



Bleak Hill Primary School

EYFS POLICY

SUMMER 2026

Signed by:

_____ Headteacher Date: _____

_____ Chair of
governors Date: _____

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Statement of Intent

At Bleak Hill Primary School, our curriculum is the cultural capital we know our pupils need so that they can gain the knowledge, skills and understanding they require for success. They can only do that if we embed the right habits for learning through the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning – Play and Exploration, Active Learning and Creative and Critical Thinking. Our enabling environment and warm, skilful adult interactions support the children as they begin to link learning to their play and exploration. In Reception, we invest time and energy into helping pupils set and reflect on their own goals by aiming high and developing a love of reading, writing and number. This is delivered through a holistic curriculum which maximises opportunities for meaningful cross-curricular links and learning experiences as well as promoting the unique child by offering extended periods of play and sustained thinking following children's interests and ideas. We value imagination and creativity and seek to create a sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning through a vibrant continuous indoor and outdoor provision, alongside trips, visits and regular forest school sessions.

Statement of Implementation

Pupils learn through a balance of child-initiated and adult-directed activities. The timetable is carefully structured so that children have rigorous directed teaching in English, Maths and Phonics with regular circle time sessions to focus on PSED.

Children are provided with plenty of time to engage in 'exploration' throughout the variety of experiences carefully planned to engage and challenge them in the provision. The curriculum is planned for the inside and outside classrooms and equal importance is given to learning in both areas. The curriculum is planned in a cross-curricular way to enable all aspects of the children's development including understanding the world and expressive art and design as well as to promote sustained thinking and active learning.

Statement of Impact

Our curriculum will meet the needs of our children, including our disadvantaged pupils and those with AEL and SEND, so we spend time looking at and evaluating how children are learning. This is achieved through talking to children, looking at their work, observing their learning experiences and analysing data and progress by class, groups and individuals. We assess children on entry along side

the National Baseline Assessment and Nursery transition information to identify children's starting points.

During each assessment window, three times a year, teachers update the progress children have made which allows us to assess the impact of teaching and identify those children needing intervention. Our curriculum and its delivery ensure that children make good progress. During their time in our EYFS, children make good progress so that we meet the national expectation for GLD at the end of the year. Pupils also make excellent progress toward their age-related expectations before transitioning into Year One. We believe our high standards are due to the enriched play-based exploration alongside the rigour of assessment and teaching the children have as they move through the early years – a rich diet of balanced learning experiences is undoubtedly the best way to develop happy, curious children.

1. Aims

- 1.1. To give each child a happy, positive and fun start to their school life in which they can establish solid foundations on which to expand and foster a deep love of learning.
- 1.2. To offer each child a wide range of new and exciting experiences and give them the opportunity to consolidate, explore and test them out along with their own, individual experiences within their play.
- 1.3. To enable each child, through encouragement, open ended questioning and high expectations, to develop, to the full, both socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally.
- 1.4. To offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited opportunity for development through the use of continuous provision that is thought provoking and challenging.
- 1.5. To encourage children to develop independence within a loving, secure and friendly atmosphere.
- 1.6. To support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing.
- 1.7. To help each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and developing the confidence to work towards personal goals.
- 1.8. To develop strong links with home working closely with parents and carers.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body

The governing body will nominate a link governor to:

- visit the school regularly;
- work closely with the headteacher and the Early years lead;
- ensure this policy and other linked policies are up to date;
- ensure that everyone connected with the school is aware of this policy;
- attend training related to this policy;
- report to the governing body every term;
- annually report to the governing body on the success and development of this policy.

Headteacher

The headteacher and the EYFS leader will:

- work in partnership with parents/carers to promote the learning and development of all children, and will ensure they are ready for school;
- ensure the seven areas of learning and development, which are all interconnected, will shape educational programmes;
- ensure that all teachers consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan challenging and enjoyable experiences for each child in all of the areas of learning and development.

- ensure that all teachers provide for those children whose home language is not English sufficient opportunities to learn and reach a good standard in English language during the EYFS;
- ensure that every child is assigned a key person;
- ensure the level of progress of children should be expected to have attained by the end of the EYFS is defined by the early learning goals:

Early Years Foundation Stage Leader

The early years foundation stage leader will undertake the following responsibilities:

Leadership and Management

- To lead and manage the EYFS working in conjunction with the Headteacher, SLT and governors.
- To undertake leadership and management responsibilities.
- To co-ordinate and be responsible for the organisation and management of the EYFS.
- To advise and work closely with the Headteacher and the nominated governor.
- To develop an EYFS development plan and to monitor its effectiveness.
- To ensure all EYFS policies are in place and regularly updated.
- To lead and develop an effective EYFS team.
- To provide and manage a stimulating EYFS environment.
- To monitor all planning in accordance with the EYFS and school policies.

Assessment and Data

- To ensure assessment procedures are in place for recording, reporting and tracking pupils' progress.
- To use pupil data effectively.
- To undertake thorough and accurate tracking of pupil progress.
- To present termly pupil progress reports to the Headteacher, SLT and nominated governor.
- To set targets with the Headteacher and SLT.
- To ensure EYFS Profiles are completed and passed on.

Transition

- To ensure smooth transitional arrangements between phases.

Parents

- To develop and strengthen good relationships with parents.

EYFS Policy

- To lead the development of this policy throughout the school.

Working Relationship

- To work closely with the Headteacher and the nominated governor.

Support

- To provide guidance and support to all EYFS staff.
- To provide training for all staff on induction and when the need arises.
- To co-ordinate and oversee EYFS teaching staff and support staff.
- To coach, mentor and develop all EYFS teaching staff and support staff.
- To receive support from the Headteacher.
- To have regular class release time in addition to PPA time.

Professional and Staff Development

- To plan staff development opportunities for all EYFS staff.

Research

- To make effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy.
- To keep up to date with new developments and resources.

Health and Safety

- To undertake risk assessments when required.

Monitoring

- To monitor, evaluate and support the teaching and learning of the EYFS pupils.
- To review and monitor this policy.

Reports

- To present pupil progress reports to the Headteacher, SLT and nominated governor.

- To produce and present regular reports on the progress of the EYFS to the governing body.
- To annually report to the Governing Body on the success and development of this policy.

Class Teacher

A Class Teacher will:

- undertake appropriate induction training before starting the role of a key person;
- be given allocated key children;
- meet the needs of each child in their care and respond sensitively to their feelings, ideas and behaviour;
- develop a genuine and close bond with the children;
- help the children to become familiar with the setting and making them to feel confident and safe within it;
- be responsible for carrying out the personal care with their key children;
- meet with parents at the beginning and end of the day;
- closely monitor and record the progress of each child in order to enable effective planning;
- liaise with parents periodically informing them of their child's progress;
- be responsible for updating the developmental records of their children;
- attend weekly planning sessions.

Learning Support Assistant

A Learning Support Assistant will:

- undertake appropriate induction training before and during their role in EYFS;
- assist the teacher in the whole planning, teaching and assessment cycle;
- supervise and lead groups of children;
- implement all policies and practices in line with the ethos of the school;
- support a creative inclusive curriculum which values learning;
- help to create a stimulating environment which supports learning (both in the outdoor and indoor provision);
- implement agreed programmes/interventions with individual pupils /groups and support teaching staff in the development and education of pupils including the provision of detailed and specialist skills/knowledge in particular areas;
- attend half termly staff meetings.

3. Curriculum

Reception follows the curriculum as outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) document, to download at: [EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers](#)

This clearly defines what we teach.

The EYFS framework includes three prime areas which underpin four specific areas.

The Prime Areas

Communication and Language	▪ Listening, Attention and Understanding ▪ Speaking
Personal, Social and Emotional Development	▪ Self-Regulation ▪ Managing Self ▪ Building Relationships
Physical Development	▪ Gross Motor Skills ▪ Fine Motor Skills

The Specific Areas

Literacy	▪ Comprehension ▪ Word Reading ▪ Writing
Mathematics	▪ Number ▪ Numerical Patterns
Understanding the world	▪ Past and Present ▪ People, Culture and Communities ▪ The Natural World
Expressive arts and design	▪ Creating with Materials ▪ Being Imaginative and Expressive

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning. The EYFS staff plan activities within the classrooms with these in mind and use them as part of the assessment process.

The Three Characteristics of Effective 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.

All of these areas interlink throughout the curriculum and adults make the most of opportunities to interact with children to develop their playing, thinking and learning. Adults also recognise that there are times when they need to take a step back to enable children to think critically and solve a problem by trial and error or perseverance.

It is our aim that children leave the EYFS with:

- a positive ‘can do’ attitude to learning
- a willingness to take risks and make mistakes
- high levels of engagement in a task where they can practice and build up concepts, ideas and skills
- perseverance
- a love of learning
- ideas of their own, that they can plan and follow through

4. Teaching Strategies

We ensure there is a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities across the day. The adult’s role is to model, demonstrate, observe, and question what the child is doing during self-initiated play in order to move their learning forward. Adult directed tasks are differentiated and planned weekly based on ongoing assessments.

5. Continuous and Enhanced Provision Play

Learning through play is an important part of our Early Years curriculum. In Reception the classrooms and outdoor provision have specific designated areas where resources are clearly labelled. Each area takes into account the unique child, enabling environments, positive relationships and learning and development. Through careful planning within each area the children are able to practice skills, build

upon experiences and revisit prior learning at their own level and pace. This play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests, select resources independently and inspire those around them. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate, and ask questions. We believe it is important that adults take an active role in child-initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating and extending their play from emergent through to high level play behaviours. This is developed further in Reception through the planning of weekly challenges. This also informs future planning and adult focused tasks.

6. Direct Teaching

We include direct, carefully planned, adult led experiences for the children in the form of whole class teaching and adult led group activities that are differentiated to meet the individual needs. These are particularly important in helping children to learn specific skills and knowledge that can then be transferred and developed within their play.

Each day we follow a timetable with set routines in place.

7. Planning

We believe many children need to be given a starting point to learn new things and find stories are a great way to fire the imagination.

Staff plan in more detail on a weekly basis using daily notes, observations, and interactions with both the children and staff to inform future learning opportunities. Although class teachers are responsible for writing plans, the EYFS plan as a team, with Teachers and LSAs all being involved.

8. Visits and Trips

Throughout the year external visits and walks using our local community are planned as part of the child's learning experience. Parental support is paramount as our ratio is one adult to five children in Reception. Risk assessments are completed prior to the trip (Refer to the Health and Safety Policy). We also plan external visitors and trips.

9. Assessment in the EYFS

We create Learning Journals which details the children's progress across all areas of learning. The primary purpose of the Learning Journal is to communicate progress with parents. The following list details what we have in place to collect our evidence:

- We use Insight which tracks children's progress against the EYFS Development Matters and the ELGs.
- The children are assessed during the first few weeks of the Autumn Term using the Reception Baseline (RBA)
- In Read Write Inc the children are tracked weekly using the Starting Strong in Reception tracker.
- The children are assessed every half term using the Read Write Inc assessments and are grouped using these results.
- Termly assessments for all 17 areas are based on the learning objectives covered in class these results are reported to the LEA as a statutory requirement of the EYFS curriculum.

10. The Role of the EYFS Staff

The class teacher is the named key worker for each child in the setting. Their role is to help ensure that the child becomes familiar with the setting and build up a positive relationship with both the child and their parents/carers.

The LSAs are assigned to a specific class within Reception and form strong relationships with each pupil and their parents/carers.

All the relevant staff are present during induction meetings and the stay and play sessions.

11. Partnership with Parent/Carers

We believe that parents and carers are a child's first educator and therefore work very closely to ensure they are involved in what we do with their child at school. We want parents to feel they can speak to us about their child at any time and feel comfortable in our setting.

We have many different processes as part of the child's induction to Bleak Hill. These are as follows:

- An induction meeting for all parents to get to meet the staff.
- A Pre-school/Nursery visit by the Early Years Lead and SENDCO.
- Stay and play sessions in Reception.
- A staggered intake.

12. Health and Safety and Safeguarding

We operate in accordance with the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance (September 2025) [EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers](#) and Early Years Foundation Stage nutrition guidance for group and school-based providers and childminders in England (May 2025) [Early Years Foundation Stage nutrition guidance](#). Daily risk assessments are completed both internally and externally by a staff member. We follow whole school procedures for child protection (see separate policy).

The Deputy Headteacher and Pastoral and Safeguarding Manager are the named Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) and all concerns are discussed with them. We have separate policies for medicine in school and off-site visits.

13. Training

There are various training opportunities for staff, these include online courses and training courses offered by the St Helens Early Years Hub. Training opportunities are also accessed from the school cluster group, St. Helens First. Staff are given the opportunities to access and attend relevant courses that will support them and their professional development. In-house training is also vital in supporting the development of staff.