

BRIXHAM CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL



**Brixham C of E
Primary School**

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS Policy)

Date:	May 2020	Approved by:	FGB
Review Period:	Annually	Next Review:	February 2021

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1. INTRODUCTION

This document outlines the philosophy, aims and principles of early years learning and teaching at Brixham Church of England Primary School. The document underpins practice in all areas of provision.

“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 up¹.”

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Brixham C of E Primary we greatly value the important role that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development, however we also believe early childhood is valid in itself, as part of life. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

The EYFS applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. At Brixham C of E Primary the EYFS applies to children attending from the age of three years to the end of the Reception year when they are five years of age. It seeks to provide:

- **Quality and consistency** in all EYFS settings, so that every child makes good progress and no child is left behind.
- **Secure foundation** through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of individual children and are assessed and reviewed regularly.
- **Partnership working** between practitioners and parents/carers.
- **Equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

1.1 About the school – our Ethos

At Brixham Church of England Primary School we aim to provide education based on the principles and practices of the Church of England. Christian values underpin all aspects of the school. We foster a particular ethos which rests upon:

- Care and respect for others
- Collective worship within a Christian tradition
- Celebrating diversity in school and the wider community
- Respect for other cultures and faiths
- Inclusive practices with a commitment to providing equal opportunities to all

¹ “Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage”, Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2017.

- Maintaining high expectations in every aspect of school life
- The development of healthy, content, happy and independent learners
- Help children to learn that courtesy, good manners and consideration for others are very important qualities
- Treat each child as an individual regardless of gender, nationality, religion or ability and provide teaching appropriate to their need.

We are fortunate to have strong links with All Saint's Church, where we attend and participate in services every year. The school aims to provide a happy, safe and secure environment where all members of the community are treated with respect. We encourage good manners and responsible behaviour and foster a positive attitude to learning by commending positive behaviour, effort and achievement through our consistent system of rewards.

1.2 Our Values

Values are fundamental expressions of what we think and believe. As a school we encourage children to think about personal and social values, to become aware of and be involved in the life and concerns of their community and society, and so develop their capacity to be active and effective future citizens.

Our core values are...

Passion
 Aspiration
 Inspire
 Compassion
 Responsibility

2. INDUCTION AND ADMISSION

We have an adjoining Neighbourhood Nursery called 'The Nest' Children often join our pre-school class from the nursery. Our Early Years staff work closely with staff from The Nest to ensure continuation in the children's development. 'Day care' children from the nursery enjoy spending time in our pre-school with children that are receiving primary education sessions provided by our teaching staff. During these sessions the nursery children are supported by their key worker from The Nest.

Before children start at our Ducklings Pre-School, the children and their parents/carers are welcomed into our setting for a minimum of 2 'settling-in' sessions as well as receiving a home visit from members of staff. These sessions enable the children to meet and make friends with the other children in the pre-school and the members of staff that they will come into contact with while in the setting.

It also provides parents/carers with an opportunity to see our daily routines, understand our expectations, to meet the members of staff and ask any questions they may have. We strongly believe it is **how the children learn and not what they learn** that is important. Helping parents to understand this process is key to our provision. Information about the day-to-day organisation of the pre-school, the staff, term dates and basic information pertinent to the well being of the child is given to the parents/carers during the 'settling-in' sessions.

During a home visit, we attempt to make strong links between home and school and we find that it helps the children to settle more easily at our pre-school. We find out about specific interests that the children may have and use this information to plan individual learning opportunities for them. Importantly, prospective parents/carers are offered a meeting with school staff in the Autumn Term before they apply for a school place the following year. This enables parents/carers to make a well-informed choice about which school to apply for and have a better understanding of the application process.

3. RECEPTION TRANSITION

In the Summer Term, parents/carers of children who will come to Brixham C of E Primary School in the coming year are invited to a transition meeting. Parents/carers are introduced to the Headteacher, teachers and support staff. At this, meeting parents/carers receive information about the school, booklets from the Local Authority and those produced by the school to support parents/carers with possible ways to help their children begin their school life. During the meeting parents are informed about class organisation, induction and admission arrangements. Parents and carers have the opportunity to ask questions and share ideas of how to help their child prepare for school. This is the first step in establishing a positive working relationship between home and school.

We are extremely lucky at Brixham C of E Primary that we have excellent transition arrangements within the EYFS. We pride ourselves on being a close team that works together for the benefit of all children in the Foundation Stage. All children in the Foundation Stage have access to our free-flow outdoor classrooms. This enables the children to become acquainted with surroundings and adults across the Foundation Stage. Staff inter-change throughout the EYFS during the year so the children know each member of staff before they begin in Class Reception. Children joining us from different settings are offered a minimum of 2 transition days.

In September (Autumn Term), all children have the opportunity to attend full time. Initially, all children are at school on a part time basis in their first 2 weeks, attending a morning session in week 1 and then staying for lunch in week 2.

4. AIMS OF FOUNDATION STAGE

It is every child's right to grow up safe, healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and with economic well-being. At Brixham C of E Primary the overarching aim of the EYFS is to help young children achieve these five "Every Child Matters" outcomes.

We aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to his/her full potential. Each child is valued as an individual and learning and teaching is based on the understanding that children develop at different rates. Our aims, below, underpin everything we do and plan for our children.

- provide a safe, challenging, stimulating and caring environment which is sensitive to the needs of the child.
- provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for future learning and development.
- to ensure play is valued as much as the child's work.
- to provide opportunities for children to experience success and pleasure in learning, fostering independence and self-confidence.

- to develop effective home-school liaison, recognising that parents/carers are the first educators.
- provide opportunities for children to learn through planned, purposeful play in all areas of learning and development in the indoor and outdoor environment.
- use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress.
- ensure that all children feel valued, respected and included and that classroom resources and activities reflect the culture and language of their homes.

5. THE CURRICULUM, LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The early learning goals (the knowledge, skills and understanding which young children are expected to have acquired by the end of the reception year) and the educational programmes (the matters, skills and processes which are required to be taught to young children) are set out in the “Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage” document (Department for Children Schools and Families, 2017).

Children are provided with a broad and balanced curriculum utilising both the indoor and outdoor environments, which cover all seven areas of learning. There is a balance of child-led and adult-led activities. The curriculum is arranged so that children may achieve and indeed exceed, the Early Learning Goals² which are expectations for the end of the Foundation Stage. The curriculum is not compartmentalised into separate areas but all areas are covered nevertheless. Experiences are a mixture of child-led and adult-led which presents the curriculum as a coherent and integrated whole. Our practice is built on the four identified themes that support the development, learning and care of young children.

EYFS has 4 guiding principles that should shape practice in early years settings. The principles are:

- **A Unique Child** – every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- **Positive Relationships** – children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- **Enabling Environments** – children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- **Learning and Development**- children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

Within the curriculum there are 3 ‘prime areas’ of learning and 4 ‘specific areas’. The ‘prime areas’, particularly crucial for setting a foundation for learning, are:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)

² "Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage September 2017 (Department for Education and Skill- setting the Standards for Learning Development and Care for children from birth to five)."

- Communication and Language (CAL)
- Physical Development (PD)

The 4 'specific areas' of learning are:

- Mathematical Development (MD)
- Literacy (Lit)
- Understanding the World (UW)
- Expressive Arts and Design (EAD)

At Brixham C of E Primary we believe these seven areas depend upon each other to support a rounded approach to child development. We aim to deliver all the areas through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. To ensure that our teaching is effective we will:

- work in partnership with parents.
- plan challenging experiences and activities.
- identify specific learning objectives and skills to ensure that the needs of each individual are met.
- model a range of positive behaviour.
- use conversation and open-ended questions to develop vocabulary and challenge thinking.
- use a range of teaching strategies, based on children's learning needs.
- extend and enhance children's play.
- directly teach skills and knowledge.
- lead children into finding out for themselves.
- interact and support children in a way that promotes positive attitudes of learning.
- *Make sure the children feel safe and happy enabling them to learn more readily.*
- value the contribution of all children.
- challenge racial, religious, disability and gender stereotypes.
- use materials that positively reflect diversity, free from any discrimination.
- plan the outdoor and indoor experiences carefully to provide a positive context for learning and teaching.
- provide opportunities for children to engage in activities of their choice that they are motivated to explore.
- assess children's development and progress for planning next steps.
- provide opportunities for children to work in small groups, in pairs, individually or as part of a whole group.

6. PLANNING

Our planning and objectives are derived from the 'Development Matters Statements' (non-statutory guidance, 2012).

As part of our planning we consider the individual way the children learn. Our short term plans are detailed and are made at team meetings on a week-to-week basis. They provide a good balance across the different areas of learning. Staff observations, evaluations and children's records inform these plans. The planned learning, objectives and learning outcomes are identified and a completed copy is displayed on our planning board for both staff and parents to view. Teachers identify a daily programme in a way that is appropriate to their group of children. Teacher's daily plans identify which tasks are directed and undirected, curriculum areas in which children will be working, observation/assessment opportunities and the work of other adults in the room. We embrace unplanned learning opportunities initiated by the children themselves, or spontaneously by staff and allow time and flexibility to capitalise on these.

7. ASSESSMENT

At Brixham C of E Primary school we analyse and review what we know about each child's development and learning and then make informed decisions about the child's progress. This enables us to plan the next steps to meet their development and learning needs. We very much focus upon the 'unique child' and what they **can do** rather than what they can't do. All practitioners who interact with the child contribute to the assessment process.

Assessment is used to:

- identify, recognise and value previous knowledge and achievement.
- inform future planning.
- identify and respond to children with special needs.
- enable teachers to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum.

Judgement of children's development and learning is based on skills, knowledge, understanding and behaviour that they demonstrate consistently and independently in a range of situations.

The EYFS Profile summarises all of the formative assessment undertaken and makes statements about the child's achievements against seventeen aspects. It summarises children's progress towards the early learning goals. It is updated regularly throughout the year by the class teachers.

Observations may be planned formally with specific learning objectives in mind or can occur informally in on-going situations. Children's progress is assessed by:

- observing
- listening
- discussing
- involving the child in his/her assessment
- keeping dated samples of work
- keeping anecdotal notes
- photographic evidence
- involving parents
- using the information that parents give about their child

Records include:

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile: Staff assess where children are in their development when they join our school. This forms a 'baseline assessment' of the child and begins a continuous ongoing assessment in all seven areas of learning. This represents the standard national form used to assess children at the end of Foundation Stage. It provides a rounded picture of a child's progress and development in relation to the learning goals at the end of EYFS. The EYFS profile for each child at the end of the academic year in which they reach five is completed and shared with their parents, their next teacher and the Local Authority. Every child is expected to achieve a 'Good Level of Development' (GLD).

Online Learning Journal: In the Foundation Stage every child has a Learning Journal. Each week staff will continue to evaluate and update these journals, including suggested 'next steps'. These 'next steps' help to inform our planning and assessments. Parents are encouraged to add to the online journal, to read through them and add their own comments regarding their child's interests and successes. The online platform used for this is Tapestry

Meetings: Regular meetings with parents/carers of children with Special Educational Needs. Parents receive and sign copies of all Educational Health Care Plans and reviews.

Reading records: Including comments written in home-school diaries and the identified learning objectives for reading for each child and how well they are achieved.

Pre-School Report: Every child who leaves the pre-school to start school is given an end of year report. The 'Characteristics of Learning' are reported on and are key to all reports.

Parent consultations: These are held twice a year. Meetings with staff can be arranged at mutually convenient times throughout the year.

8. PLAY

"Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development³."

At Brixham C of E Primary School we do not make a distinction between work and play. We support children's learning through planned play activities, through observation of child-initiated or adult-led play activities and then provide the most effective learning opportunities. We believe that it is important for adults to support children's learning through play, by getting involved in the play themselves. Through this philosophy we 'learn together'. Roles of the adults in play involves:

- taking part e.g. suggesting scenarios, modelling play.
- carefully planning and organising to provide for and extend learning.
- introducing new or changing resources to ensure play doesn't become repetitive, low-level and superficial. We will ensure our structured play poses fresh challenges, adds stimulus and offers new experiences.
- providing enough time for children to develop their play.
- observing children to facilitate assessment and planning their next steps.
- giving children the freedom to be inventive.
- providing opportunities for children to play alone and in groups.

³ "Early Years Foundation Stage", Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2017

9. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

At Brixham C of E Primary School we aim to provide all pupils, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability, equal access to all aspects of school life and work to ensure that every child is valued fully as an individual. Practitioners, as role models, are aware of the influence of adults in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical ideas.

10. INCLUSION

Children with special educational needs will be given support as appropriate to enable them to benefit from the curriculum. Additional adult support may be provided for children with specific medical needs, thus increasing the adult/pupil ratio.

Educational Health Care Plans identify targets in specific areas of learning for those children who require additional support, in line with the school's SEND Policy. Staff would discuss these targets with the child's parents/ carers.

Progress is monitored and reviewed every term. The school's SEND co-ordinator is responsible for providing additional information and advice to staff and parents/carers and for arranging external intervention and support where necessary. For further information see SEND policy.

11. PARTNERSHIPS WITH PARENTS/CARERS

To have a positive impact on children's learning in the Foundation Stage we encourage parents and carers to become involved in the life of Brixham C of E Primary School by:

- taking the opportunity to make pre-selection visits with or without the child.
- attending induction meetings and reading admission packs. Parents/carers have the opportunity to share information with a member of staff on an individual basis so that Foundation Stage staff can prepare for children before they begin school.
- 'Open Door Policy' - coming into the classroom when they bring their children to school to:
 - (i) see the activities prepared for their children.
 - (ii) view teachers' short term plans displayed on the Parents' notice board so that families who wish to, can follow up or reinforce their children's learning at home.
 - (iii) talk informally with staff and share any concerns, ideas or information.
- attending consultations with class teachers to discuss the progress of their child
- attending workshops/ meetings to gain an understanding about the work of the school, the work their children are doing and how the work of school can be developed and extended at home so that a consistent approach is maintained.
- attend 'coffee mornings' or 'stay and play' sessions across the Foundation Stage.
- sharing books from the class and school libraries, supporting reading plans from school and reading books that are taken home.
- reading short booklets explaining ways on how they can support their children in their learning.

- reading the Class newsletters.
- regularly reading the school website and in particular our 'class blogs'
- sharing their child's learning journals which are used to record special moments or achievements.
- signing up to our home-school partnership agreement which states both parties will work together for the development of the children.
- reading an end of year report which identifies the areas of learning for children to be developed both at home and school.

12. HEALTH AND SAFETY

- Trained First Aid staff in each room. Also in Reception and Ducklings.
- All items of furniture and equipment are inspected before put into initial use.
- Non-slip flooring is used in wet areas.
- We encourage children to handle equipment with care.
- Risk assessments are carried out as required both inside and outside the classroom by staff.

13. STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The Senior Leadership Team and the Headteacher work closely together to identify any training needs within our staffing. These needs can and will also be identified by staff and are openly discussed at Foundation Stage meetings at school. All staff are involved in both training and other aspects of Professional Development, such as at annual reviews of performance.

Staff training may include:

- inset courses
- in-house training
- in cluster groups supported through Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership
- visits to playgroups, nursery or other schools

14. MONITORING

This policy will be reviewed annually.