



**Beacon**  
Academy



# EYFS Policy

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Statutory or Best Practice Policy	Statutory
School or Trust Policy	School

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## Structure of the Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. Our Early Years Foundation Stage accommodates children from the age of 3 to 5 years. Our school has an Early Years provision supporting a large Nursery and reception cohort.

### Nursery :

Our Nursery offers up to 10 sessions per week and has the capacity to accommodate up to 40 children within one session. The Nursery accepts the extended 30 hours funding in addition to the universal funding for 3 and 4 years old, we also accept 2 year old funding where applicable. We offer Nursery places to children in the September following their third birthday. If we have spaces available mid-year, we will then invite children to join us in the term after their third birthday (ie start of Spring and Summer terms). On occasion, places permitting, children may join Nursery in the term in which they turn 3. Attendance during this term must be paid for by the parent, unless the child has 2 year old funding. In Nursery we follow the statutory guidance to ensure adult to child ratios are met and is over seen by a qualified teacher. Attendance at our nursery, however, does not guarantee a Reception place and parents/carers must reapply for a school place through the Cornwall Council School Admissions process.

Please see appendix 1 for full details of our Nursery offer.

### Reception :

Our Reception provision has the capacity to accommodate 60 children divided into 2 classes. Each class of 30 children are supported by a class teacher and a teaching assistant in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory guidance 2014 and revised in 2021.

To ensure best practice and continuity our foundation stage classes work closely together. The Nursery and Reception follow the non-statutory curriculum guidance Development Matters published March 2020 and revised July 2021

We welcome visits to our Nursery and Reception classes.

## Aims

- To give each child a positive and meaningful start to their school life, in which they can establish solid foundations on which to develop into confident and independent lifelong learners.
- To encourage children to develop independence within a secure and friendly atmosphere.
- To support children in building relationships through the development of social skills, such as cooperation and sharing.
- To help each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and by developing the confidence to work towards personal goals.
- Our high expectations will enable each child to develop socially, physically, intellectually, and emotionally and to achieve their full potential.
- To provide a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited opportunities for development through a wide range of new and exciting first-hand experiences that will give children the opportunity to consolidate, explore and test their skills, knowledge and understanding alongside existing experiences.
- To ensure that children are kept healthy and safe and that they achieve the knowledge and skills they need to start school.
- To offer a broad and balanced curriculum that gives children a broad range of knowledge and skills needed to make good progress through school life and beyond.

## The Curriculum

Nursery and Reception follow the non-statutory curriculum guidance Development Matters published March 2020 and revised July 2021 and the Statutory framework for Early Years Foundation Stage revised 2021, which are available on the school website or to download at [Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk)

and

[Development Matters - Non-statutory curriculum guidance for the early years foundation stage \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk)

The following policy details the specifics of our setting.

The EYFS is based upon seven key features of effective practice:

- The best for every child
- High quality care
- The curriculum – what we want children to learn
- Pedagogy: helping children learn
- Assessment: checking what children have learnt
- Self-regulation and executive function
- Partnership with parents

## Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning and the Nursery and Reception teachers plan activities with these in mind. The characteristics highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them. The three characteristics 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

**Creating and Thinking Critically** – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

## Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of **three prime** areas of learning:

- Communication and Language
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development

There are **four specific areas** of learning:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

At Beacon Academy all areas are delivered through a well-planned play-based approach, with a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities. Throughout the foundation stage our long, medium, and short-term plans ensure that each child has the opportunity to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in every area at the appropriate developmental level. Our long-term planning ensures coverage so that all children have opportunities to work towards and achieve the Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS. We follow the children's interests to inform us of our topics and areas of interest.

## Play

Learning through play underpins our approach to teaching and learning in the foundation stage. We embrace the fact that young children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them. In doing so we provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning to help them make sense of the world. Children have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own. They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experiences at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests, inspire those around them and consolidate their understanding and skills. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate, and ask questions. Our adults take an active role in child-initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating, teaching and extending play, skills and language.

## Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

Our whole school ethos, as well as that of the foundation stage, embraces inclusion. We recognise and respect the abilities and strengths of our children at all levels of development and the wealth of knowledge and experience that they bring from their differing backgrounds and cultures.

We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning and we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of individual children, so that children are able to reach their full potential. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children from all social, economic and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds. We aim to 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.

We will provide: a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children to help them to learn effectively; a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued; resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping; challenging activities for all children including for those whose ability and understanding are advanced. We will monitor children's progress and take action to provide support as necessary. Where a specific need is suspected we will liaise with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator and seek advice from outside agencies, such as the Speech and Language service, the Educational Psychologist and the Bi-lingual Support Services amongst others. We adhere to the Equal Opportunity and Inclusion policies of the school.

Early Years Pupil Premium – we will endeavour to identify our least advantaged pupils and inform parents or carers of their opportunity to apply for their child's entitlement to extra funding in school. All extra funding we receive will be used to support areas in which we identify that the child will best benefit. We will track children's progress to ensure that they are making good progress and to ensure that support is adjusted to target specific areas as the child develops.

## Assessment

Throughout Nursery and Reception children's knowledge, understanding, skills and achievements are assessed and tracked using the developmental stages set out in the non-statutory curriculum guidance Development Matters published March 2020 and revised July 2021.

Our assessment depends on us getting to know our children very well and to this end we gather information from a range of sources; observations of the children in play, in adult led activities, discussions with parents and carers and spending time talking to the children. We keep written and photographic evidence to help us build up a picture of children's strengths and achievements these also help us to plan for children's next steps in learning. Every child in Nursery and Reception has a 'Learning Journal' in which we record our observations and keep samples of the children's work.

At the start of both Nursery and Reception children are assessed to determine a baseline, or starting point, for their future learning. Judgements will be based on the adults' observations of children during activities and play. Parents/carers will be given information of these starting points and information about next steps in learning at a parent meeting midway through the Autumn term.

## Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA)

The Reception Baseline Assessment is a statutory report that must be completed in the first six weeks that a child starts Reception.

## Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP)

The Foundation Stage Profile, the end of year assessment of children's achievements in all areas of learning, is a statutory report. Observational evidence and samples of children's work throughout the school year will be used to assess children as 'emerging' or 'expected' based on their understanding and achievement of the Early Learning Goals set out in the EYFS statutory guidance revised September 2021 (pages 11-15).

Parents/carers will be given information of their child's achievements in a written report at the end of the summer term.

Throughout the year children's knowledge, skills and understanding will continue to be tracked throughout the foundation stage and assessed against the ELG's at the end of reception to establish an end of foundation stage achievement and learning profile for each child in preparedness for their transition to key stage one.

## Transitions

At Beacon Academy we recognise that starting school and moving up classes has the potential to be a stressful time for both children and parents. To this end we have established a strong procedure for transitions to ensure that our children and parents are as confident and secure as they can be when facing the challenges of each year group.

For Nursery children, we invite the child and their parent/s to have a number of stay and play visits in the summer term before they start. If they start mid-year, then we still encourage a number of visits with their parent so that they become more familiar with the environment and the staff.

For new Reception children we hold a meeting in the summer term before the children start school to provide parents with key information, school expectations, knowledge on our curriculum and assessment and advice on how they can help their child. In Nursery all parents are offered a home visit prior to their child starting school and in Reception all children who did not attend the Nursery are also visited, where possible. This gives children the security of meeting with their teachers in a safe, familiar environment and gives parents time to ask questions and share knowledge or any concerns they have about their child in a personal, private, and confidential way.



In the summer term Reception children have the opportunity to meet with their teachers in their classroom on two occasions. They also have the opportunity to experience a school lunch.

New Nursery children are given staggered entry times to ensure that they have the time to feel welcomed and to support them in exploring their new environment.

At the end of Reception children have the opportunity to meet with their new teachers in their classrooms during growth mindset week prior to starting Year 1. At the end of each school year teachers have the opportunity to share their knowledge of each child's knowledge, understanding and achievements, including EYFSP assessment data, with their next class teacher to ensure that all teachers have a well-rounded picture of the children prior to the new school year.

During children's time in Nursery and Reception a range of shared activities are planned for all classes to help develop children's confidence and to ensure continuity in experiences throughout the foundation stage. Children in both Nursery and Reception make use of the whole school facilities to ensure that children are confident and well prepared for moving around the school and mixing with older children as they progress through the school. Throughout the Reception year, when children are ready they are gradually introduced to whole school activities such as assemblies.

## Community Links

At Beacon Academy the foundation stage classes enrich learning and encourage strong links with the local area through local visits i.e. to The Beacon, the library, local emergency services as well as by inviting in members of the local community whenever we can.

## Partnership with Parents

We believe that parents and carers are a child's first educator and therefore work very closely to ensure they are involved in what their child does at school. We want parents to feel they can speak to us about their child and to feel comfortable in our setting. As well as the Nursery and Reception visit days we offer daily opportunities to our parents to give them the opportunity to share their child's learning environment, have time to talk informally with the practitioners and to meet other parents. We also offers parents a variety of learning workshops to provide advice and information on how they can support their child's learning. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to share information about their child, to ask questions and to discuss their child's learning with the teachers.

We believe that all parents have an important role to play in the education of their child. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. Parents are encouraged to join in with their child's education from the very start of their school journey. In Nursery and Reception all parents are invited to join in with a range of activities which support their children's learning.

At Beacon Academy we value the importance of the three-way relationship between children, parents, and staff, as it enables children to make good progress and maximise their potential. We want to listen to parents and to share information about their child's progress in a continuous and on-going way throughout the year. Formal parents meeting are offered termly, where parents have the opportunity of speaking with the teachers to discuss their child's progress and development, their next steps in learning.

## Health & Safety and Safeguarding

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe, and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance (revised 2021) and we adhere to the school's Safeguarding Policy.

We are a healthy school and our children under 5 receive free milk and all children have access to fresh water and free fruit from a government scheme. Reception children are eligible for free school meals or can choose to bring in a healthy packed lunch.

Each foundation stage classroom has access to toileting facilities and we teach the children the importance of hygiene, hand washing techniques and throughout the year we plan activities to give children knowledge and, where possible, experiences of a range of healthy food.

## Other Policies

This policy links with the following policies:

- Anti-bullying, Behaviour
- SEND
- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- E-Safety
- Equality and Diversity
- RSE
- Collective Worship
- Radicalisation
- See also annual Safeguarding assurance Section 157 and 175 of Education Act 2002.

**Review Date: April 2024**