



# Early Years Foundation Stage

**Signed:**

**Chair:** *R. Patrick*

**Executive Head:** *S. Stevenson*

**Date:** 12<sup>th</sup> February 2025

**Review date:** February 2027



### Intent

At Bursley Academy we place great value on the development of children as individuals and providing them with the skills, knowledge and understanding they need to prepare them for the challenges in Key Stage One and beyond. Our calming **environment provides a multi-sensory experience** filled with well-paced and variable **learning opportunities that build the children's knowledge** and develop skills in all areas of learning laid out in the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework 2021. Our children are continuously immersed in **active and enjoyable experiences, we develop resilience and challenge their learning** as they revisit activities in different ways.

Our curriculum is designed around what we know our pupils need so that they can gain the knowledge, skills and understanding they require for success. They can only do that if we embed the right practices for learning through the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning – Play and Exploration, Active Learning and Creative and Critical Thinking.

Some of our children arrive below national expectations for their age. We have to teach them how to listen, speak and meet the high expectations for behaviour by working together and being kind. As such, we prioritise **Personal, Social and Emotional Development** and **Communication and Language** in Nursery. Our enabling environment and warm, skilful adult interactions support the children as they begin to link learning to their play and exploration. As the pupils move into Reception, we invest time and energy into helping pupils set and reflect on their own goals by aiming high and developing a love of reading, writing and number. This is delivered through a holistic curriculum which maximises opportunities for meaningful cross-curricular links and learning experiences as well as promoting the unique child by offering extended periods of play and sustained thinking following children's interests and ideas. We value imagination and creativity and seek to create a sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning through indoor and outdoor provision, alongside trips, visits and forest school sessions.

Our aim in the EYFS is to build strong foundations rooted in academic success as well as development, so that ultimately our pupils go on to be happy, curious life-long learners.

### Implement

Pupils learn through a balance of child-initiated and adult-directed activities. The timetable is carefully structured so that children have rigorous directed teaching in Literacy, maths and phonics everyday with regular circle time sessions.

Children are provided with plenty of time to engage in 'exploration' throughout the variety of experiences carefully planned to engage and challenge them in the provision. The curriculum is planned for the inside and outside classrooms and equal importance is given to learning in both areas. The curriculum is planned in a cross-curricular way to enable all aspects of the children's development including understanding the world and expressive art and design as well as to promote sustained thinking and active learning.

Reading is at the heart of our curriculum. Children follow the rigorous phonics program of Little Wandle, so that they meet good outcomes for reading with almost all children passing the Year One phonics screening. We follow White Rose Maths approach in Reception with an emphasis on studying key skills of number, calculation and shape so that pupils develop deep understanding and the acquisition of mathematical language. Pupils learn through games and tasks using concrete manipulatives which are then rehearsed and applied to their own learning during exploration. These early mathematical experiences are carefully designed to help pupils remember the content they have been taught and to support them with integrating their new knowledge across the breadth of their experiences and into larger concepts.

Our inclusive approach means that all children learn together but we have a range of additional intervention and support to enhance and scaffold children who may not be reaching their potential or moving on children who are doing very well. This includes, for example, WellComm; keep-up phonics, and maths interventions. Depending on the cohort we also run, social interaction interventions, gross motor and fine motor interventions. The characteristics of effective learning are viewed as an integral part of all areas of learning and are reflected in our observations of children.

Our regular monitoring of teaching and learning includes observations from SLT and feedback and team meetings led by the EYFS co-ordinator.



### Impact

We recognise that every child is unique and that they develop and learn in different ways and at varying rates. We want all of our children to develop a positive attitude to learning and therefore we strive for our children to become curious, resilient and self-assured in order to prepare them for the next stage of education, laying secure foundations for future learning and development.

### Continuous Provision

Indoors and outdoors resources are organised to develop children's skills in personal interaction and exploration and are linked to cultural capital of the cohort and current assessment data. Resources are carefully selected to meet the development needs of the children in order to enhance potential for new learning and consolidate prior learning. Resources are dressed/displayed to reflect children's interests – discover, experiment and explore our key themes. Continuous provision transcends all areas of learning and provides children with the opportunity to demonstrate the three characteristics of effective learning. Children are given the freedom to make independent choices and are encouraged to be active learners and take control of their own learning.

### Teaching

In partnership with parents, the school will promote the learning and development of children to ensure they are ready for the next stage of education.

The EYFS provision and practice will be based on an observation of children's needs, interests and stages of development. Learning and development in school will be planned to reflect these interests and individual circumstances in order to provide each child with a challenging and enjoyable experience.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape education programmes in EYFS settings. These are split into two important and interconnected sections – prime and specific:

The 'prime' areas of learning and development are:

- Communication and language:
  - Listening, attention and understanding
  - Speaking
- Physical development:
  - Gross motor skills
  - Fine motor skills
- Personal, social and emotional development:
  - Self-regulation
  - Managing self
  - Building relationships

The 'specific' areas of learning and development are:

- Literacy:
  - Comprehension
  - Word reading
  - Writing
- Mathematics:
  - Numbers
  - Numerical patterns
- Understanding the world:
  - Past and present
  - People, culture and communities – The natural world



- Expressive arts and design:
  - Creating with materials
  - Being imaginative and expressive

In organising and implementing educational programmes, the school will ensure that a broad range of activities and experiences are planned, having regard to three characteristics of effective teaching and learning in the EYFS:

- Playing and exploring – children investigate and experience things, use what they know in their play and are willing to try new things.
- Active learning – children concentrate, keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy their achievements.
- Creating and thinking critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and use what they already know to learn new things, and develop strategies for doing things.

Further information regarding learning and development, including how these link to and underpin the national curriculum in KS1 and beyond, will be set out in the school's Early Years Teaching and Learning Policy.

We ensure there is a balance of child- initiated learning through continuous provision, and adult led activities, across the school day. Although much of the time is spent with children self-selecting tasks, the interaction between the adult and child is essential. The adults respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. The adult's role is to continually model, demonstrate and question what the child is doing. In some cases, the adult will ask a child to complete a task with them; at other times they will participate in the child's play, extending it where possible.

There are set routines that we follow each day. There are designated times when the children come together to be taught and we focus on math's, literacy, phonics, stories and topic work. These times provide the opportunity for children to develop their ability to work as a group to listen, to take turns, to answer and concentrate. Whole class reading and story time are important parts of the day. We want our children to develop a life-long love of reading. 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 make sure there is always time for a whole class story during the day, as well as opportunities to enjoy books within the continuous provision. The children 'vote' for a book they want to listen to during snack. In Reception every child is provided with their own book bag and will receive a 'reading' book once a week. In school they will share this book with an adult either on a one to one basis or in a group. They will also have the opportunity to select a book for enjoyment from the school library on a weekly basis.

### **Planning**

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum provides the basis for planning in our Nursery and Reception classes (Foundation Stage). The planning objectives within the Foundation Stage are supported by the Development Matters Statements from the Early Years Foundation Stage document. Our planning is based upon our Crucial Knowledge document which lays out the knowledge that we want our children to know before they leave each phase. We have themes with discrete lessons in phonics, reading, writing and maths. Practitioners select themes according to children's interests, experiences and prior learning. Progress and curriculum coverage are monitored half-termly. Each learning area in the classrooms and outdoor areas have provision plans, which identify learning opportunities and suggested enhancements. Staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice. They also respond to children's social and emotional needs as well as their academic achievement.

### **Assessment**

At Bursley Academy, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Practitioners observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. Observation and responding to children's thinking inform our planning of experiences and opportunities, how we create our environment for thinking, the strategies the adults use to extend learning (modelling, scaffolding, questioning, discussion, shared sustained thinking) and how we capitalise knowledge of children's interests to ensure high



## Bursley Academy

### Early Years Foundations Stage Policy

levels of engagement. All adults record observations– when a child does or says something that demonstrates progress or skill in a particular area.

A continuous cycle of observation, assessment and planning is embedded throughout our EYFS provision.

Observations are recorded on Marvellous Me which parents can access. Assessment data will be shared with parents during parents evening. At the end of the EYFS (end of Reception), practitioners complete the EYFS profile (Statutory requirement) for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are;

- 'Expected' - meeting expected levels of development
- 'Emerging'- not yet reaching the expected levels of 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, practitioners will discuss this with the child's parents/carers and agree how to support the child.

Staff input data three times a year as well as producing a gap analysis document.

#### **Parent Partnership**

We believe that education is a shared responsibility between school and home. We therefore work very closely to ensure that parents/carers are involved in their child's education, and provide them with a newsletter 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 online observations and parents evenings. We understand the importance of parents/carers views, so provide opportunities for feedback throughout the school year. We offer workshops to provide parents with an insight into how we teach specific areas of the Early Years Curriculum, detailing ways in which they can support their child's learning at home. These sessions also give parents/carers the opportunity to work with their child in the school environment.

#### **Inclusion**

All children will be valued as individuals irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. The Inclusion Policy will ensure that the needs of all children are met, regardless of any protected characteristics they have.

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy will ensure all children receive the support they need and are given the best learning experience possible. SEND in the EYFS setting will be monitored and managed by the school's SENCO.

The EYFS curriculum will be planned in order to meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace.