

‘Love God, Love others’ and ‘let your light shine’



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

As outlined in Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage:

‘No job is more important than working with children in the early years.’

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of their Reception year. At Blue Coat C.E. Infant School we *believe young children learn values from their personal relationships, everyday interactions and the examples set by parents, other adults and teachers.*

*As a Church school we have a responsibility to base our values on the wisdom and understanding of the Christian faith and the gospel values founded by Jesus.
As a multicultural school we celebrate the core values we share in common with other faiths and cultures.*

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2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#) for 2023, and, the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile, which is updated annually by the Government.

3. Structure of the EYFS at Blue Coat Infant School

We have a 52 place Nursery which is open Monday to Friday.

This total includes part time and 30 hour places. A 30 hour child will take 2 places.

Children can access a part time place of 15 hours: 3 hours every morning or 3 hours every afternoon.

The sessions run from 8.30am-11.30am, or, 12.30pm-3.30pm. During the session the children are provided with snack and milk, funded by the Government.

We have limited places for children accessing 30 hours, Monday –Friday. The session runs from 8.30am-3.30pm. During the session the children are provided with snack and milk, funded by the Government. (Children who have 30 hours stay for lunch 11:30-12:30pm and must come with a packed lunch).

We have 90 places in Reception. We offer a soft start from 8.40am-8.50pm. During the morning the children are provided with snack and milk, funded by the Government.

Free school meals for lunch are provided, also funded by the Government. The school day ends at 3.10pm.

Parents will be asked for voluntary contributions for trips and enrichment activities during the school year.

4. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest EYFS statutory framework.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. 3 areas, known as the prime areas, are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

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

Curriculum Intention

The Blue Coat CE Federation of schools work closely together to provide a seamless blend of education which develops the whole child throughout their primary education journey. As a federation of inclusive Christian schools, we value and respect **all** and endeavour to embrace and celebrate our diverse community fostering positive partnerships and collaborations. We pride ourselves on our outstanding practice and distinct Christian identity.

Our vision is to provide an aspirational, nurturing environment to enable pupils to have the confidence and opportunity to make outstanding progress and the capacity to shine brightly in all that they do. We are committed to offering a fully inclusive and nurturing education for our pupils, ensuring that children of all levels and abilities are supported and challenged to achieve and feel successful and proud. We place a high priority of ensuring all pupils are integrated into mainstream classrooms with a high standard of focused expertise and staff from our specific federation inclusion team.

Our curriculum has been devised using the growing knowledge of cognitive theory and meta-cognition research and its impact on pupil outcomes. Our knowledge-based, values-led curriculum is designed using subject based units and is sequenced progressively so that new knowledge and skills build on what has come before. We ensure that the knowledge we teach is spaced, with regular retrieval practice so children can apply the key content and skills in varying contexts and build secure schemas of understanding based on their prior knowledge. Therefore, actively forging links between concepts and schemas over time.

Teachers carefully plan and teach engaging lessons in an effective sequence of learning, always mindful that they are:

- providing suitable learning challenges which build on prior knowledge;
- increasingly developing the children's fluency and mastery of key skills;
- responding to pupils' individual and diverse needs;
- overcoming any potential barriers to learning.
- demonstrating a high standard of pedagogical practice.

Our curriculum is designed to develop the characteristics of effective learning:

- Creating and thinking critically – pupils have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things
- Active learning – pupils keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements
- Playing and exploring – pupils investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.

Our aspirational academic learning is underpinned by a strong emphasis on personal development and social skills. Our pupils learn responsibility and develop a secure sense of self and value their ability to make a positive contribution to society. It is our aim that by the time children leave our EYFS to embark on the next stage of their education, they are fully equipped with secure academic skills and knowledge and have developed the personal attributes needed to enable them to become successful citizens and live remarkable lives.

Implementation:

At Blue Coat C.E Infant School we follow the Early Years Foundation Stage framework. This is made up of **four overriding principles** which our early year's education is based upon:

- **Unique Child** – Every child is unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- **Positive Relationships** – Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- **Enabling Environments** – Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and carers.
- **Learning and Development** – Children develop and learn in different ways. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early year's provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

Age-related expectations combine the acquisition of knowledge and development of skills to create a purposeful and exciting learning journey for every child. The curriculum programme of study has high expectations to combine transferable skills, demonstrate a breadth of vocabulary and develop strong, meaningful links.

Areas of Learning:

The framework sets out the three prime areas of learning that underpin everything in the early years:

- **Communication and language** - The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial.
- **Physical development** - Physical activity is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives. Gross motor skills (including core strength) provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being. Gross motor skills also impact on Fine motor development. Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination which is later linked to early literacy.
- **Personal, social and emotional development** - PSED is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Strong, warm and supportive relationships with adults enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others.

The four specific areas help children to strengthen and develop knowledge and skills learnt in the prime areas:

- **Literacy** - It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Children need to be able to speak in sentences in order to be able to write in sentences. Oral rehearsal from familiar texts and using story maps supports the children's writing development. This is also linked to their learning in phonics and of tricky words.
- **Mathematics** - Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary strong foundations to excel mathematically. Children should be able to count confidently, develop a deep understanding of the composition of numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers.
- **Understanding the world** - Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them

- **Expressive arts and design** - The development of children's artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials.

All of these areas of learning are connected together. The characteristics of effective teaching and learning weave through them all. That is because children in the early years are becoming more powerful learners and thinkers. These characteristics develop as they learn to do new things, and acquire new knowledge.

The Learning Environment

At Blue Coat C.E. infant School, we recognise the learning environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. The nursery and reception classrooms, which incorporate the indoor and outdoor areas, are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active and can be quiet. The environments are set up into learning areas where children are able to find and locate resources and equipment independently. Our learning environments operate a free flow system whereby the children can choose which area of the environment they would like to explore. This runs alongside the adult led activities that take place throughout the day at various times.

Planning

The delivery of our ambitious curriculum uses an integrated thematic approach where the 17 areas of learning and development are integrated into a theme if appropriate but also taught discretely where this might be more suitable to the circumstances. Throughout the year, we have special days which have a clear focus, for example; Science Week, World Book Day and Special Visitors.

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, practitioners working with our youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate. Nurture provision enables children to have targeted support whilst still being included and integrated in their class.

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners reflect on the different learning styles the children may have and include these in their practice.

Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Practitioners respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interactions. Children who have a secure understanding of a skill must be given the opportunity to embed this in a range of situations. Staff ensure knowledge and skills are seen being used naturally, independently and consistently to ensure they are embedded.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1.

As part of our best practice we:

- provide communication and Language opportunities in rich multisensory contexts.
- work in partnership with our community to enrich learning .
- raise aspirations and help them see a purpose to learning .
- identify when a child is not doing something, so that it can be acted upon.
- misconceptions are addressed.
- adapt planning on day-to-day assessment.
- promote and support children's emotional security and development of their character.
- are excellent role models for behaviour.
- create a culture to learn from mistakes and to continue to persevere.
- engage in dialogue with children and model language well.
- share reading/whole group of stories, non-fiction and poetry.
- encourage children to sing songs, nursery rhymes and musical games.
- maximise our learning environment by using all available outdoor provision, including the Forest.
- use interventions to demonstrate rapid, effective support.

Mental health and self-regulation

Self –regulation underpins children's abilities to act socially with peers and adults, to participate productively in learning activities, to hold conversations, and adapt successfully to new or challenging situations. Staff respond to children's personal and physical needs as well as promoting independence.

We promote good mental health and the ability to self-regulate by:

teaching children the language of feelings, helping them to appropriately develop their emotional literacy. We can use Colour Monsters & Worry Monsters to support this.

setting up systems that enable the children to display how they are feeling, for example, using personal feelings charts.

providing Interventions that support children socially (Wellcomm, Little Learners, Early Talk Boost and NELI).

we use social stories to discuss any issues that arise.

5. Working with parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents.

We communicate with parents in many ways:

- Home visits and transition phone calls are made. These enable us to learn as much as we can about their child before they start school.

- Parents are asked to support with the baseline assessment by assessing their child's ability with some I can statements.
- We provide a soft start to the day. All parents can talk to the staff about their child before they start school and at the end of the day.
- Half termly projects go home. Parents can self-assess their child's engagement and assess against the ELGs. Parents are given Knowledge Organisers for each theme so they can see what their children are learning in school and how they can support learning at home.
- All parents can email or telephone staff with any queries.
- Parents are told during termly parents evening where their children are in terms of age related expectations for each of the prime areas and Literacy and Maths.
- Parents are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. The progress check and EYFS profile helps to provide parents with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.
- We invite all parents to workshops throughout the year alongside stay and play sessions, including early reading sessions and early mathematics.
- At the end of the EYFS a profile is also used to inform parents about their child's development through a school report that breaks down each of the ELGs. We also provide a short narrative describing how the child demonstrates the 3 characteristics of effective learning.
- Parents are invited to make comments on their child's report at the end of the year.

6. Behaviour

Teachers have clear rules and limits. They act as role models to children. Children are expected to know the rules:

- Be safe
- Be kind
- Be ready to learn

The children in Reception will be expected to talk about how they demonstrate these rules.

We also use our school values to reinforce our behaviour expectations.

7. Inclusion

Practitioners need to be alert to the general diversity of children's interests, needs and backgrounds in order to accurately assess their attainment. This includes children with a special educational need or disability (SEND), who may demonstrate their attainment in different ways. Children whose home language is not English should have opportunities to engage in activities in the security of their home language where it is possible. Children from different cultural backgrounds will demonstrate their attainment not only through what they have been taught but also when activities such as role play, cookery, celebrations, visits or events are linked to their cultural experience.

We continue to plan activities that promote an understanding of people, families and communities beyond their own. We do this in an age-appropriate way, which includes routinely challenging stereotypical behaviours and respecting differences.

8. Health and Safety

First-aid boxes are located in Nursery and Reception. Only medicine prescribed to a child by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist will be administered. The school's Administering Medication Policy outlines the procedures for administering medicines. The teachers will report any accident or injury involving a child to their parents on the day it occurs, and any first-aid treatment administered to a child will also be reported to their parents. Accidents and injuries will be logged in the First Aid Folder.

9. Assessment

At Blue Coat Infant School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

When a child is **aged between 3 and 4**, staff review their progress and provide parents and/or carers with a written summary of the child's development in the 3 prime areas. This 'progress check' highlights the areas in which a child is progressing well and the areas in which additional support is needed.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

At the **end of the EYFS**, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters [guidance](#)) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority upon request.

Impact

We use learning stories across the EYFS to provide a picture of the successes of the children throughout their time in Early Years.

Every member of staff uses **ongoing observational assessment** to identify children's starting points and plan experiences which ensure progress. This information is tracked on the INSIGHT Tracker. We also analyse data of groups and individuals to celebrate our strengths and set our next priorities.

Teachers must ensure that all data is accurate and up-to-date by the end of the assessment week. The Blue Coat moderation tool is used by all staff to ensure this. Phonic assessments take place each half term along with Wellcomm screening for children who are not age related expectation in communication and language.

Teachers use a best fit approach and assessment must be based on a holistic view for each child. The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions and this is then shared with parents and/or carers.

Within EYFS, we carry out regular in house moderation sessions to ensure that we are consistent and accurate with our judgements. Where possible, we aim to also attend external moderations to further validate our judgements and share best practice with others. We then use data to compare the school's performance in relation to school, local and national expectations and create our Federation Improvement Plan (FIP).

Blue Coat Infant School robustly evaluates its setting and strives to continuously improve its provision. We spend time looking at and evaluating how children are learning. We use a range of methods to provide clear triangulation: talking to children, looking at their work, observing their learning experiences through Drop-ins, Book Looks or Lesson Observations.

10. Transition

The children at Blue Coat Infant School experience a smooth transition between Nursery, Reception and Year 1. Effective communication and collaboration between staff and parents ensure the children leave the EYFS with a solid foundation of learning of which to build upon.

We maintain effective transition by:

- having a carefully planned handover that discusses the children's needs, ability and attainment, and their likes and interests.
- spending a morning with their new teacher on Changeover Day. Additional sessions (in their current classroom and their new classroom) are also provided as part of the Transition plan.
- having moderation, sharing data and discussions with new teachers.
- Learning Lab time is part of the Year 1 timetable in the Autumn Term.

11. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

12. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by Mrs. Miller our EYFS Lead every two years.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

Appendix 1: List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Intimate Care	Intimate Care Policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy
Administering medicines policy	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See health and safety policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy