

# Burwell Village College Primary School Parents' Guide to the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework

Exciting times ahead for you and your child

*"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 it's 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. **The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)** sets the standards that all children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children develop a broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life."*

(EYFS, DFE.)

## What is the Early Years Foundation Stage?

Welcome to the **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**, which is how the Government and early years professionals describe the time in your child's life between birth and age 5.

**For Burwell Primary this applies to Reception, the first year in school and last year of the EYFS.**

This is a very important stage as it helps your child get ready for school as well as preparing them for their future learning and successes. From when your child is born up until the age of 5, their early years experience should be happy, active, exciting, fun and secure; and support their development, care and learning needs.

Nurseries, pre-schools, **reception classes** and childminders registered to deliver the EYFS must follow a legal document called the **Early Years Foundation Stage Framework**.

## What is the EYFS Framework – why do we have one?

The EYFS Framework exists to support all professionals working in the EYFS to help your child, and was developed with a number of early years experts and parents.

In 2012 and 2014 the framework was revised to make it clearer and easier to use, with more focus on the things that matter most. This new framework also has a greater emphasis on your role in helping your child develop.

The framework has been revised again with changes to the statutory guidance coming in to effect in April 2017

The EYFS framework sets out:

- The legal welfare requirements that everyone registered to look after children must follow to keep your child **safe** and promote their welfare
- The 7 areas of **learning and development** which guide professionals' engagement with your child's play and activities as they learn new skills and knowledge
- Assessments that will tell you about **your child's progress** through the EYFS
- Expected levels that your child should reach at age 5, usually the end of the reception year; these expectations are called the "**Early Learning Goals (ELGs)**"

There is also guidance for the professionals supporting your child on planning the learning activities, and observing and assessing what and how your child is learning and developing.



## What does it mean for me as a parent?

### Ensuring my child's safety

Much thought has been given to making sure that your child is as safe as possible. Within the EYFS there is a set of welfare standards that everyone must follow. These include the numbers of staff required in a nursery, how many children a childminder can look after, and things like administering medicines and carrying out risk assessments.

### Quality

You can find out about the quality of your child's nursery and other early years providers in relation to the EYFS Framework by checking what the Government's official inspection body for early years, Ofsted, has to say about it. You can find this information at [www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report).

## How my child will be learning

The EYFS Framework explains how and what your child will be learning to support their healthy development.

Your child will be learning skills, acquiring new knowledge and demonstrating their understanding through **7 areas of learning and development**.

Children should mostly develop the **3 prime areas** first. These are:

- **Communication and language;**
- **Physical development;** and
- **Personal, social and emotional development.**

These prime areas are those most essential for your child's healthy development and future learning.

As children grow, the prime areas will help them to develop skills in **4 specific areas**. These are:

- **Literacy;**
- **Mathematics;**
- **Understanding the world;** and
- **Expressive arts and design.**

These 7 areas are used to plan your child's learning and activities. The professionals teaching and supporting your child will make sure that the activities are suited to your child's unique needs. This is a little bit like a curriculum in primary and secondary schools, but it's suitable for very young children, and it's designed to be really flexible so that staff can follow your child's unique needs and interests.

Children in the EYFS learn by playing and exploring, being active, and through creative and critical thinking which takes place both indoors and outside.



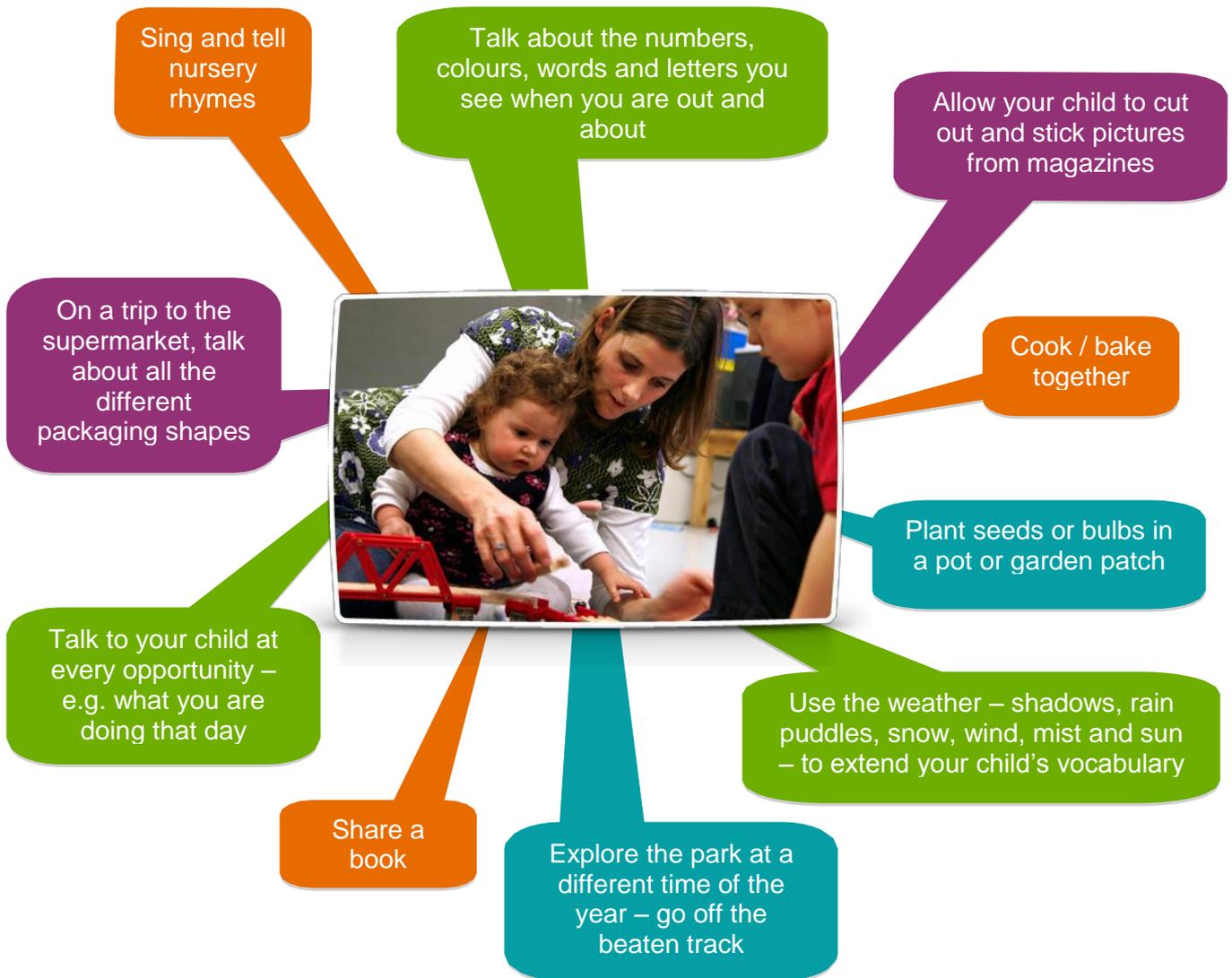
The diagram below gives examples of the areas of learning and development and shows the links between the way in which your child learns and what they learn. Please bear in mind that all children develop at different rates so these examples are for guidance only. They are taken from the Early Years Foundation Stage Development Matters document.



## As a mum or dad, how can I help with my child's learning?

All the fun activities that you do with your child at home are important in supporting their learning and development, and have a really long lasting effect on your child's learning as they progress through school.

Even when your child is very young and is not yet able to talk, talking to them helps them to learn and understand new words and ideas. If you make the time every day to do some of the following things with your child it will make a real difference to your child's confidence as a young learner.



If you're looking for new ideas for things to do then find out what is on offer at your local children's centre or pre-school. Many offer 'messy play' activities which you and your child can join in with, and many of the activities they provide are free. Staff can also give you advice about the kinds of books or other activities your child might enjoy at different ages.

## How can I find out how my child is getting on?

It is important that you and the professionals caring for your child work together. You need to feel comfortable about exchanging information and discussing things that will benefit your child. These conversations will either need to be with your childminder or, in a larger setting like a nursery, with your child's "key person". This is the person who:

- Is your main point of contact within the setting
- Helps your child to become settled, happy and safe
- Is responsible for your child's care, development and learning
- Takes a careful note of your child's progress, sharing this with you and giving you ideas as to how to help your child at home

**You should be able to get information about your child's development at any time and there are two stages (at age 2, and again at age 5) when the professionals caring for your child must give you written information about how he or she is doing.**

Try to speak to your child's key person as often as possible about what your child has been doing, what they have enjoyed, what they need to be doing more of and what you can do at home.



## When your child is 2

At some point after your child turns 2, the professionals working with your child must give you a written summary of how your child is progressing against the 3 prime areas of learning:

- communication and language;
- physical development; and
- personal, social and emotional development. This is called **the progress check at age 2**.

This check will highlight areas where your child is progressing well and any where they might need some extra help or support – and how mums and dads and other family members or carers can work with the key person to help. You might find it useful to share the information from the check with other professionals such as health visitors (who can use it as part of the health and development review).



## When your child is 5 – EYFS in Reception Year.

At the end of the EYFS – in the summer term of the reception year in school – teachers complete an assessment which is known as the **EYFS Profile**. This assessment is carried out by the reception teacher and is based on what they, and other staff caring for your child, have observed over a period of time.

Another important part of the EYFS Profile is your knowledge about your child's learning and development, so do let your child's class teacher know about what your child does with you: such as how confident your child is in writing their name, reading and talking about a favourite book, speaking to people your child is not so familiar with or their understanding of numbers.

All of the information collected is used to judge how your child is doing in the 7 areas of learning and development. Finding out at this stage how your child is doing will mean that the teacher your child has in their next school year – year 1 – will know what your child really enjoys doing and does well, as well as helping them decide if your child needs a bit of extra support, what that support should be and if they are already getting it.

The school will give you a report of your child's progress, including information from his or her EYFS Profile.

## Where can I go for further information?

The most important place to find out more is **your child's childminder or nursery** – do ask as many questions as you need to. Providers really do welcome speaking with you.

You may want to find out what is on offer at **your local children's centre**.

You can find the **Early Years Foundation Stage** which includes the early learning goals at [www.foundationyears.org.uk](http://www.foundationyears.org.uk). The foundation years website also includes a range of resources and contacts.



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# EYFS at Burwell: Learning in Reception

Educational research continues to inform us that children learn best when they are active and engaged in their learning. In planning and guiding children's activities, teachers reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

**playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go';

**active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements; and

**creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

## Types of Activities

In Class the activities will be:

- **Teacher input**- this is usually a short carpet session where the Teacher will introduce a concept. For example, ordering numbers to 10. The teacher may use a game or a song on the interactive whiteboard that the children can watch and participate in.
- **Focus activity** – the Teacher or the Teaching Assistant will work with small groups of children reinforcing and extending the concept through a practical activity. In relation to the example above, this could be ordering number tiles on a washing line, deciding the correct order and talking about which numbers are bigger/smaller.
- **Teacher directed activity** – this is an activity that has been set up in preparation to support the concept from Teacher input. A small group of children will be directed there to work independently. The teacher only intervenes to support the learning or correct any misconceptions.
- **Child initiated activities** - this is when the children are given opportunities to 'play', accessing resources independently and doing what interests and engages them, incorporating ideas and concepts from current/previous learning. Teachers will listen, observe, support and challenge children's play but will never guide the learning away from the child's own ideas and interests. For a child play is a time to reflect on their own learning, put ideas into practice in their own way and clarify their own understanding.

## REMEMBER

—  
*'Play is work  
for the  
child'.*

*(Froebel, 2008)*

# Learning Phonics at Burwell

Our practice in EYFS includes teaching children to read using guidance from 'Letters and Sounds' incorporating synthetic phonics. There are 6 stages to learning phonics which will be covered in Reception and beyond into Year 1 and 2. There is a link to the Jolly Phonics sounds and actions on the school website.

**Phoneme** is the sound the letter makes.

**Grapheme** is the written shape of the letter or letters.

## Phase 1

Activities are divided into seven aspects, including environmental sounds, instrumental sounds, body sounds, rhythm and rhyme, alliteration, voice sounds and finally oral blending and segmenting.

## Phase 2

Learning 19 letters of the alphabet and one sound for each. **Blending** sounds together to make words. **Segmenting** words into their separate sounds. Beginning to read simple captions.

**Set 1 - s a t p**

**Set 2 - i n m d**

**Set 3 - g o c k**

**Set 4 - c k e u**

## Phase 3

The remaining 7 letters of the alphabet, one sound for each. Graphemes such as **ch, oo, th** representing the remaining phonemes not covered by single letters. Reading captions, sentences and questions. On completion of this phase, children will have learnt the "simple code", i.e. one grapheme for each phoneme in the English language.

**Set 6 - j v w x**

**Set 7 - y z zz qu**

## Phase 4

No new grapheme-phoneme correspondences are taught in this phase. Children learn to blend and segment longer words with adjacent consonants, e.g. swim, clap, and jump. The main challenge in this phase is to help children to blend and segment words.

Phonics also introduces children to 'nonsense' words. **Nonsense** words may have no definition or meaning, for example; **zop, han, nooch, crat**, but teaches children the complexity of the English language and secures phonic knowledge and awareness.

## Phase 5 and 6 in Year 1 and 2

In the next years children move on to the "complex code". Children learn more alternative graphemes for the phonemes which they already know, plus different ways of pronouncing the graphemes they already know.

Working on spelling, including prefixes and suffixes, doubling and dropping letters etc.

## Parental Tips for Helping with Phonics

- Make it fun—Play hide and seek with objects or hunt for letters when out & about
- Write sounds while in the bath
- Make sounds from sticks, stone or paint them with water
- Spot letters in books and move forwards to identify words
- Make sure you pronounce them correctly!

# Early Reading and Writing at Burwell

## Terms to Help you with Letters and Sounds

**Phoneme** - The smallest unit of sound. There are approximately 44 phonemes in English (it depends on different accents). Phonemes can be put together to make words.

**Grapheme** - A way of writing down a phoneme. Graphemes can be made up from 1 letter e.g. p, 2 letters e.g. sh, 3 letters e.g. tch or 4 letters e.g. ough.

**Oral Blending** - This involves hearing phonemes and being able to merge them together to make a word. Children need to develop this skill before they will be able to blend written words.

**Blending**- This involves looking at a written word, looking at each grapheme and trying to work out which phoneme each grapheme represents and then merging these phonemes together to make a word. This is the basis of reading.

**Oral Segmenting** - This is the act hearing a whole word and then splitting it up into the phonemes that make it. Children need to develop this skill before they will be able to segment words to spell them.

**Segmenting** - This involves hearing a word, splitting it up into the phonemes that make it and working out which graphemes represent those phonemes and then writing those graphemes down in the right order. This is the basis of spelling.

## Remember...

We all make progress with reading and writing at different speeds. Some children will be ready to learn to read and write at the start of Reception and some children may need some more time to develop.

We are all here to work together, if you are worried about helping your child learn to read and write please speak with us.

## Ideas for helping with Early Reading

- Create a love of books—enjoy reading make it a happy time
- Let your child use the pictures to tell you a
- Enjoy it when children memorise the story and can 'tell' you the words on the page  
Spot words that your child knows in the book—  
Mum, Dad, dog or cat are often great words
- Find words that your child can segment and blend by themselves—set them up to impress you!
- Read everything—books, cereal packets, signs, number plates, posters—whatever takes their fancy!

## Ideas for helping with Early Writing

- Start writing on a big scale—outdoors with a paint brush or chalk
- Check and encourage your child to grip the tool correctly, using a pincer grip
- Play with playdough and plastecene to develop finger strength and control.
- Draw and copy patters—these will develop the writing motions of up and down strokes or rounds and diagonals
- Think about writing with your 'wrong' hand while wearing a glove—this is like writing for a child—it's tricky!
- Let them free write—they can tell you 'what is says' - marks and then letters have meanings!
- Watch out for children writing the first sound of the word they are sounding out
- Encourage spelling by sounding out the letters
- 'Check' how the word would look like in a book if your child asks
- Again have fun, don't make it a chore, make them love it!

# Early Maths at Burwell

Early maths at home involves number, shape and measure. By the end of Reception children need to read, write and order the number to 20. The activities below will help you engage

## Recognising Number

Choose a number for the week, e.g. 2.

Encourage your child to look out for this number all the time.

Can your child see the number 2 anywhere?

**at home** - in the kitchen or on pages in a book

**in the street** - on doors, on car number plates or on buses

**while out shopping** - on the shop till, on shelves, in shop windows

## Patterns and Games with numbers

Find two apples, toys, spoons, straws, sweets, etc. Make patterns, such as two knives, two forks, two spoons, two knives, two forks, two spoons...

Practise writing the number 2.

## Shape and Space

While you have all the items out of the cupboard— what shapes can you find?

Open up the packets—can you see a square and rectangle? What about other shapes?

Count the corners and sides—remember the names of the shapes and the number of corners and sides they have!

## Calculation—Play a Dice game

Use a 'dotted' dice and write the numbers 1 to 6 on a sheet of paper (or use the numbered animals).

Throw the dice. Can your child guess how many dots there are? Check by counting.

Ask your child which number on the paper matches the dots on the dice.

Add 2 numbers together—add the dots by counting, write a sum. Who can reach 20 first?

What would 1 less or 1 more than that number be? What about 2 more or 2 less?

## Counting

Practise counting. Start at 5, and count on from there to 11.

Start at 9, count back from there to zero.

Choose a different starting number each time.

Count using numbers to 10, 20 and then beyond to 100.

## Measure—Cupboard maths

Ask your child to help you sort a food cupboard out, putting **heavier** items on the lower shelf and **lighter** items on an upper shelf.

What about height—can you also sort the items according to height? Are the heaviest items always the tallest?

# Day to Day Routines at Burwell

At the start of Reception each day will bring something new—remember we are here to help.

The classroom door is open and children can enter between 8.50 and 9am for our drop off time. This is a great time to catch the Teaching Assistants to pass on any messages or to share in achievements at home. We know that all pupils are capable of coming in independently and settling down ready for register and lessons by 9am.

By 9am, when the door close we will be needing you to say a happy goodbye. If you want to talk to us in more detail we are more than happy to make an appointment after school.

## Sharing Home Learning

We love to share our learning. As the term progresses you will have the opportunity to share in our **Learning Journals**.

However, we love to celebrate things that have been learnt at home—riding a bike, making the bed or winning an award for swimming! Please feel free to bring things in to share—items that support our topic are always warmly welcomed.

Teachers also send out a weekly Newsletter outlining the learning for the next week.

## Reading Books

Children will bring home a 'book banded' reading book. The Bands are explained on the school website. These books are for you to share and read with your children every night.

We will explain where the books are found and how they are changed at the September meeting.

You are welcome to take more than one book, but please keep within the same colour band.

## Computing to Support Learning

There are some excellent website and apps to help with early learning.

Engaging with your child while they are playing and learning will really support them.

The BBC offer some excellent interactive games to help with phonics and maths.

Also Phonic Play can provide some excellent resources.

## Things to Bring to School Every Day

- Water Bottle
- PE Kit
- Coat—we do go outside if it is raining
- Wellies

## Parent induction:

Reception staff hold several meetings before your child starts school.

One to help prepare children for school is held before the offer of places has been made.

The main induction meeting is in May which explains the induction process.

The third is held at the start of the first term just after the children have settled in.