



Belswains Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Guidelines

Intent

At Belswains Primary School we aim to provide a curriculum that is inspiring, inclusive and develops a lifelong love of learning in our pupils. We provide a wide range of cross-curricular learning opportunities, accessible to all pupils with different life experiences. This enables pupils to achieve their full potential and to become the 'best version of themselves'. We have high expectations for the learning of all our pupils. We instil a language for learning through the 'Characteristics of Effective Learning', which help to develop intrinsic motivation in our pupils. We aim for them to become confident and motivated learners, who acquire the self-belief to take risks and overcome new challenges in their learning. We provide opportunities for our pupils to grow their resilience and to identify that making mistakes is part of learning. We provide pupils with the opportunity to develop their sense of wellbeing, to identify their emotions and to choose strategies which enable them to self-regulate their feelings. We encourage independence in our pupils, which will equip them with personal life skills that they will carry with them throughout their time at Belswains Primary School and throughout their lives. We appreciate that all children are unique and we celebrate and welcome differences within our school community. Therefore, our curriculum is child centred, taking into account the interests of the pupils. A combination of planned learning activities and independent learning opportunities, enable our pupils to develop holistically. Furthermore, we aim to provide a wide range of experiences and high quality texts to develop enthusiastic and confident readers who acquire a love of reading.

Implementation

At Belswains Primary School we have designed a curriculum which is ambitious and promotes enthusiasm for learning in our pupils. Our curriculum follows the Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage 2021. Our curriculum is designed to develop specific knowledge and skills through planned experiences that inspire and engage our pupils. We also incorporate the interests of our pupils into child initiated learning. Through observation and deep meaningful interactions we guide, extend and develop each pupil's learning potential, we then carefully assess and plan next steps for each pupil. We use regular observations and our knowledge of our pupil's home lives, to inform our planning which enables us to provide pupils with motivating and stimulating learning opportunities. We strive to provide pupils with opportunities that they will not have experienced before and that enhance their learning in school. We use our school grounds, local community and parental engagement to extend and enhance pupil progress.

In our learning environment adults model language for learning through the 'Characteristics of Effective Learning'. Adults regularly model how to reflect on their learning and pupils are encouraged to use positive language when speaking about their own work. They are encouraged to embrace their accomplishments and identify what they would adapt next time. This approach informs the goals they set for themselves, allowing them to develop intrinsic motivation. This language for learning also helps our pupils to become critical thinkers who explore, ask questions and reflect on their own learning.

We encourage pupils to be open to new learning experiences and opportunities in both our indoor and outdoor environment. Adults model assessing and taking risks to inspire our pupils to be confident and resilient risk takers. Our pupils understand that taking risks in their learning is important and allows them to develop their ideas and understanding. Our curriculum allows pupils to develop their knowledge and skills in all the areas of learning. We use the Development Matters Statements and Early Learning Goals to assess pupil's achievements throughout their time in Early Years and at the end of this Key Stage.

Communication and Language Development

In our learning environment, pupils are provided with a vast range of learning opportunities, which enable them to develop their communication and language skills, including both speaking and listening. Through interactions with our Early Years Practitioners and modelling of learning activities, our pupils hear and learn a wide range of vocabulary. High quality texts and stories also provide our pupils with the opportunity to engage with new and exciting vocabulary. This new language is reinforced by vocabulary stickers, that pupils are given when they have learnt a new word. Each week there is a focus word of the week which is used throughout adult led activities and is shared with parents in our weekly newsletter. Our pupils are encouraged to engage in purposeful conversations with their peers and the adults working with them. Our pupils learn how to use language to describe, explain, question and debate. They learn the importance of listening to others when engaging in back and forth conversations.

Personal Social and Emotional Development

In our learning environment pupils learn to identify their feelings. Initially adults support our pupils to talk about their feelings and they register their feelings using the 'Zones of Regulation'. Our pupils have a lollipop stick and they place it in the colour pot that is linked to different emotions. This is a whole school approach, pupils learn how to use this strategy in Early Years and they will then develop this throughout their time at Belswains Primary School. Circle time, social stories and adult interactions are used to support pupils who require additional support to identify their feelings. Strategies are provided and modelled by adults and we also use our 'What do you need?' display to equip pupils with the support they need to regulate their feelings.

Our pupils build strong, trusting relationships with the Early Years Practitioners, which allows them to feel safe, secure and respected. Through adult modelling and interactions we teach our pupils how to play co-operatively with other children, by taking turns and finding a compromise. We also celebrate the diversity in our school by encouraging families to bring in items from their different cultures and religions, which pupils can then explore during independent learning opportunities.

We promote independence and self-help skills to ensure that pupils are equipped with the personal life skills they require by the time they leave the EYFS, these are skills they will use throughout their lives. We encourage pupils to use their self-help skills in the Autumn term by washing their hands correctly, using the toilet and putting their coats on independently, as well as communicating their needs. Pupils will understand the concept of cultural capital through our high expectations by tidying away objects, finding equipment they need independently, having the option to use knives, chopping boards and peelers to prepare their snack and by washing their cutlery, straws and utensils when they are finished. They are encouraged to use their critical thinking skills by choosing independently, the materials they need for their learning and knowing where to find them in their learning environment. During circle time, adult led activities and independent learning opportunities, pupils learn about the importance of a healthy lifestyle and staying safe in different situations, this includes healthy eating, oral health/cleanliness, safety in the sun and online safety.

Physical Development

In our environment, we support pupils with both their fine and gross motor skill development. During weekly PE lessons our pupils are provided with the opportunity to practice various skills. Initially they learn how to travel safely around a space in different ways. This then supports them as they learn the skills involved with a range of sports. We are continuing to develop our outdoor spaces to encourage our pupils to use and develop their upper body strength (pulley ropes, climbing wall, tyres) this in turn supports them as they learn how to write. Fine motor skill development is supported during busy finger activities where pupils practice manipulating a range of different resources, including elastic bands, threading resources, playdough, tweezers, scissors and much more. The activities pupils complete during these sessions gradually become more challenging as they master new skills. Interventions are offered to pupils who need some extra support with the development of their fine motor skills, this includes holding a pencil effectively and forming letter shapes correctly.

Literacy

In our learning environment, we promote a love of reading and language by reading regularly to our pupils during planned adult-led activities and independent learning times. We have a number of welcoming reading areas throughout our environment, which are appealing to our pupils and offer them with inspiring resources and activities that they can use to explore stories and the art of storytelling. These include nursery rhymes, helicopter stories, drama and puppet shows which allow pupils to retell familiar stories, as well as create their own unique narratives. Pupils also engage in ERIC time regularly where they have the opportunity to pick a story, share it with a friend and retell it in their own words using the pictures to help them. Through adult interactions and regular observations, the interests of our pupils and their experiences from home are carefully considered when choosing books for our pupils. We expose them to a range of rich texts including traditional tales, contemporary stories and books by BME authors.

A love of reading is promoted through our book corners that are intended to create a calm, relaxed and inviting experience for our pupils. Adults regularly model using books during learning activities and in role-play to demonstrate their purpose.

The school follows the Read, Write, Inc phonics scheme. Every pupil takes part in regular phonics sessions, with intervention opportunities for those who find this area of learning

more challenging. During these sessions pupils learn the sounds that various graphemes make, they learn how to 'Fred talk' and blend sounds in words and they develop fluency when reading. Furthermore, these skills and knowledge then support their writing. We understand the importance of children reading at home so our pupils take home phonics activities every week until they are ready to start taking reading books home, they also visit the library every week at which point they are able to choose their own library book that they can take home to share with their families.

Our aim is for our pupils to become lifelong readers and at Belswains Primary School we believe that starts in the Early Years.

In our environment we provide pupils with a range of mark making and writing opportunities. These opportunities are often linked to the interests of our pupils, the learning topics and child initiated learning opportunities. These are always purposeful, such as writing a label for a model that the pupils have made or writing a menu for the role play café. Pupils are provided with a range of resources that they independently choose from, they are encouraged to think carefully about which resources are best suited to the task they are completing. These resources are spread throughout our environment to ensure that our pupils have the opportunity to mark make and write within every learning area. We aim to provide them with inspiring hooks for their writing, this may be through the use of books that offer ideas, suggestions from adults during role play activities or awe and wonder from first hand experiences.

Mathematics

In our environment, mathematical learning opportunities can be found throughout our indoor and outdoor areas. We provide pupils with the knowledge and understanding of key concepts such as comparing (recognising more and less), counting accurately (forwards and backwards in order), one to one correspondence, shape and their properties, size, patterns (including repeating patterns) and recognising and writing numerals. Our pupils learn how to find one more and one less than a given number, the beginning of addition and subtraction. As well as how to share items, double numbers and find 'groups of', the start of division and multiplication. Through adult led activities and independent learning opportunities, pupils revisit mathematical skills and concepts regularly, helping to ensure that they become confident mathematicians who are able to apply their learning to a range of different situations. Our pupils explore the composition of numbers to 10 and learn how to use different strategies to represent this, such as the part whole model and calculations. Pupils hear mathematical vocabulary modelled during adult interactions and are encouraged to use this language themselves. We recognise that subitising is a vital skill for children to master and our pupils practice this regularly during child initiated learning opportunities and adult led sessions. During adult led activities, our pupils are taught how to use manipulatives and pictorial representations to support their understanding of various concepts. This enables our pupils to become more independent as they learn a range of strategies that they can use to solve mathematical problems. This enables them to become problem solvers who think through a problem step by step, use trial and error and communicate what they notice.

Understanding the World

Our pupils' natural curiosity about the world around them is something that we celebrate and encourage at Belswains Primary School. Throughout our curriculum, pupils are provided

with a range of first hand experiences which enable them to learn about the world around them. Child initiated learning activities are vital for allowing our pupils to explore different aspects of this area of learning. Through interactions with adults, pupils are provided with the vocabulary to explain and describe their own observations. They are always encouraged to question further how and why something has happened, to predict what might happen next and to test their predictions. This supports them once they have left Early Years, when they will use these skills during enquiry led learning opportunities. We plan a range of opportunities for our pupils including trips, visits from outside agencies and parent workshops. These allow pupils to see first hand the topics that they have been learning about in school, and also allows them to learn about a range of different occupations. This area of learning is led by the pupil's own interests and by the changing environment around them.

We plan adult led activities that enable our pupils to learn about the past and compare how it is different to life today. They reflect on their own memories and are encouraged to share these with their peers. Families are also encouraged to share stories about how life has changed overtime; this is meaningful for our pupils.

Our pupils first learn about their local community and discuss areas that are of great importance to them. We then develop pupils understanding of different countries and cultures using geographical resources such as maps, atlases and globes. Our pupils are encouraged to discuss the similarities and differences of countries around the world compared to where they live, always being encouraged to celebrate and respect the differences.

Our pupils learn about changes in the natural world and are always encouraged to explore these in their environment. They learn about animals and plants where they develop specialised vocabulary when discussing these topics. Our pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for planting and growing their own seeds. Furthermore, they observe first hand chicks and caterpillars hatch, change and grow.

Stories and non-fiction texts are invaluable when supporting pupil's understanding of these concepts. Technology is also used to enhance our pupil's engagement with these topics.

Expressive Arts and Design

In our environment, our pupils are provided with a range of opportunities to explore their creativity and imaginations. Through planned activities during child initiated learning, adults model a range of skills, pupils then have the opportunity to explore and practice these themselves. These skills enable them to design and make their own inventions and artwork. But pupils are always given the time and space to explore their own interests. Pupils quickly learn where they can find different resources in our learning environment, at which point they can then choose the media and materials they need to achieve a desired effect. Pupils learn which resources are fit for a specific purpose and begin to explain and justify why they have chosen to use them. Pupils experiment with colour and texture. They learn how to colour mix and create different shades and tints. Pupils learn how to improve their designs and creations further by using our suggestion board, which models a range of different techniques and vocabulary which pupils can use to explain the processes they have used. Our pupils are provided with the opportunities and resources they need to create designs in a range of our learning areas. For example they can access paper and clipboards in our construction area, on which they can draw what they intend to build first and later evaluate how similar their final product was to their original plan. Music, role-play and storytelling

are all weaved throughout adult led activities, independent learning opportunities and within our environment. Our pupils regularly take part in these activities using stories and stimulus to inspire them.

Impact

At Belswains Primary School the impact of our EYFS curriculum is reflected through our confident, resilient and enthusiastic learners. Our pupil's physical, social, emotional and communication development all influence the accelerated progress they make across the specific areas. Pupils develop holistically which allows them to learn the knowledge and skills they need in all seven areas of learning. They have detailed subject knowledge and understand and use a wide-variety of vocabulary to enhance their oral and written communication skills.

Pupils acquire the personal life skills they need to enable them to be independent and to transfer and apply their knowledge and skills to other areas of learning. The personal life skills that they learn in EYFS and their social and emotional development enables them to interact confidently with others in different social situations. They can identify their feelings by using the 'Zones of Regulation' and they can use various strategies to enable them to self-regulate their emotions.

At the end of EYFS pupils accept errors with increasing resilience and demonstrate a positive attitude towards new challenges, which they will continue to use in Year 1. Our learning environment is nurturing and caring, allowing our pupils to value and respect themselves and others around them.

With adults modelling story-telling and promoting a love of reading, pupils choose to read and share stories during independent learning times. They choose books that are of interest to them and familiar stories. At the end of EYFS pupils will have made accelerated progress in reading from their own personal starting points, enabling them to be competent and confident readers, with the aim being that all pupils can read fluently.

Further support through interventions and meaningful interactions with adults, enable those who haven't reached certain ELG's to continue to make progress.

When pupils leave Early Years at Belswains Primary School they will be ready for the next stage in their learning, as they will have learnt the skills, knowledge and vocabulary that they need. They will have developed a lifelong love of learning and they will be ready for the new opportunities provided to them in Key Stage 1 and beyond.