

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Birkenhead High School Academy



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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

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) that applies from September 2021](#).

3. Structure of the EYFS

The Early Years Foundation Stage at BHSA includes a nursery class (F1) and two reception classes (F2). Nursery has their own classroom and outdoor area and the two reception classes share an outdoor learning environment allowing for 'Free-Flow' play during activity sessions where appropriate.

Nursery is taught by a teacher with QTS alongside a level 3 teaching assistant and the ratio of 1:13 is maintained so no more than 26 pupils are on site at one time. During lunchtime sessions when the teacher is not present, a ratio of 1:8 is maintained with nursery being overseen by a level 3 Teaching Assistant (or higher) alongside a level 2 midday supervisor and another midday supervisor. A first aider is on site, either in the classroom or in the school office, at all times. 30/15 free hours is available in our F1 setting for those eligible and all finance is dealt with by the school finance department. Pupils attend for either full days, morning or afternoon sessions.

Each Reception class has a teacher with QTS and a level 3 teaching assistant. The PAN number for our Reception classes is 28 meaning a ratio of 1:30 with a teacher with QTS is maintained at all times. Both teaching assistants in F2 are first aid trained and first aid is also accessible on site at the school office. The external door outside the Reception classrooms which leads out onto the secure school site is alarmed to alert a staff member of anyone leaving the building.

Each child is allocated a 'Key Worker' (the class teacher) and this is the first person for a parent to talk to if they have any concerns about their child at home or school.

4. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2021.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 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

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

To support the pupils' development through these 7 areas of learning, the EYFS team have developed twelve simple EYFS curriculum goals that they strive for all learners to achieve in order to become the best learners they can be in preparation for their transition to key stage 1. These goals are based upon supporting their progress through the areas of learning towards meeting the early learning goal and upon developing and exhibiting the characteristics of effective learning. They aim to put in basic terms for staff, pupils and parents what our aims and intentions are for our pupils in order to support them to be ready for the next steps in the learning journey. Our school values are also incorporated to ensure pupils are being encouraged to uphold and demonstrate our core values and support the ethos of the school as a whole. See Appendix 2

4.1 Planning

Staff develop a clear and progressive EYFS curriculum, detailing next steps for pupils as a whole and also for individual pupils who need extra support. Though topics of learning are mapped out in our Academy roadmaps (please see the school website), the EYFS curriculum is one that remains highly responsive to pupil voice and staff are constantly adapting plans and following the interests of the children within a particular topic. This results in a wide variety of activities which stimulate interest and curiosity in all areas of learning, supported by a well-resourced and highly stimulating environment. An overview of the EYFS curriculum can be viewed on our EYFS curriculum plan.

Continuous provision activities are responsive to the needs of the children and are regularly updated to maintain interest and engagement, allow for opportunities to practise and apply what has been learned in teacher led activities and develop skills in areas of learning that may need extra support.

Particular attention is paid to the development of language and oracy through a language rich provision in which the embedding of new subject specific vocabulary is planned for in all areas of the curriculum to provide all pupils with the cultural capital needed to succeed. This vocabulary is embedded into daily story and rhyme time and guided sessions as well as being promoted in play through the role play areas with pupils engaging in regular conversations with peers and adults in the provision. Pupils are expected to develop their fluency with new vocabulary through repetition and a supportive environment in which they are encouraged to always 'have a go.' The use of high-level questioning from staff with this strong focus on language acquisition as well as opportunities to read, write and count both indoors and outside results in a highly purposeful environment.

4.2 Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. Each day pupils take part in a systematic synthetic phonics session supporting the development of language, reading, writing, spelling and speaking and listening. A new validated systematic synthetic phonics system 'Essential Letters and Sounds' has been purchased and training is due to commence shortly to develop our phonic practice and ensure fidelity to the scheme and consistency in our approaches within EYFS and KS1. Fully decodable books are being purchased alongside the scheme which will ensure that children commonly read and write well.

Pupils will also have a daily mathematics lesson that supports numberwork, measure, shape and space. Number is taught systematically using the NCETM Mastering Number approach as recommended by our local Maths hub representative with other areas of the maths curriculum being taught through White Rose. Children apply these skills in books and in continuous provision with carefully planned resources and activities. These are designed to inspire and engage pupils allowing them to practise oral activities.

These sessions are practitioner-led, pupil-focused and scaffolded with opportunities for independent learning and collaborative learning. 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.

5. Assessment

At Birkenhead High School Academy, 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. Staff also take into account observations and comments shared by parents and/or carers.

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

Accurate assessment informs both group and individual need. Observations are collected via Tapestry, individual writing and maths books. Any written/recorded observation documents are those that the staff have developed individually to support their accurate and formative assessment. Expectation of summative assessment for staff is clear with tracking documents completed using their own assessments and evidence at baseline and then termly. Within this document, staff detail the next steps for any pupils off track for any areas of development and the support in place as well as identifying the next steps and support for more able pupils. Moderation between staff is robust and results in a high level of consistency of judgements. Checkpoints within every area of learning for each term in F1 and F2 have been developed collaboratively by staff using Development Matters, Birth to 5 matters and cross-school networking opportunities. These checkpoints allow staff to make an informed and confident decision of whether a pupil is on track/off track to meet the ELG in a particular area of learning. Staff are confident using these checkpoints not as a tick list but as suggested behaviours a child may be exhibiting to be on track enabling them to make a rounded and holistic assessment of their current level. The Early Years Lead works closely with the Headteacher and class teachers to monitor and track children's progress in the EYFS. Red flag documents are updated termly as well as the EYFS tracking documents in response to data to prioritise areas of learning in the classroom environment

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.

6. Working with parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.

The school works closely with families to ensure that all children make the best progress possible and have a positive start to school. During their transition from nursery settings, F2 staff organise 1:1 telephone conversations (in place of nursery visits due to Covid-19) with nursery practitioners for all pupils allowing important information about the children to be communicated securely. 'All about me' documents are sent to parents asking them to complete information about their child to aid their transition and 'Transitioning to school' documents are emailed out supporting parents with the transition giving suggested activities and preparations they could be doing with their child prior to September.

When staff have been unable to continue normal practice of inviting nursery and reception parents into school for a welcome meeting (due to Covid-19), both F1 and F2 have sent out video presentations and a Junior School Handbook with all the information the parents needed prior to the start of school. 360 images of all EYFS rooms have been sent out to enable both parents and pupils to become as familiar as possible with the environments. EYFS staff have also organised small group 'Google meets' for parents and pupils to meet them face to face, albeit virtually, and allow questions to be asked and any concerns raised.

Regular chats and an 'open door ethos' for our EYFS parents help to ensure they are kept well-informed of their child's progress. Parents are encouraged to share children's achievements from home with the class through Tapestry. Many parents/carers are actively engaged in supporting their children in learning through regular reading, homework and liking and commenting on Tapestry posts. Parents are kept informed of progress and development through well-attended parents' evenings as well as twice annually reports. Parents value these opportunities and are keen to be involved. Harder to reach parents are targeted by staff through phone calls and are encouraged to support their learning and engage through Tapestry.

Parents share their enjoyment of reading and books with their children and school through Tapestry with challenges given to inspire a love of reading such as reading in unusual places and sharing a favourite story. Strategies for teaching phonics are shared with parents through phonics evenings (most recently online videos) and provision of sheets/ideas for helping their child at home through weekly homework.

7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

7.1 Oral Health

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years at BHSA by:

- Talking about the effects of eating too many sweet things
- Discussing the importance of brushing your teeth
- Inviting parents who are dentists/dental nurses to school to talk to the pupils and further promote good oral health

7.2 Procedure for administering medicines

Medicines are brought to school by parents/carers to the school office; they must complete a 'Parental agreement for setting to administer & store medicine' form. Medicines are only administered by fully trained staff. Members of Junior School staff who are trained as first aiders can administer medicines in school. At the end of a term or academic year, or whenever medicines/epi-pens are required to be returned home, they will be collected by a parent/carer from the school office. Medications are stored safely in the first aid cupboard in the office, which is locked, or the medical fridge if required to be stored at a controlled temperature. All classrooms have a basic first aid kit and full, portable first aid kits are taken on any off-site visits. Inhalers and

epi-pens must be accessible by all staff, with epi-pens kept at height, away from the reach of children. These are kept in a consistent location in each classroom in a clearly labelled box: bright pink for inhalers and bright blue for epipens. The epi-pen box is clearly labelled with a photograph of the child as well as their name. See the whole school 'First Aid Policy' for further information.

7.3 Dismissal procedures

Prior to September, EYFS parents/carers are asked to complete a google form detailing the adults who are likely to collect their child from school on a regular basis. They are also asked to provide a unique password which can be asked for at any point by EYFS staff to an adult who has come to collect a pupil. Parents are advised to inform the school office or the teacher directly if their child is to be collected by someone other than those on their 'regular pick ups' list. This adult will be asked for the password to ensure their identity upon pick up. If the staff are, for any reason, concerned about releasing a child to an adult, pupils would be taken to the school office and their parent/carer telephoned for further information. In EYFS, pupils are dismissed one by one from the classroom with the teacher stood at the door, calling the pupil's name as they see their adult.

7.4 What to do in the event of an accident procedure

In EYFS, minor accidents are not recorded. If a child has a minor bump to their head and requires an ice pack, the parent is informed via our 'bumped head note' system. Any more substantial accidents requiring further first aid will be recorded on CPOMS and the parents informed either by telephone or at pick up.

7.5 Nappy changing/incontinence

It is encouraged that pupils are toilet trained before starting school. If that is not the case, staff will support and encourage toilet training as per discussion with the parents. Small toilets are available for our EYFS pupils.

In the case of children with a medical need, there are full changing facilities available in our visitor toilet. Staff would attend in pairs and record when they have needed to change a child. Any concerns would be communicated with the parent/carer.

7.6 Procedure for a parent failing to collect a child-

The late collection policy will operate to the following timetable from the end of the school day:

In the event that the parent/carer is running late or has made alternative collection with a friend/relative they should phone the school office to advise us of those changes so that both the school and child are aware.

School finishes at 3.20pm. If school have not been informed that the adult collecting a child is running late, teachers will remain in the classroom with the pupil until 3.30pm. At 3.30 pm children will be taken to the office for collection where they will be supervised by office staff until 4.00pm. During this time calls will be made - staff will phone the SIMs contacts of the pupil in priority order. All reasonable attempts will be made to contact the parents/carers or emergency contacts. The child will not be allowed to leave the premises with anyone other than those named on SIMS as a contact or an adult who the parents/carers have informed school has permission to collect the child.

If a child has not been collected by 4.00pm and the school have not been able to make contact with any of the emergency contacts listed for the child, the school will contact the Integrated Front Door to get advice. They may at this point suggest that the school telephone the police.

Incidences of late pick up will be recorded if a pupil is collected after 3.45pm.

7.7 Procedure for child exhibiting symptoms of illness and/or those who are infectious

If a child is ill and needs to be collected from school, the parent/carer will be called and the pupil wait being supervised at the junior school office.

In order to support infection control in school, Public Health guidelines detailed here are followed https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/Guidance_on_infection_control_in%20schools_poster.pdf

Information about infection control regarding common childhood illnesses are communicated regularly with the parents and also upon pick up if a child has been ill exhibiting some of the symptoms of one of these illnesses.

7.8 Procedure for checking the identity of visitors

When welcoming a visitor onsite, the relevant sections of the whole academy safeguarding policy are followed. Visitors who hold a DBS certificate such as supply teachers or workshop leaders etc are asked to provide the school with a copy of their DBS and some sort of photographic identification.

For visitors who do not hold a DBS certificate or have not supplied paperwork in advance of their visit, the staff member inviting them in must complete the school risk assessment detailing the arrangements in place to cover safeguarding requirements. For example, if the visitor has not provided an enhanced DBS certificate, they will be accompanied on site at all times.

Any parents visiting the school are signed in using our InVentry system and are in the presence of a staff member during their visit at all times.

All visitors, including senior pupils doing reading support, are signed in and out the school site using the InVentry system.

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

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by Catherine Smith (Assistant Head and EYFS/KS1 lead) every 2 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 whole academy safeguarding policy and online safety policy covering the use of mobile phones and cameras in the setting.
Procedure for responding to illness	See whole academy health and safety policy. See above for procedure for responding to children who are ill or infectious (which must be discussed with parents/carers)
Administering medicines policy	See whole academy first aid policy <i>point 8</i> copied for reference above.
Emergency evacuation procedure	See Junior School staff handbook. Relevant section copied in appendix 3
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See whole academy safeguarding policy and the above section on Junior school visitors.
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See above for procedure for a parent failing to collect a child. See whole academy safeguarding policy for procedure for missing children (pg 58)
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See whole academy complaints procedure

Appendix 2. 12 BHSA curriculum goals



With thanks to Heather Elizabeth, Jo Bailey and Rachel Allinson for allowing adaptations to their work.

Appendix 3. Evacuation procedures

Emergency Procedures

The fire alarm signal is a continuous siren.

Staff will be notified in advance of the first fire drill (at the beginning of September) and we undertake these at least once per term, some drills will not be notified in advance in order to fully test all aspects of our procedures. At the start of each term, teachers must go through the procedures to be followed and the behaviour expected. Students must not talk during the drill.

Fire Evacuation

In the case of someone who needs support to evacuate the building, they should follow the procedures agreed in their personal emergency evacuation plan (PEEP) and if possible exit the building. If this is not possible and they are located on the upper floors, they should make their way to one of the designated refuge points by the lifts. They must NOT use the lifts and the fire service will be notified upon their arrival.

Junior pupils exit the building via their nearest exit point and assemble at their designated location on either the infant or junior playground in class lines. **Students must leave the building in silence and line up in their class positions.**

If the fire alarm activates whilst the Junior pupils are in the dining hall, they are to evacuate immediately and assemble at the Junior site assembly point over the bridge; registers will be taken to check all are present. In the event of a Junior pupil being involved in a Senior School fire alarm during an activity other than lunch, the staff will bring the pupils to the Senior fire assembly point and registers will be taken to check all are present.

Each class teacher should count the students in their line. Each Key Stage Lead should check with the class teacher in their Key Stage if they have all their pupils then report to the HoJ. Mrs Williams or Mrs Collinson will bring the registers to the assembly point.

No-one re-enters the school buildings until it has been confirmed as safe to do so by the HoJ or senior person responsible for the evacuation in the absence of the HoJ.

Gas Leak

In essence, this evacuation will follow the pattern of the fire drill, but:-

- the fire bell cannot be used
- it is likely that a partial evacuation only will be required. A full evacuation would be prompted by the National Gas Emergency Service (Call 0800 111 999 to report a gas or carbon monoxide emergency).
- Common sense must be used

If you suspect a gas leak:

- Ventilate the area instantly by opening windows and doors.
- Evacuate those students/staff who seem at immediate risk. Alert anyone else in the vicinity.
- Alert the caretaking team and the HoJ

**DO NOT USE ANY ELECTRICAL SWITCH OR APPLIANCE. AVOID USING THE INTERNAL PHONE SYSTEM.
DO NOT EVACUATE TO THE THREATENED AREA. IF NECESSARY, EVACUATE TO THE ASTRO PITCH.**

If you suspect a major gas leak:

Follow the procedures above, using the hand bell available if at all possible.

If a major gas leak is suspected:

The HoJ will delegate to individuals the task of ringing the hand bells in each area and decide on the assembly point.

- The FM Key Holder will alert the National Gas Emergency Service (Call 0800 111 999 to report a gas or carbon monoxide emergency).
- On hearing the handbell, you must act promptly: ventilate the room; do not touch any electrical device; do not use the phones.
- The person ringing the handbell will confirm the assembly point: act on this promptly. (The fire drill assembly point might be the most dangerous in certain circumstances so, if necessary, evacuate to the Astro pitch).
- Follow the fire drill procedure once assembled.

Extraordinary Weather: Snow, Fog, Flood, Blizzard

Staff are expected in school despite inclement weather.

1. If there is prior warning of emergency conditions, notification that staff and students are not to attempt the journey into school will be given on local radio (Radio City and Radio Merseyside) and a message sent out by the office.

All staff who live nearby should go to school to deal with any students who arrive unaware of the closure.

2. If in doubt, however, staff must phone the school. (There may be advice recorded on the answer phone).
3. In the event that only some of the staff and students arrive in school, classes will go to their classrooms and/or be merged, if necessary, until other arrangements can be made.

4. Should an emergency arise while we are already in school, the Principal will decide if we are to close the school, taking into account whether the school buses will be running, the distances staff and students must travel and advice from the emergency services. This decision will be made by midday.

If a parent phones in to ask for his/her daughter/ward to leave school early, they may do so.

Violent Intruder Procedure

Thankfully, violent attacks in or around schools in the UK are very rare but recent tragic events remind us of the need to always be prepared. In July 2016, the UK's National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) provided new guidance on how to prepare for and respond to a threat from a violent intruder. This was summarised in a video entitled '**STAY SAFE**'. Link below for reference:
<http://www.npcc.police.uk/NPCCBusinessAreas/WeaponAttacksStaySafe.aspx>

At BHSA, we are adopting the three recommended response strategies from this new guidance of '**RUN, HIDE & TELL**' into our emergency preparedness as follows:

1. 'RUN'

In the rare event of a violent intruder attack with a direct threat in your immediate vicinity, it is recommended that you **RUN** away from the direct threat to a place of safety. If it is necessary to **RUN** completely away from the BHSA site, we have a reciprocal agreement with St Anselm's College (25-43 Manor Hill, Birkenhead, Prenton CH43 1UQ) so that we can **RUN** to their site as a place of safety and to re-assemble there. This is a far better option than to surrender or negotiate. If there's no safe route available to **RUN** away from the threat then **HIDE**.

2. 'HIDE'

In the rare event of BHSA students and staff being indirectly at risk from a violent intruder in the general vicinity of the premises or grounds, the following **HIDE** procedures are to be followed:

- a) The member of staff who either identifies or is informed of the risk should immediately alert the office (JNRs or SNRs) of the concern, via email, phone or SIMs alert function. The office staff will then immediately inform ALT members on site so as to coordinate the actions to be taken. A decision may be made for all staff and students to 'stay put' and **HIDE** until the risk has been mitigated.
- b) In order to signal a 'stay put' and **HIDE** in SNRs, the lesson change bell will be sounded by 5x (1 sec) bell rings followed by 1x (5 sec) bell rings. In JNR's, the handbell will be sounded inside the building. This bell ringing signals indicate that until informed otherwise, staff and students are to either go to the nearest classroom with a member of staff in or remain in their current location with a member of staff, with the door closed, blinds closed and everyone sat calmly away from the windows and doors.
- c) The Office will make contact with PE staff if there is a lesson on the Astro via phone or walkie talkie in order to inform actions to be taken based on the specific threat.
- d) Staff members are to monitor communications but all mobile phones should be adjusted to silent and with vibrate switched off.
- e) If the situation changes and there is a direct threat in your immediate vicinity, then revert to step 1 to **RUN** if you have a safe route available to do so.
- f) A member of the ALT or emergency services will inform you when the threat has been cleared in order for staff to allow movement from your **HIDE** location.

3. 'TELL'

The ALT members on site will **TELL** the Police by dialling 999 as swiftly as possible when safe to do so, giving as much detail as possible about the location and circumstances of the threat.