any concerns
- have flexible admission arrangements when circumstances are difficult, to help children and parents settle comfortably into school life
- arrange for children to be collected from school at 2pm for the first two weeks of term
- arrange various activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between children, school and parents
- invite parents to workshops to help support them with their child's learning
- provide a newsletter and topic web every term outlining activities that have taken place and experiences to look forward to, in Reception

Resources

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning.