



Early Years and Key Stage 1 Policy

Rationale

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) education provides a firm foundation for learning, and helps to ensure that pupils become confident and positive about coming to school and learning together. In Forest Bridge School's Early Years and KS1 classes we learn through a range of activities, primarily hands on and play based and provide a positive, happy and supportive environment.

Pupils in both the EYFS and KS1 classes use the results of their FBSC assessment, the EYFS Reception Baseline Assessment, National Curriculum and Principles as the foundation for their learning. These classes will incorporate National Curriculum targets as appropriate to individual needs.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- 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 the school and parents.
- Learning and development is important. Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

This policy has been created in line with the new EYFS framework which comes into effect on 1 September 2021.

You can find the new EYFS framework [here](#).

ASD and Early Years

Pupils entering Early Years and KS1 have received a recent diagnosis of autism, and require close assessment and intervention to meet their needs, and to discover the impact of their autism on their communication, social and learning ability. As all of our pupils have autism, they require extra support to make sense of our world. We use a range of interventions and teaching strategies to support and engage learning, and to build an appropriate learning environment. The environment and amount of individual, paired, grouped, child-led and adult-led activities will vary dependent on the needs of each individual group of pupil. Activities are supported by visual props and we provide multi-sensory learning opportunities, to meet the needs of all our learners.

Aims

In Early Years and KS1 we aim to help our learners to make sense of their world, and to develop a positive attitude towards school and directed learning. We aim to identify and meet the needs of each individual learner by carrying out continuous assessment across the curriculum. We provide motivating, differentiated activities, which are designed to meet the interests and needs of each pupil.

A Unique Child

At Forest Bridge School we recognise that every pupil is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that pupils develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Pupil's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use re enforcers, praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and rewards, to encourage pupils to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value all our pupils and their families within our school. We recognise that all pupils have different abilities and skills, and aim to meet the needs of all pupils in our care. We endeavour to match the challenge of each task to the ability of each pupil, taking into account the needs of our visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learners.

Forest Bridge School endeavours to develop and retain close links with the local community to enable integration where it is relevant. We regard the varied cultural and linguistic backgrounds of our pupils as a valuable learning resource. The planning is designed to meet the needs of all pupils regardless of gender, race, learning difficulties, or religion.

In our school we believe that all our pupils matter. We give our pupils every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our pupils' range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

We meet the needs of all our through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend pupils knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on pupil's learning needs;
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support pupils and to help them to learn effectively;
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all pupils is valued;
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- planning challenging activities for pupils whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- monitoring pupil's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

It is important to us that all pupils in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate pupils on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide pupils with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Pupils should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognize and avoid hazards.

We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all pupils. (See Whole School Safeguarding Pupils Policy) In line with our policy, there is no use of personal mobile phones by staff members across the school.

There will be at least one member of staff who has a current pediatric first-aid certificate on the school premises at all times, and will accompany children on any school outings with reception age pupils.

Welfare

“Pupils learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.”

At Forest Bridge School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2014. We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare of pupils.
- promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when pupils are ill.
- manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the pupil’s stage of development and individual needs.
- ensure all adults who look after the pupils or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
- Ensure that every pupil receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the pupils.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

Positive Relationships

At Forest Bridge School we recognize that pupils learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the pupils and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognize that parents are the pupil’s first and most stable educators and we value the contribution they make.

We recognize the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the pupils.

We do this through:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school;
- inviting all parents to an initial meeting during the term before their child starts school;
- offering parents a home visit after school to help the pupil make the connection between school and home and help both parents and school staff further benefit the pupil through close working
- inviting parents into school through a variety of events and when beneficial into the classroom
- daily home/school communication books and weekly photos to share what the pupils are doing both at school and home
- encouraging parents to talk to the pupil’s teacher if there are any concerns.

There are more formal meetings that happen throughout the year through parent's evenings and the Annual Review meeting.

Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress prior to their annual review meeting.

All staff involved with the EYFS and KS1 aim to develop good relationships with all pupils, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At our school the EYFS teacher acts as a 'Key Person' to all pupils in EYFS, supported by the Supervisor and ABA Tutors.

Enabling Environments

At Forest Bridge School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the pupil's development. We assess the pupil's interests, stages of development and learning needs, before planning challenging, achievable activities and experiences to extend the pupil's learning.

Curriculum and Assessment

The Early Years and KS1 classes provide a curriculum designed to incorporate the needs of our Reception and Year One and Year 2 pupils. The classes use the three prime and 4 specific areas of the EYFS curriculum, alongside the FBSC as a basis for insuring a broad and balanced curriculum. All Curricular subjects are planned for using the EYFS framework (including Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) and EYFS Profile) and FBSC, as a framework and targets from both are incorporated and used. Planned activities are often hands-on and play based and are flexible and differentiated according to the needs of our pupils.

The level of staffing and resources ensure all pupils experience a broad and balanced curriculum, designed to suit their individual needs. Targets and learning are shared with parents through our PLO plans, and continuous assessments, the RBA, the Early Year's Profile, FBSC, and this ensures progression and continuity.

The Learning Environment

Pupil with ASD have a variety of auditory, visual and spatial sensory needs and we do our best to adjust our EYFS and KS1 class to help address these needs. We are mindful that we are doing this within a building and classrooms that have not been purpose built.

These classrooms are organized each year to allow the specific group of pupils to learn explore and play securely and safely.

The EYFS and KS1 classrooms have their own limited outdoor area. This has a positive effect on the pupil's development. Being outdoors offers the pupils further opportunities to explore, use their senses, develop their language skills and be physically active. We plan activities and resources both inside and outside enabling the pupils to develop in all the areas of learning.

Learning and Development

At Forest Bridge School we recognise that pupils learn and develop in different ways and have their own learning styles. We value all areas of learning and development and understand that they are often linked.

Early Years and KS1 have excellent well targeted staffing, to ensure we can offer our learners the 1:1, 1:2 and small group opportunities which they require in order to best meet their potential.

Early Years and KS1 are hands-on, play based learning environments designed to engage the pupils, with multi-sensory resources and opportunities.

Teaching and Learning Style

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in the EYFS and KS1 just as much as they do to the teaching throughout the school.

Features of high quality teaching and learning that relate to the EYFS and KS1 classes in particularly are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our pupils feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that teachers have of how pupils develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;
- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps pupils work towards and achieve their next steps in learning
- the provision for pupils to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- the encouragement for pupils to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence;
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of pupils through observations and direct assessment;

Play

“Pupil’s play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play pupils learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for pupil’s development.”

Through play our pupils explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They have the opportunity to practise skills, develop ideas and think creatively alongside other pupils and adults as well as individually.

Active Learning

“Pupil’s learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve pupils for sustained periods.”

Active learning occurs when pupils are motivated and interested. Pupils need to have some independence and control over their learning. As pupils develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides pupils with a sense of satisfactions as they take ownership of their learning.

Creativity and Critical Thinking

“When pupils have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.”

Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning:

Three Prime Areas:

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social and emotional development

Four Specific Areas:

- literacy
- mathematics
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design

All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and pupil initiated activities. Unlike a mainstream EYFS setting, where there is a higher percentage of pupil-initiated activities, the balance is swapped in our setting with more adult initiated activities. This is to best meet our pupils’ needs and ensure they make good progress through a meaningful curriculum. We also do a significant amount of generalization of skills through repetition of activities and working on similar skills in a variety of ways as this is a challenging area for pupils with autism.

Communication and Speech Therapy

Early Years and KS1 staff use every opportunity to motivate speech and meaningful communication. This is a main aim throughout the entire day and all curriculum areas. Snack and mealtimes are particularly effective, as is play and “choosing” opportunities. To support purposeful and effective communication we incorporate alternative communications such as PECs (Picture Exchange Communication system) and Makaton (Signing and Symbol system of communication). This offers PUPILS a visual aid, and promotes communication as something we need and can benefit from.

Speech therapists are involved in the classes on a regular basis in a variety of ways dependant of the PUPILS’s needs. This may come in the form of running small groups, individual work or support to class staff.

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS and KS1 teachers to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Head teacher, SLT and subject leaders carry out monitoring of the EYFS and KS1 classes through observation and discussion as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.