Early Years Foundation Stage Policy including Key Persons

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Introduction and Purpose

At Brabyns Nursery School, we recognise that the Early Years Foundation Stage provides the foundations for children's future learning, development and wellbeing.

Our aim is to provide every child with a safe, nurturing and stimulating environment where they feel secure, valued and confident to explore, play, learn and develop. We recognise that every child is unique and that children develop at different rates and in different ways.

Our Early Years practice is underpinned by the principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework and Development Matters. Alongside this statutory guidance, our experienced EYFS team has developed a bespoke curriculum which provides a clear progression of knowledge, skills and vocabulary throughout the nursery.

We place strong emphasis on knowing our children well, building positive relationships, providing high-quality interactions and using our professional knowledge to support each child's individual learning journey.

We work closely with parents and carers, recognising them as their child's first and most important educators. Through a strong partnership between home and nursery, we aim to provide children with the consistency, encouragement and support they need to thrive.

Aims

Our EYFS provision aims to ensure:

- That children experience a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum.
- That every child is supported to develop their knowledge, skills and confidence.
- That children are provided with high-quality learning experiences appropriate to their age, stage and individual needs.
- That practitioners know each child well and understand their interests, strengths and areas for development.
- That children develop positive attitudes towards learning.
- That children are encouraged to become independent, confident and resilient learners.
- That children develop strong relationships with adults and other children.
- That children are supported to develop the skills required for their next stage of learning.
- That every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- That parents and carers are actively involved in their child's learning and development.
- That children are supported to become **school ready** and make a positive transition to their next stage of education.

Structure of the EYFS

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year.

At Brabyns Nursery School, our provision is organised into three stages:

Baby Explorers

Our youngest children, where the focus is on secure relationships, emotional wellbeing, communication, sensory exploration, physical development and early independence.

Little Adventurers

Our 2–3-year-old children, where we build on children's developing communication, independence, relationships, physical development, curiosity and early understanding.

Pre-School Pioneers

Our 3–4-year-old children, where we continue to develop children's knowledge, skills, independence and confidence and increasingly prepare them for their transition to school.

Children's individual development is always considered alongside their age and stage. We recognise that children do not all develop in the same way or at the same rate.

The EYFS Curriculum

Our curriculum follows the latest EYFS Statutory Framework and Development Matters. Alongside this, our EYFS team has created a bespoke curriculum with a clear progression of knowledge, skills and vocabulary.

The EYFS curriculum consists of seven interconnected areas of learning and development.

Prime Areas

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

Specific Areas

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

The prime areas are particularly important in supporting children's curiosity, relationships, communication and ability to learn and thrive. They are strengthened and applied through the specific areas.

Our curriculum also recognises the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

- **Playing and Exploring**
- **Active Learning**
- **Creating and Thinking Critically**

These characteristics are woven throughout children's experiences and help

practitioners understand how children approach learning.

Teaching and Learning

We provide rich and varied experiences through high-quality learning provision and an aspirational curriculum which reflects children's developing needs and interests.

Learning takes place through a combination of:

- Child-initiated play.
- Adult-led experiences.
- Small-group experiences.
- Individual interactions.
- Daily routines.
- Indoor and outdoor learning.
- Stories, songs and rhymes.
- Real-life experiences.
- Opportunities to explore and investigate.
- Specialist experiences where appropriate.

Each area of learning is implemented through planned, purposeful play, alongside a balance of adult-led and child-initiated learning.

Practitioners respond to children's emerging interests and needs and use warm, positive interactions to extend their learning.

Through our teaching and learning, we aim to:

- Provide opportunities for children to initiate their own learning.
- Encourage positive dispositions towards learning.
- Give children time to practise and consolidate their learning.
- Provide a safe, stimulating and comfortable learning environment.
- Develop children's positive self-image.
- Encourage children to learn through movement and their senses.
- Support children to make connections in their learning.
- Ensure that play is progressive and appropriate to children's development and interests.
- Use professional judgement to determine when skills and knowledge should be taught directly.
- Model positive behaviour and rich language.
- Provide purposeful indoor and outdoor learning environments.
- Encourage curiosity, creativity and exploration.
- Work closely with parents and carers.
- Use meaningful observation and assessment to understand children's development.

Planning

Planning is responsive to the children in our care.

Practitioners consider:

- Individual needs.
- Interests.
- Developmental stage.
- Previous learning.
- Emerging skills.
- Next steps.
- Opportunities for challenge.
- Opportunities to revisit and consolidate learning.

Planning is not intended to restrict children's learning. Practitioners adapt experiences and provision in response to children's interests, questions, ideas and emerging needs.

Where a child may have special educational needs or disabilities, practitioners work closely with the SENCO and parents and consider whether additional or specialist support may be appropriate.

Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of our EYFS practice.

At Brabyns, we place emphasis on practitioners knowing each individual child in depth, rather than tracking every statement within Development Matters.

Practitioners use observation, professional knowledge, interactions, children's work, Tapestry records, information from parents and ongoing discussions with colleagues to understand children's development.

Assessment is used to:

- Identify what children know and can do.
- Recognise progress and achievements.
- Identify emerging skills.
- Identify areas requiring additional support.
- Provide appropriate challenge.
- Plan meaningful next steps.
- Adapt teaching and provision.
- Support transitions.
- Inform parents about their child's development.

Children's development is formally reviewed half-termly, with assessment informing planning and next steps.

Further information is detailed in the **Brabyns Nursery School Assessment Policy**.

Tapestry

Tapestry is used to collate and share significant observations and learning experiences.

Practitioners use Tapestry to record meaningful observations, photographs and examples of children's learning and development.

Observations are shared with parents regularly, but they are not expected to be shared constantly or immediately after every observation. Practitioners' priority during the nursery day is to be present, engaged and responsive with the children. Observations are therefore collated and recorded during designated time away from the children, wherever possible.

This ensures that children's learning and wellbeing remain the priority while parents are still kept meaningfully informed about their child's experiences and development.

Parents are encouraged to contribute to Tapestry by sharing experiences, achievements and observations from home. This helps practitioners build a complete picture of the child and strengthens the partnership between home and nursery.

Key Person Approach

Every child at Brabyns is allocated a named key person.

The key person is responsible for developing a secure and trusting relationship with the child and supporting their care, emotional wellbeing, learning and development.

The key person:

- Gets to know the child well.
- Develops a strong relationship with the child and family.
- Observes and assesses the child's development.
- Identifies appropriate next steps.
- Plans experiences based on the child's interests and developmental needs.
- Supports the child's emotional wellbeing.
- Communicates regularly with parents.
- Supports continuity of care.
- Contributes to effective transitions.

A secondary key person is identified to provide continuity when the child's primary key person is absent.

The suitability of the key person relationship is considered during the settling-in period and throughout the child's time at nursery.

Settling In

We recognise that starting nursery is a significant transition for young children and their families.

Our settling-in process is designed to help children develop secure relationships, become familiar with their environment and establish confidence in nursery routines.

Following a child's first half term, practitioners review how the child has settled. This includes considering:

- Relationships with key adults.
- Relationships with other children.
- Emotional wellbeing.
- Communication.
- Independence.
- Engagement in the environment.
- Interests and preferences.
- Developmental progress.
- Any emerging areas requiring support.

This review often provides part of the first parent meeting and allows practitioners and parents to share information and establish a strong partnership.

Two-Year Progress Review

When a child is aged between two and three, practitioners complete a two-year progress review.

Parents are sent a letter explaining the two-year review and are invited to participate in the process.

The review is completed collaboratively with parents and will often form part of the first formal parent meeting following the child's settling-in period.

The review considers the child's development in the three prime areas:

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

The review provides an opportunity to:

- Share information about the child's development.
- Celebrate progress.
- Discuss areas where additional support may be beneficial.
- Consider appropriate next steps.
- Share information from home and nursery.
- Strengthen the partnership between parents and practitioners.

The review is completed within the year in which the child turns two.

Where appropriate, practitioners will work with parents, health visitors and other relevant professionals.

WellComm Assessment

At Brabyns Nursery School, we use the WellComm assessment tool alongside our ongoing observations and professional knowledge of each child. WellComm supports practitioners in identifying children's understanding and use of language and communication and helps us to recognise where a child may benefit from additional support.

WellComm assessments are completed at baseline and reviewed regularly as part of our ongoing assessment process. The information gathered helps practitioners to:

- Identify children's current communication and language skills.
- Recognise areas of strength and areas where additional support may be beneficial.
- Plan appropriate activities and experiences to develop communication and language.
- Monitor children's progress over time.
- Identify children who may benefit from further assessment or support.
- Share appropriate information and next steps with parents and carers.
- Work with the SENCO and other professionals where additional support may be required.

WellComm is used alongside Tapestry observations, day-to-day interactions, practitioner knowledge, children's individual interests and experiences, and information shared by parents and carers. It is not used in isolation or as a measure of a child's overall development.

Where WellComm identifies an area of concern, practitioners will discuss this with the Room Leader and, where appropriate, the SENCO and parents/carers. Further support, strategies or referral to relevant professionals may be considered where appropriate.

The information gained through WellComm helps us to ensure that communication and language opportunities are appropriately matched to each child's individual stage of development and supports us in planning meaningful next steps.

Parent Partnership

We recognise parents and carers as their child's first and most important educators.

A strong partnership with parents is central to our approach.

We maintain communication through:

- Tapestry.
- Informal conversations.
- Parent meetings.
- Written reports.
- The two-year progress review.
- Workshops and other nursery events.
- Individual meetings where appropriate.

Parents are encouraged to share:

- Their child's achievements.
- Interests.
- Experiences from home.
- Changes in circumstances.
- Concerns.
- New skills or behaviours.

Parents are encouraged to contribute to Tapestry and to speak regularly with their child's key person.

We value parents' knowledge of their children and use this information alongside our professional knowledge to support children's learning and development.

Reports and Parent Meetings

Parents receive two formal written reports during their child's nursery journey:

- End of Autumn Term.
- End of Summer Term.

Parent meetings are held following these reports and provide an opportunity to discuss children's progress, achievements and next steps.

Parents are encouraged to discuss their child's development with practitioners throughout the year rather than waiting for a formal parent meeting.

School Readiness

Our aim is to support every child to become confident, independent and enthusiastic about learning.

In Pre-School Pioneers, assessment and provision increasingly support children's transition to school.

This includes developing:

- Independence.
- Communication.
- Listening and following instructions.
- Positive relationships.
- Emotional regulation.
- Concentration and perseverance.

- Early literacy.
- Phonics and phonological awareness.
- Early mathematical understanding.
- Physical development.
- Self-care.
- Confidence.
- Resilience.
- Problem-solving.
- Curiosity and a positive attitude towards learning.

Being school ready does not mean that every child has achieved the same level of development. We consider each child's individual starting point, strengths, interests and needs.

Inclusion and Additional Needs

We recognise that every child is unique and that some children may require additional support.

Where a concern is identified, practitioners work with the Room Leader, SENCO and parents to understand the child's needs and identify appropriate support.

Our approach includes:

- Open communication with parents.
- Early identification.
- Individualised support where required.
- Ongoing assessment and monitoring.
- Adaptation of provision.
- Appropriate professional advice.
- Partnership with external agencies where appropriate.

Parents are involved in discussions about their child's development and support.

Further information can be found in the SEN and Inclusion Policy.

Behaviour and Relationships

We promote positive relationships and learning behaviours through warm, consistent and respectful interactions.

Practitioners model positive behaviour and support children to:

- Develop friendships.
- Share and cooperate.
- Express their feelings.
- Manage emotions.
- Resolve conflict.
- Develop resilience.
- Develop confidence and independence.

Further information is contained within the Behaviour Policy.

Promoting Independence

Children are encouraged to develop independence throughout their nursery journey.

Practitioners provide opportunities for children to:

- Make choices.
- Manage personal belongings.
- Develop self-care skills.
- Dress and undress appropriately.
- Manage mealtimes.
- Use the toilet independently where developmentally appropriate.
- Take responsibility for resources.
- Solve problems independently before seeking support.

Our aim is to develop children's confidence and ability to manage everyday situations as they progress towards school.

Staffing and Professional Development

We ensure that staffing arrangements meet children's needs and promote their safety, development and wellbeing.

Staff are appropriately qualified and receive induction, supervision and ongoing professional development.

Practitioners participate in regular supervision where they can:

- Discuss children's development.
- Share concerns.
- Reflect on practice.
- Identify training needs.
- Discuss safeguarding responsibilities.
- Consider their own professional development.

Staff work collaboratively to ensure consistency and continuity of care.

Safeguarding and Welfare

Safeguarding is central to all aspects of EYFS practice.

All staff follow Brabyns Nursery School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and associated procedures.

Staff understand their responsibility to identify and respond to concerns about children's safety and welfare.

All safeguarding concerns are recorded and acted upon in accordance with nursery procedures.

Staff follow the nursery's procedures relating to:

- Mobile phones.
- Smart watches.
- Cameras and photographs.
- Confidentiality.
- Information sharing.
- Safe care practices.
- Intimate care.

- Health and safety.

Confidentiality and Data Protection

All information relating to children and families is treated confidentially and handled in accordance with the nursery's Data Protection Policy.

Practitioners must ensure that personal information is:

- Kept secure.
- Shared appropriately.
- Only accessed by authorised individuals.
- Not discussed inappropriately.
- Handled respectfully.

Tapestry accounts and children's learning records must be accessed and used appropriately.

Health, Wellbeing and Oral Health

We promote children's health and wellbeing through everyday routines, learning experiences and conversations.

Children are supported to understand:

- Healthy eating.
- Personal hygiene.
- The importance of physical activity.
- Rest and sleep.
- Emotional wellbeing.
- Oral health.
- Personal safety.

We talk to children about the effects of eating too many sugary foods and the importance of brushing their teeth.

Further information is contained within the relevant nursery health, food, oral health and intimate care policies.

Transition

Transitions are carefully planned to support children's emotional wellbeing and continuity of learning.

This includes transitions:

- Into nursery.
- Between Baby Explorers and Little Adventurers.
- Between Little Adventurers and Pre-School Pioneers.
- From nursery to school.

Practitioners share relevant information to ensure that children are well known by the adults supporting them at each stage.

Where appropriate, transition information includes:

- Strengths.
- Interests.
- Development.
- Communication.
- Emotional wellbeing.
- Independence.
- Additional needs.
- Effective strategies.
- Next steps.

We work with parents and receiving schools where appropriate to support a smooth transition.

Monitoring and Review

The quality of EYFS provision is monitored regularly through:

- Observation of practice.
- Tapestry reviews.
- Assessment reviews.
- Staff supervision.
- Team meetings.
- Parent feedback.
- Monitoring of children's progress.
- Review of planning and provision.
- Professional development.

The Nursery Manager and Room Leaders are responsible for ensuring that EYFS practice remains consistent, effective and responsive to children's needs.
