

# **Bounds Green School**



## ***Early Years Foundation Stage Policy***

**Date of Policy Approval:**

**Date of Policy Review:**

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## **Our School Vision**

Bounds Green is a happy and successful school community because:

- We **challenge** every child to be ambitious and achieve success in their learning.
- We **value** respect and responsibility, individuality and inclusivity, confidence and kindness.
- We **nurture** each unique child to value themselves and develop self-worth in order to thrive in life.

## **Our Early Years Vision**

We want our children at Bounds Green School to be happy, confident, resilient individuals with a passion for learning. We believe in providing our children with a safe, stimulating, open ended environment that follows and builds on each individual's wants, needs and interests and gives our children the strong foundations to be confident, independent learners for life.

Children's learning is led through play, experiential hands-on learning, through conversations with adults and other children and through a variety of planned experiences. Through our Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum, carefully planned environments and adult-led sessions, children are provided with vast experiences that are vital in enhancing children's skills, knowledge, learning and development, giving children the opportunity to grow, discover, investigate and apply their learning.

We are committed to ensuring our children flourish in confidence, providing them with the best possible start to their school life, teaching them skills and giving them experiences which will enable them to grow as individuals.

Our EYFS curriculum is designed to allow children to develop the knowledge and learning behaviours that they need to reach their full potential, ensure their well-being now and success in the future.

## **Aims**

The EYFS curriculum is based on the understanding that children develop rapidly during this stage of their learning – physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially.

The curriculum for the EYFS should underpin all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children's:

- Personal, social and emotional well-being
- Language and communication skills
- Physical development
- Reading and writing skills
- Mathematical skills
- Understanding of the world
- Creative development
- Positive attitudes and dispositions towards their learning
- Team-work and collaborative skills
- Positive relationships

## The Areas of Learning

There are seven areas of learning and development, all of which are important and interconnected. They are; Communication and Language, Physical Development, Personal Social and Emotional Development, Literacy, Maths, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design.

Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. The **prime areas** are fundamental to a child's development throughout the EYFS. These three areas, are:

### 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. Communication and language development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment, to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves and to speak and listen in a range of situations such as through reading, conversation, story telling, role play. Reading frequently to the children and engaging them in a range of texts such as non fiction stories, rhymes and poems provides children with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts.

In addition, children are introduced to new vocabulary through 'Word of the Week'. A new word is introduced each week and reinforced using Makaton signs and repetition. Stories and activities are carefully planned in order to reinforce and embed this key vocabulary.

### Physical development

Physical activity is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives. Physical development, both fine and gross motor skills, involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive, and to develop their co-ordination, control and movement. Through play both indoors and outdoors, children are supported to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, developing healthy bodies and social and emotional wellbeing. 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.

### Personal, social and emotional development

Personal, social and emotional development involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves and others, to form positive relationships and develop respect for others, to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings, to understand appropriate behaviour in groups, and to have confidence in their own abilities. Through adult modelling and guidance, children will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently.

We also support children in the four **specific areas**, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas include essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society. The specific areas are:

### Literacy

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two areas: language comprehension and word reading. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest. Skilled word reading involves children linking sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Writing involves spelling, handwriting and composition. This includes; writing recognisable correctly formed letters, spelling simple words by identifying the sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters and writing simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.

At Bounds Green, we believe that all our children can become fluent readers and writers. This is why we teach reading through Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised, which is a systematic and synthetic phonics programme. We start teaching phonics in Reception and follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised progression, which ensures children build on their growing knowledge of

the alphabetic code, mastering phonics to read and spell as they move through school. Phonics lessons take place five days a week. Once children are able to read simple words and sentences, children will take part in reading practice sessions twice a week. Children will then have the opportunity to take this book home which is matched to each child's reading level. Reading practice session books to be sent home alongside class library book.

To promote our love for reading, we invite parents in to the classroom to be a 'Mystery Storyteller'. One parent from each class is invited into the classroom each week to read a story to the children. In addition, in Reception, children have the opportunity to take part in our 'Reading Challenge' (Bronze, Silver and Gold). Children are sent home a reading booklet and each time they read a book at home, children colour in a star in their booklet. Once they have completed the booklet children receive a special sticker and certificate in assembly. Furthermore, each classroom in Reception has a voting station so that children are making choices about the book they would like to be shared at the end of the school day. This helps to promote British Values as children will understand that their views count, their opinions are important, be encouraged to make decisions and to value each other's views.

We introduce 'yellow books' in the Autumn term and each week we alternate between a literacy and maths activity. These activities may include writing about a half term holiday, describing a character from a story or writing about a school trip.

### **Mathematics**

Mathematics involves providing children with opportunities to develop a deep understanding of numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers. Children are provided with frequent and varied opportunities to build and apply this understanding through using a range of manipulatives, including small pebbles and tens frames for counting. In addition, there are rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures, looking for patterns and relationships and having a go.

The maths 'yellow book' activities link in with the learning that week such as recognising and ordering number cards to 5 and then 10, sharing objects equally and combining two groups.

### **Understanding the world**

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places and the environment. 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. At Bounds Green School, we welcome these first hand experiences, from a trip to the theatre to visits from important people in our community. 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.

Our mud kitchen in our outdoor area is key in providing a variety of different learning opportunities including sensory, imaginative, creative and exploratory play. These learning opportunities include exploring the properties, colours and textures of mud and discovering how the ingredients affect properties, exploring the environment through their senses, enact the world around them, using their imagination, problem solving and working with others.

### **Expressive arts and design**

Expressive arts and design involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, supporting children's imagination and creativity. We provide opportunities for children to share their thoughts, ideas and feelings through art, music, movement, dance and role-play.

## **The Characteristics of Effective Learning**

The characteristics of effective learning are the factors which play a central role in children's development. They are vital elements which support the transition process from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Year One.

The role of the practitioner is crucial in developing high quality play in the learning environment. This includes resourcing a challenging environment, supporting children's learning through planned and spontaneous play, and extending and building on children's experiences and interests. In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice.

Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

**Playing and exploring-** Children explore, investigate and experience things and 'have a go';

**Active learning-** Children concentrate and persevere if they encounter difficulties and enjoy their achievements.

**Creating and thinking critically-** Children have and develop their own ideas, make links and connections between their play and experiences, and develop strategies for doing things.

## Learning and Teaching

Staff believe that learning for young children is a rewarding and enjoyable experience in which they explore, investigate, discover, create, practise, rehearse, repeat, revise and consolidate their developing knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes.

During the Early Years, many of these aspects are brought together effectively through playing and talking.

Effective learning involves:

- Children initiating activities that promote learning and enable them to learn from each other
- Children learning through movement and their senses
- Children having time to explore ideas and interests in depth
- Children feeling secure, which will help to promote confident learners
- Children learning in different ways and at different rates
- Children making links in their learning
- Creative and imaginative play activities that promote the development and use of language.

We believe that teaching is the process whereby children are systematically helped to make connections in their learning and are actively led forward to reflect and make use of what they have already learnt.

Teaching has many aspects, including planning and creating a learning environment, organising time and resources, interacting, questioning, responding to questions, working with and observing children, assessing and recording children's progress and sharing knowledge gained with other practitioners and parents.

Effective teaching requires:

- Effective Early Years practitioners who encourage learning and development, through play and teaching.
- Creating a secure, stimulating environment using imagination to help children to learn.
- Practitioners who model a range of positive behaviour
- Planning experiences and activities that are challenging but achievable Using language that is rich and grammatically correct
- Teaching new vocabulary through modelling and explanation
- Using conversation and carefully framed questions
- Direct teaching of skills and knowledge
- Promoting positive attitudes to learning through interaction and support

- Planning both indoor and outdoor learning environments
- Skilful and well-planned observations of children
- Working in partnership with parents and carers to support their children.
- Assessing children's development and progress
- Identifying the next step in children's learning to plan for individual children's progress.

### **Value of Play**

Well-planned continuous provision, both indoors and outdoors, is an important way in which young children learn. It is the process through which children explore, investigate, recreate and understand the world in which they live. It is a vital component of children's lives and is the medium through which skills can be developed and practised. The role of the practitioner is crucial in developing high quality play in the learning environment. This includes planning and resourcing a challenging environment, supporting children's learning through planned and spontaneous play, and extending and developing children's language and communication. Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice.

### **Assessment**

Reception children now take part in a statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). The RBA is a short, interactive and practical assessment of each child's early literacy, communication, language and mathematics skills which will be carried out in the first 6 weeks of your child starting in Reception. It will be undertaken by your child's class teacher and will measure your child's progress from reception to year 6. The data will only be accessed by the DFE. When your child reaches year 6, you will be able to see the progress your child has made throughout their school journey. If you wish to read further on the reception baseline, then you can find a useful parent booklet here;

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reception-baseline-assessment-information-for-parents>

Assessment in the Early Years is constructive and is carried out through observations- both informal and planned. The vast majority are made whilst the child is involved in child-initiated experiences. Bounds Green School uses the Evidence Me assessment tool to collect evidence and record children's experiences. Foundation Stage staff are trained to use observations as the basis for planning, observing children to identify their achievements, interests and next steps for learning. These observations then lead the direction of the planning.

SIMS is used termly to track children's progress at different points in the year. When assessing children's progress, practitioners will also take into account a collection of perspectives including, those of the child, parents/ carers and other adults who have significant interactions with the child.

The framework requires that the EYFS profile (a statutory assessment of children's development at the end of the early years foundation stage), is carried out in the final term of the year in which a child reaches five years old. It is made up of an assessment of the child's outcomes in relation to the 17 ELG descriptors and summarises and describes children's attainment at the end of the EYFS. The primary uses of the EYFS profile data are to inform parents about their child's learning and development against the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) and the characteristics of effective learning. In addition, the data is used to support a smooth transition to Key Stage 1 by establishing a professional dialogue between EYFS and KS1 teachers and to support Year 1 teachers to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children. Practitioners are expected to use their professional judgement to make these assessments, based on their knowledge and understanding of what the child knows, understands, and can do.

### **Role of Parents**

The EYFS Team is keen to develop an effective partnership with parents. We recognise that parents are the children's first and most enduring educators and that in order to have a positive impact on a

child's development and learning, it is essential to develop a close working relationship with parents and carers, based on mutual respect. The Early Years team is always happy to talk to parents about any issues as they arise and communication between home and school is fundamental to children's learning. Targets are shared with children termly and during parent consultations.

### **The Role of Additional Adults**

The Nursery and Reception classes are supported by qualified Nursery nurses. They are involved in planning, assessment, teaching and liaison with parents. They have a special role to fulfil and the following list is seen as some of the qualities and skills they bring to the team:

- To assist in providing a full range of activities which meet the emotional, physical, social and intellectual needs of the children;
- To learn with groups of children for various activities in the different curriculum areas;
- To participate in the preparation of the learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, before the children arrive and with classroom management during the session;
- To make observations and monitor progress of the children and share these with other early years practitioners;
- To contribute to the planning of the curriculum to meet the needs of individual children;
- To contribute with regards to record keeping and reports as required by the teacher;
- To provide first aid (if trained)
- To help children acquire self-help skills including toileting and personal hygiene as necessary;
- To work closely with parents and carers, providing a welcoming environment;
- To assist with the tidying up of materials and organisation of resources used during the sessions;
- To help with creating displays;
- To attend staff meetings and courses when required.
- To attend Early Years meetings and contribute their knowledge and ideas.

### **Starting Nursery/ Reception**

Starting school can be a difficult time for young children; we therefore plan this time carefully to support children with the transition and to ensure it is as smooth as possible for each child and that they settle in to their new class quickly and happily.

Parents of all children starting in the foundation stage will be invited to an induction meeting in the Summer term to meet their child's new teachers and other key staff and to get an overview of the school. We have a thorough settling in process for the Nursery and Reception children before they start. A home visit will take place for all children in Nursery and all new children in our Reception classes. As the transition from home to an early years setting can be difficult for parents and children, home visits can help smooth the transition to the early years setting. Meeting practitioners for the first time on their home territory, where they feel secure, is reassuring for children and enhances the relationship between the setting and the home benefiting both the child and parent, and the practitioner. Visits can also provide practitioners with invaluable background information, enabling them to respond sensitively and appropriately to questions and situations concerning family life once the child is at the setting.

### **Nursery**

In September, new Nursery children are invited to attend a stay and play session. Nursery children have a staggered start, with the size of the class starting as a small group then increasing incrementally each day until all the children are in attendance. This gives the children a chance to become familiar with each other and the adults they will be working with. At the end of the Nursery year in the final term, Nursery children are given an opportunity to visit Reception.

In Nursery (Heathrow) there are 60 children at one time within the setting, some of which will transfer to our Reception classes. Applications for Reception places should be completed via the Haringey admissions website.

### **Starting Reception**

In Reception we have three class known as Paddington, Canary Wharf and Elephant and Castle. Children starting Reception are given an opportunity to come in to school in September to meet their new class teacher and other children in their class. In September, children begin with several half day sessions, which then become whole day sessions once we feel the children have settled. This allows the children to adapt to the longer days over time. Children settle at different rates and so, if we feel a child needs some additional settling in time, we will speak to the parent directly.

At the end of the Reception year, teachers and early year's practitioners meet to create three new classes for year 1.

### **Transition**

At the end of the year teachers and practitioners will meet and discuss the children transitioning to a new class. This transition time is extremely important and it is essential that the children are well prepared and parents have an understanding of the next step in their child's education. The transition between Reception to Year 1 is carefully planned, and parents are invited to a 'Meet the teacher' meeting to discuss this transition to Key Stage One and understand the National Curriculum. In addition, children have the opportunity to meet their new class teacher and spend a day in their new class in the summer term.

### **Safeguarding and Child Protection**

Please read our school policy which provides all the relevant information regarding our Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures.

### **Equal Opportunities**

We believe that children should have equal access to the Early Years curriculum. All staff should have an awareness of what Equal Opportunities means in principle as well as in practice. Practitioners should plan to meet the needs of all children; children with SEN, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children with EAL, children from disadvantaged backgrounds, children from all social and cultural backgrounds and children of different ethnic groups. Lessons are planned to support the needs of all our children to ensure they make progress in their learning.