# Early Years Teaching and Learning Policy

**Contents:**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Approved by:** | FGB | **Date:** | Autumn 2026 |
| **Last reviewed on:** | Autumn 2026 | | |
| **Next review due by:** | Autumn 2027 | | |

Statement of intent

1. Legal framework
2. Roles and responsibilities
3. Learning and development
4. Assessment
5. The learning environment
6. Parental engagement
7. Inclusion
8. Transition
9. Monitoring and review

**Our Vision**

**At Brierley, God guides us as one family.**

**We learn, grow, and shine together in our community,**

**Nurturing hope, resilience, aspiration and forgiveness**

**Everyone is loved, celebrated, and supported to flourish.**

**Living God's love through our words, actions, and journey beyond our school,**

**following the example of Jesus.**

**Though we are many, we are one body, together we learn and grow.**

## Statement of intent

Every child deserves the best possible start in life. At Brierley CE Primary School, we greatly value the importance of the early years foundation stage (EYFS) in providing a secure foundation for future learning and development and understand our responsibilities in ensuring that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe.

This policy has been developed in conjunction with the relevant DfE guidance and legislation and seeks to provide:

- **Quality and consistency**, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
- **A secure foundation** through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each child and are assessed and reviewed regularly.
- **Partnership working** between practitioners and parents.
- **Equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

## 1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Childcare Act 2016
- Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- Education Act 2011
- DfE (2021) 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Early Years Policy
- Early Years Assessment Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy

## 2. Roles and responsibilities

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Acting in accordance with the 'Headteachers' standards' and the expectations of the school community.
- Creating a culture where children experience a positive and enriching school life.
- Upholding ambitious educational standards which prepare children from all backgrounds for their next phase of education and life.
- Promoting positive and respectful relationships across the school community and a safe, orderly and inclusive environment.
- Establishing and sustaining high-quality, expert teaching across all subjects and phases, built on an evidence-informed understanding of effective teaching and how children learn.
- Ensuring teaching is underpinned by high levels of subject expertise and approaches which respect the distinct nature of subject disciplines or specialist domains.
- Ensuring a broad, structured and coherent curriculum entitlement which sets out the knowledge, skills and values that will be taught.
- Establishing effective curricular leadership.
- Ensuring valid, reliable and proportionate approaches are used when assessing children's knowledge and understanding of the curriculum and ensure effective use is made of formative assessment.
- Forging constructive relationships beyond the school, working in partnership with parents and the local community.

The early years leader is responsible for:

- Ensuring all staff members read and implement this policy.
- Ensuring that all staff are up to date with current statutory and Ofsted expectations, including the early year's team and the SLT.

- Supporting the policies, ethos and vision of the school and actively promoting high levels of achievement in the early years stage.
- Leading the early years team in the planning and delivery of a creative and stimulating curriculum based on the educational programmes of the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'.
- Ensuring the educational provision and practice is based on the EYFS characteristics of effective teaching and learning, supports a range of learning needs and develops children's independence.
- Taking responsibility for high-quality teaching provision throughout the early years stage.
- Ensuring the requirements for the EYFS, including the arrangement of assessment, are met in line with the relevant statutory requirements.
- Monitoring the progress of children and reporting evaluated data to the headteacher.
- Developing and maintaining effective relationships with parents, colleagues, the governing board and the local community.
- Ensuring parents are informed about their child's progress, development and targets, and are aware of relevant early years policies, practices and procedures.
- Supporting staff development by identifying and/or providing regular training and CPD opportunities.
- Providing regular 1:1 meetings with staff to support professional development.

The key person is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the children they support receive learning tailored to their needs.
- Engaging with parents to support them in guiding their child's development at home.
- Helping families with more specialist support, where required.
- Helping children become familiar with the school and acting as a point of contact for children and their parents.

All early years staff are responsible for:

- Acting in accordance with this policy at all times.
- Maintaining their professional knowledge and understanding of statutory documentation.
- Understanding and acting within the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.
- Having proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school.
- Demonstrating consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct.
- Having a firm understanding of child development and age-appropriate needs.
- Supporting and promoting children's early education and development in the EYFS.
- Planning and delivering valuable learning experiences, environments and opportunities that are appropriate to the age, stage and needs of individual and groups of children.
- Identifying the needs, interests and stages of development of individual children.
- Using formative and summative assessment to track children's progress to plan next steps and shape learning opportunities.

- Working cooperatively with colleagues and other professionals to meet the needs of all children and enable them to progress.
- Liaising closely with parents to help them promote their child's health, wellbeing, learning and development.
- Identifying any areas of concern relating to children and their learning, development and emotional needs.
- Considering whether a child may have SEND which requires specialist support, and knowing and understanding the policy and procedure to follow to provide this.
- Taking charge of their own personal development, including undergoing additional training, and identifying what support they need to benefit children and the provisions in place to support them.

## 3. Learning and development

In partnership with parents, the school will promote the learning and development of children to ensure they learn and develop well, are kept healthy and safe and have the knowledge and skills they need to start school.

**Curriculum planning**

Provision and practice within the early years will be centred around the requirements of the DfE's 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'.

The EYFS framework outlines seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in the early years. These are categorised as 'prime areas' and 'specific areas'.

**Prime areas** – defined as the areas that are particularly important for building a curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships, and thriving:

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

**Specific areas** – defined as the areas through which the prime areas are strengthened and applied:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive art and design.

At Brierley we will plan and provide educational programmes that involve activities and experiences for children as set out under each of the areas of learning.

When planning the early years curriculum, practitioners will:

- Consider the individual needs, interests, and development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all areas of learning and development.

- Stimulate children's interests, responding to each child's emerging needs and guiding their development through warm, positive interactions coupled with secure routines for play and learning.
- Reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and adjust their practice appropriately.

If a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, practitioners will discuss this with the child's parents and agree how to support the child. Staff will also consider whether a child may have a special educational need or disability which requires specialist support.

For children whose home language is not English, practitioners will:

- Take reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning, supporting their language development at home.
- Ensure that children have sufficient opportunities to learn and reach a good standard in English language during the EYFS, ensuring children are ready to benefit from the opportunities available to them when they begin Year 1.

In organising and implementing educational programmes, the school will ensure that a broad range of activities and experiences are planned, having regard to three characteristics of effective teaching and learning in the EYFS:

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically

## 4. Assessment

Assessment plays an important part in helping the school to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, plan activities, and assess the need for support.

In line with statutory requirements, the school will undertake a summative assessment of each child's development at certain stages. These are:

- Reception Baseline Assessment – a short assessment which is taken within the first six weeks of a child starting Reception, regardless of what time of the year this occurs.
- The EYFS Profile – a comprehensive assessment completed at the end of the EYFS to provide a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, attainment against the ELGs, and their readiness for Year 1.

Ongoing formative assessments will be used to assess the day-to-day learning and development of children in the EYFS. Practitioners will interact and observe children to understand their achievements, interests and learning needs, and will use this information to shape learning experiences for each child.

Parents will be kept up-to-date with their child's progress and development, and the early years leader and practitioners will address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents.

When undertaking assessment activities, all staff members will have due regard to the Early Years Assessment Policy, the 'Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Handbook' and Assessment and Reporting Arrangements (ARA) for that year, and any LA advice.

## 5. The learning environment

The school recognises that the physical and emotional environment play an important role in supporting, enabling and extending pupils' learning and development.

The school will provide a safe and stimulating environment that values active learning, exploration and play, where children feel free to create, make links and develop critical thinking skills.

Early years practitioners will ensure that learning environments are well-organised and suitable for group, individual and whole-class learning, with interactive displays and easily accessible resources utilised to encourage independence.

At all times, children will have access to indoor and outdoor learning environments. Staff will plan provision to ensure that there are a range of learning opportunities available, and that the learning opportunities available in the outdoor environment build on and develop those inside.

Independent learning will be encouraged through planned continuous provision where children can make their own selection from a variety of resourced areas, including:

- **Snack area – toaster**
- **Construction area**
- **Creative area**
- **Reading**
- **Writing**

Staff will support children to navigate and access the learning environment, intervening and interacting where necessary to ensure that all learning opportunities and teaching moments are captured and capitalised upon.

Appropriate and stimulating educational visits and visitors, from both within and outside of the local community, will be arranged to further expand children's learning experiences.

The school values the importance of positive relationships. To support this, staff will be responsible for:

- Knowing and understanding the families, cultures and what they bring (also known as cultural capital).
- Ensuring they interact and empathise with children.
- Supporting children's emotions.
- Ensuring children feel valued and confident to try new things.

The expectations of behaviour will be consistent throughout the different learning areas and children are supported to regulate their emotions through co-regulation and the knowledge of their key person.

## 6. Parental engagement

The school firmly believes that the EYFS cannot function without the enduring support of parents and that children benefit from a strong partnership between staff and parents.

To capitalise on children's school and home experiences, the school will be committed to working closely with parents and creating an ongoing dialogue. The school will ask that parents support the school by:

- Ensuring that their child regularly attends school, giving reasons for any absences.
- Informing the school of any concerns or problems which may affect their child.
- Actively engaging in the school community.
- Meeting with the teachers where possible
- Enabling their child to be as appropriately dressed as possible with regard to the School Uniform Policy – parents should talk to their child's class teacher if this is a problem so that the school can support this.
- Enabling their child's knowledge and understanding through sharing the ideas sent from school.
- Encouraging their child's development and progress.

The school will support parents by:

- Sharing all school policies and procedures as required, including the school's privacy notice.
- Committing to the wellbeing of all families and children.
- Informing them how the school works with children and what teaching and learning is provided.
- The daily routine and the activities offered in the early years and how parents can support their child's learning at home.
- Explaining how support for children with additional needs is provided.
- Providing details of how the school's snack and lunch menus are developed, including how the school caters for allergies and dietary preferences.
- Providing staffing details, including the name of the child's key teacher and teaching assistants.

The school will provide support, advice and workshops for parents, with the aim of developing a two-way understanding so that the school can use children's home cultures and backgrounds to enrich and underpin teaching. The school will also provide parents with the opportunity to join pupils in sessions on a regular basis. Tasks will be set to be completed at home under parental supervision.

Parents will be kept up-to-date through the use of conversations, the school website, texts, newsletters, notice boards. The school understands the importance of talking with parents, but will ask that appointments are made whenever possible.

Parents will be invited to parent consultations in autumn and spring term; however, the school will have an open-door policy and parents are welcome to talk to teachers at the start and end of the school day.

The school has a Complaints Procedures Policy in place which is shared with parents – written records will be kept of all complaints the school receives.

## 7. Inclusion

All children are valued as individuals, irrespective of any protected characteristics, in line with the Equality Act 2010. The Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy will ensure that the needs of all children are met, regardless of their protected characteristics.

The EYFS curriculum will be planned in order to meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace.

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy will ensure all children receive the support they need and are given the best learning experience possible. SEND in the EYFS setting will be monitored and managed by the school SENCO.

## 8. Transition

The school understands the importance of the transition process and, therefore, will adapt its practices to support children settling into their new environment. The school's settling in policy will be reviewed collaboratively by staff members on an annual basis.

The school will offer visits and sessions for parents and children to attend school during the Summer term prior to child starting primary school. The first visits will be within their FS1 or FS2 setting, allowing the children to feel secure in the new environment. The second visit allows children to have dinner at school alongside their parent/carers.

Transition meetings between FS1 staff and FS2 staff will be held during the Summer term. FS1 staff will provide the relevant FS2 teachers with information regarding children, allowing them to accurately plan effective learning during reception year.

Transition meetings between early years staff and Year 1 staff will be held during the Summer term. Early years staff will provide the relevant Year 1 teachers with information regarding children, allowing them to accurately plan effective learning during Year 1.

The early years leader and Year 1 teacher will meet to discuss and expand on the information presented in children's EYFS profiles.

The following process will be implemented to ensure children's successful transition to Year 1:

- Parents are invited to a meeting to ensure they know about school procedures and allocation of classes, and to voice any concerns
- Children are invited to a number of visits to their Year 1 class
- In the Summer term, early years staff and Year 1 staff will meet to discuss each child's development in order to support a smooth transition to Year 1

## 9. Monitoring and review

The quality of teaching will be continuously monitored, and any concerns will be raised with the early years leader.

This policy will be reviewed by the early years leader, headteacher and governing board on an annual basis. The next scheduled review date of this policy is Autumn 2027.

Any changes to this policy will be communicated to parents and staff members, who can request a copy of the policy from the school office.