

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

This policy applies to EYFS pupils in Reception and children in our Nursery Provision

“All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives, so their experiences in early years 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 provide the foundation children need to fulfil their potential.” (Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework pg. 7).

Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) refers to children from birth to five years of age. At Bedford Greenacre Independent School, children complete their final year of the EYFS in Reception. This policy mainly refers to the Nursery Provision.

The EYFS seeks to provide:

- **quality and consistency** in all early years settings, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind;
- **a secure foundation** through planning for the learning and development of each individual child, and assessing and reviewing what they have learned regularly;
- **partnership working** between practitioners and with parents and/or carers;
- **equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

At Bedford Greenacre Independent School Nursery, we aim to achieve this by:

- setting the standards for individual learning, development and care to enable each child to fulfil their potential,
- providing for equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice,
- creating the framework for partnership by working with parents, professionals and other outside agencies,
- ensuring that learning and development is planned around the individual needs and interests of the child and informed by the use of on-going observational assessment,
- laying a secure foundation for future learning through the provision of a Key Person, child centred learning and enabling environments.

Play

At Bedford Greenacre Independent School we recognise that play underpins all learning and development for young children. Most children play spontaneously although some may need adult support. It is through play that children develop intellectually, creatively, physically, socially and emotionally. By providing well-planned experiences based on children's spontaneous play, both indoors and outside, we support our children to learn with enjoyment and challenge. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside and with other children and adults as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

Principles of high quality play

- Play is an intrinsic part of children's learning and development.
- Play has many possible but no prescriptive outcomes.
- Play challenges children and offers them the chance to learn in breadth and depth.
- Play draws on what children already know and can do and enables them to master what is new.
- Play enables children to apply existing knowledge and to practise their skills.
- Play encourages children to communicate with others as they investigate or solve problems.
- Play offers children opportunities to explore feelings and relationships, ideas, and materials, connections and consequences.
- Play empowers children to make choices, to solve problems and to be independent in their learning.
- Play enables children to express fears or relive anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.
- Play encourages children to struggle, to take risks and to become resilient as learners.
- Play can be supported and extended but not interfered with by adults.
- Play presents no barriers to children because of their language, cultures, abilities or gender.

Overarching Principles

Four guiding principles shape our practice. These are:

- every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**
- children learn and develop well in **enabling environments with teaching and support from adults**, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- importance of **learning and development**. Children develop and learn at different rates. (See "the characteristics of effective teaching and learning" at paragraph 1.18 EYFS Statutory Framework). The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Unique Child

At Bedford Greenacre Independent School we believe every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We give every child the opportunity to achieve their best by having realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of all our children across the areas of learning and development. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with disabilities, children with additional educational needs, children with medical needs, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children by:

- child-centred learning
- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, skills, experience and interests
- planning opportunities to develop their well-being, self-esteem and confidence, including experiences that provide risk and challenge
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs
- providing a secure and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is respected and valued
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination or stereotyping
- planning challenging and appropriate experiences for higher achieving children
- monitoring children's progress and providing additional support when identified
- using age-appropriate ways to seek the views of all children through observing, listening and sensitive discussion
- seeking advice from specialist agencies where appropriate.



Positive Relationships

Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships. At Bedford Greenacre Independent School we respect that parents are the child's first and future educators. We believe that the positive relationships we build are the key to effective partnerships between all practitioners, parents, carers and families. Each child has a Key Person, i.e. the person with whom they form a special attachment. The Key Person is responsible for ensuring that the child feels safe and cared for, in order to develop a positive sense of well-being and achievement.

We meet the needs of all of our children by:

- developing positive relationships with parents/ carers during the settling-in process
- working with parents/ carers right from the start to find out about their child's needs, feelings and interests
- developing effective partnerships with families throughout the year by offering regular opportunities for them to talk about their child's progress through our open door policy and stay and play sessions
- encouraging families to talk to their child's Key Person, as well as other staff members to foster two-way communication with parents / carers and families
- helping parents to support children's learning and development
- recognising that friendships and relationships are an important part of a child's development from birth

Enabling Environment

At Bedford Greenacre Independent School, we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning. Our environments are carefully planned both indoors and outdoors to help children achieve across all aspects of the EYFS. Opportunities are provided for children to take part in a wide range of experiences and to extend their interests.

We meet the needs of all of our children by:

- encouraging children to communicate and talk about their experiences
- developing children's independence and decision making by providing an environment where children can freely access resources and select from the experiences on offer
- using the outdoor environment to enhance learning and development
- analysing children's responses to different situations and identifying their future learning needs
- using diverse materials and equipment for the children to explore
- encouraging a positive attitude to learning by ensuring our planning utilizes and builds on the children's interests, developmental stage and learning style.

At Bedford Greenacre Independent School Nursery, we work collaboratively with parents/ carers, other settings and other professionals to support children's learning and development.

Teaching and support from adults

In planning and guiding children's activities we reflect on the different ways that children learn and support these in our 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,
- **creating and thinking critically** – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Role of the adult

- To observe child-initiated play to understand and provide for their interests and needs.

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- To plan and resource a challenging indoor and outdoor environment.
- To support children's learning through planned play activity.
- To extend and support children's spontaneous/self-initiated play.
- To extend and develop children's language and communication in their play.

Observations undertaken by all practitioners are used to plan children's next steps of learning in their individual learning plans and progress is recorded in each child's Learning Journal. At Bedford Greenacre Independent School, we ensure that the requirements of the EYFS are met through all seven areas of learning and development, in order for children to make progress towards the Early Learning

Goals, which are the established expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Reception year. Progress is closely monitored and parents are encouraged to contribute to their child's assessment.

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.

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of Learning and Development: All areas are important and interconnected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. Children should mostly develop the three prime areas first. These are:

- Communication and language
- Personal, social and emotional development
- Physical development

These prime areas are those most essential for a child's healthy development and future learning. As children grow, the prime areas will help them to develop skills in the four specific areas. Providers must also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. These are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

All of the seven areas are delivered through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Children in the EYFS learn by playing and exploring, being active, and through creative and critical thinking which takes place both indoors and outside.

Assessment

Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support. Ongoing assessment (also known as formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process. It involves practitioners knowing children's level of achievement and interests, and then shaping teaching and learning experiences for each child reflecting that knowledge. In our interactions with children, we respond to our regular observations about children's progress and observations that parents and carers share.



Progress Check at Age 2 years old

When a child is aged approx. 27 months, practitioners complete a progress report which also offers parents the chance to contribute for a full understanding of a child's interests, abilities, and next steps. Keyworkers also use ASQ's (age and stage questionnaires) to ensure that both they and the parents have the same understanding of the child's development.

For children under and up to 24 months, practitioners focus on prime areas, which are:

- Communication and Language
- Personal, social, and emotional development
- Physical development

This progress check identifies the child's strengths and areas where the child's progress is less than expected. If significant concerns emerge, or an identified special educational need or disability, we will develop a targeted plan to support the child's future learning and development involving parents and/or carers and other professionals (for example, our Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) or health professionals) as appropriate.

If a child joins the nursery from another setting, we encourage them to share any developmental reports enabling a smooth transition and experiences are targeted at the appropriate level.

EYFS Profile

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Profile is a report of your child's development and achievement at the end of their Reception year.

The main purpose of the EYFS profile is to provide a reliable, valid and accurate assessment of children at the end of the EYFS. At Bedford Greenacre Independent School we use the EYFS profile to:

- inform parents about their child's development against the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) and the characteristics of their learning
- support a smooth transition to Key Stage 1(KS1) by informing the professional dialogue between EYFS and KS1 teachers
- help Year 1 teachers plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all pupils.