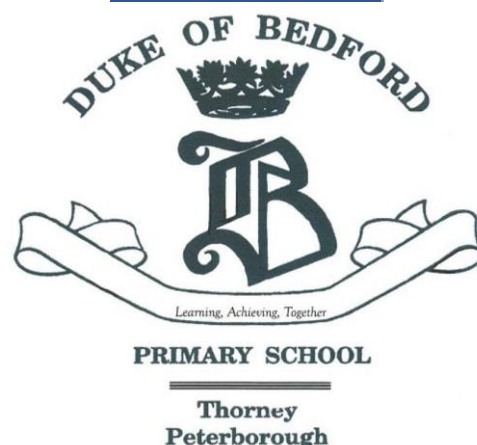


Duke of Bedford Primary School

Early Years Policy

Pre-School and Reception (Year R)

December 2022



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Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) extends from birth to five years.

Entry into our Foundation Stage (Pre-School) can be from 2 years old and ends at the end of the Reception year.

Entry into our Primary School is at the beginning of the school year in which the children are five.

The EYFS is very important in its own right, and we at the Duke of Bedford Pre-School and Primary School ensure that children learn, develop well and are kept healthy and safe.

We promote teaching and learning to give children the foundations for good progress and preparing children for later schooling.

The early years' education we offer children is based on the following principles;

- It builds on what our children already know and can do;
- It ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged;
- It offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children, and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
- It is based around the children's interests;
- It provides a rich and stimulating environment;
- It acknowledges the importance of a full working partnership with parents/carers.

Legislation

This policy is based on the requirements set out in the Early Years Statutory Framework 2021.

Structure of the EYFS

Our Pre-School offers 24 places for children aged 2-4 years. Funded places are available for those children eligible as well as paid places.

We offer flexible session times 9-12; 9-3.30 or 12-3.30.

Pre-School is in a self-contained building across the playground from the Reception classroom but within the school grounds. It has one large classroom and a large, enclosed garden/outdoor area.

A pre-school manager, a deputy manager and pre-school assistants all whom have the relevant qualifications run it on a day-to-day basis.

Our Reception class offers 30 full-time places. The Reception class has a full-time teacher and a teaching assistant.

The Reception class teacher is also the EYFS Phase Leader. This role involves working closely with the pre-school manager and staff, guiding and supporting the implementation of the EYFS Statutory Framework 2021.

Curriculum Aims of the Early Years

Our Pre-School and Reception we follow the statutory curriculum requirements as set out in the EYFS Statutory Framework 2021. We use the Development Matters (2021) guidance to support our curriculum. The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are seen as important and interconnected. Three of the areas are referred to as the Prime areas. These are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving (Early Years Framework 2021.)

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 Prime areas are strengthened and applied through the further four areas which are referred to as the **Specific areas:**

- **Literacy;**
 - ◆ Comprehension
 - ◆ Word reading
- **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

Children joining our school may have learnt a great deal and we begin with this starting point, known as the child's 'Baseline Assessment'. Through observations and interactions with the children, we also make our own judgements. This enables us to plan an enriched curriculum that begins from the right starting points.

Teaching and Learning Styles

Our aim at the Duke of Bedford Pre-School/Primary School for children in the EYFS is to provide a safe, supportive learning environment where we can build on children's previous learning experiences in the home and other settings, provide opportunities and age appropriate content to develop their learning.

Teachers reflect on the different ways of learning and refer to the Characteristics of Learning outlined in the EYFS Statutory Framework 2021.

These Characteristics of effective learning are:

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

We aim to assist children to become independent, a creative thinker to equip them ready for future learning throughout their school life and beyond.

Features of good practice in our Pre-School/Primary School that relate to the EYFS are:

- The partnership between staff and parents, carers, agencies and other settings that help our children to feel secure at school, and to develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- The staff understand how children develop and learn, and how this must be reflected in their teaching;
- The range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions, and extend and develop the children’s play, talk or other means of communication;
- The carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage;
- The provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests, and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- The encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- The support for learning, with appropriate and accessible space, facilities and equipment, both indoors and outdoors;
- The identification, through observations, of children’s progress and future learning needs, which are regularly shared with parents and other investors;
- The good relationships between our school and the other educational settings in which the children have been learning before joining our school
- The clear aims of our work, and the regular monitoring of our work to evaluate and improve it;
- The regular identification of training needs for all adults working in EYFS.

Play in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Through play, our children explore and develop the learning experiences that help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up their ideas, learn how to control themselves and begin to understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively both alongside other children and on their own.

They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems, and express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations. We consider the outdoor learning environment just as important as the inside. Children have access to the outdoor area throughout the day.

Inclusion in the Early Years Foundation Stage

We believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking into account our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning, see our policy on Inclusion. We follow our legal responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010.

In Pre-School and Reception, we set realistic and challenging expectations that aim to meet the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the key stage. Some children progress beyond this point. We help them do this by planning to meet the needs of both boys and girls, of children with special educational needs, of children who are more able, of children with disabilities, of children from all social, economic and cultural backgrounds, of children from different ethnic groups, and of those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build on and extend the children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- Using a variety of teaching strategies that are based on children's learning needs;
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children, and to help them to learn effectively;
- Offering a safe and supportive learning environment, in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Employing resources that reflect diversity, and that avoid discrimination and stereotyping;
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- Monitoring children's progress, and providing support as necessary, which may require us to seek additional professional support from external agencies.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively across all areas of learning, as well as offering them opportunities to develop their cultural capital. In order to do this, practitioners working with the 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. In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice. They also show ambitious intent for all children. Staff are expected to develop a strong continuous provision, and then plan enhanced provision and additional adult directed activities to support this. As children progress through the early years foundation stage, key group work, adult-directed and whole class work will be planned, as appropriate for the age and stage of the pupils.

Assessment

At The Duke of Bedford, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the 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. Practitioners also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers. This is all completed on Tapestry. All practitioners are expected to show an understanding of what the pupils know and can do and what their next steps in learning are. They are regularly expected to discuss this with leaders to ensure we meet the needs of all pupils within the setting and we adapt timetables, the environment and planning to ensure we continue to be ambitious for all pupils.

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 or,
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers. The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters guidance and our own in school curriculum documents) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

Parents/carers of Pre-School and Reception children receive an annual report that offers brief comments on each child's progress in each area of learning. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs, and gives details of the child's general progress. We complete these in June, and send them to parents/carers in early July each year.

The role of parents

We believe that all parents and carers have an important role to play in the education of their child. We therefore recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school;
- Where possible, visits by the teacher to the childcare provision prior to their starting school;
- Offering a range of activities, throughout the year, that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents; holding Open mornings and Parent Cafes where family members can participate in the learning and explore the learning theme with their child in the setting.
- Providing a handbook of information about commencing Pre-school and School;
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress through our genuine "open-door" policy.
- Encouraging parents/carers to talk to the child's teacher or Pre-School staff if there are any concerns;
- Encouraging parents/carers to stay if there are problems with settling in;
- Providing various activities that involve parents, through regular communication with home including newsletters and weekly 'Learning Links' posts on the Google Classroom stream, provided by the reception teacher, discussing the kind of work that the children are undertaking the following week and how a parent/carer can support the learning at home.
- Involving families in contributing to the child's Learning Journey via Tapestry.

There is a formal meeting for parents in October and March which the parents discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher/Pre-school. Parents/carers receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.

Resources

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning and reflects the individual's interests, passions and abilities. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning. We ensure that resources and spaces are safe to use and checked regularly.

Transition

During the period of time before Reception children begin school, we offer a wide range of transition experiences to support them and their family with being 'school ready'. And likewise, when a child is going to join Pre-School, we offer a programme of communication to introduce families to our Pre-school setting. We particularly place an emphasis on supporting children to have a secure level of social, emotional and self-care skills to allow them to access the EYFS curriculum effectively and to for them to deal with the expectations of school structure and life. The transition opportunities we offer are:

- If a child is to begin Reception, parents/carers are invited to a meeting where they are given a wide range of information about starting school, our expectations and services;
- Open morning for all members of the family to explore the school setting and enjoy activities in our Early Years outdoor learning space;
- Reception children may attend Stay and Play sessions where they can meet their future peers and have the opportunity to explore their new learning environment;
- Staff carry out nursery or pre-school setting visits and liaise with other professionals that have worked with the children;
- Individual family appointments with the Reception teacher and teaching assistant in September, before the child starts school.
- Families new to school or Pre-school are given an introduction pack;
- Prior to starting Pre-school, parents are given All About Me sheets to complete which provides us as a setting with some personal information around each child.

Continuing the Parents/Carers as Partners ethos

As an Early Years setting, we place much value on developing and maintaining excellent relationships with families from the outset and believe that for a child to achieve to their potential it is vital that we offer support and know the wider family network and any barriers this may pose to a child's development. The EYFS Leader and Pre School Manager work closely with the school SENCO to ensure that we identify these barriers to learning early on and we put strategies in place to overcome them.

Safeguarding and welfare procedures

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by talking to children about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things

- The importance of brushing your teeth

We follow [statutory guidance](#) for safety around supervised tooth brushing.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

Monitor and review

This policy is monitored by the Headteacher/Governing body and will be reviewed annually.