

Birkenhead High School Academy

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Curriculum Statement



Every child deserves the best possible start in life, with support that facilitates fulfilling their potential. Here at BHS Junior School, we provide a welcoming and stimulating environment—an atmosphere where every child feels secure, confident, and valued.

Our children feel safe and are encouraged to explore the rich learning environment around them, make new friends, and flourish. Beyond academic excellence, we are committed to:

- **Learning Essential Life Skills:** We empower our pupils with the practical tools they need for the future, fostering independence, resilience, and problem-solving.
- **Developing Global Awareness:** We nurture a deep-rooted appreciation of the world around them, encouraging curiosity about different cultures, environments, and the beauty of our planet.

By blending a nurturing atmosphere with a forward-thinking curriculum, we ensure our students grow into well-rounded individuals ready to make their mark on the world.

The Foundation Stage at BHS includes a Nursery class (F1) and two Reception classes (F2). The Nursery has its own dedicated classroom and outdoor area, while the two Reception classes share a vibrant outdoor learning environment. Our pupils learn by playing, exploring, and being active, engaging in a variety of activities that take place both indoors and outdoors.

Central to our approach is a seamless, all-through EYFS journey. We ensure that skills are intentionally built upon as children progress, providing a continuous curriculum that bridges the gap between Nursery and Reception. This all-through philosophy allows us to monitor development closely and ensure every child is ready for the next step in their education.

We take great pride in our cross-phase learning and support, particularly during our extended transition period. During this time:

- **Mentorship:** Our Reception children take on a supportive role toward our Nursery pupils, fostering a sense of responsibility and kindness.
- **Shared Growth:** This interaction helps Nursery children feel confident about their upcoming move, while Reception children solidify their own social leadership skills.

To further enhance social development, Reception children are encouraged to play across the entire outdoor classroom. By moving freely between spaces, they widen their scope for friendships beyond their immediate registration group, building a diverse and inclusive social circle from the very start.

All staff working within the Nursery and Reception classes work together to teach and nurture our pupils. They are allocated a 'Key Worker' (which is usually the class teacher) and this is the first person for a parent/carer to talk to if they have any concerns about their child at home or

school. We have an open-door policy and a very close working team so parents/carers can talk to any member of our Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) team about their daughter/ward.

During our transition period, we make it a priority to get to know our families very well. We believe in involving parents in every step of their child's journey and offer a number of experiences for parents to feel truly involved in their child's learning. These include opportunities such as 'Watch a Phonics Session', 'Snuggle and Read', and 'Stay and Plays', all designed to build a strong partnership between home and school.

Parents/carers are kept informed at the classroom door where achievements can be shared or little concerns raised. Our wider school events are shared through the weekly Bugle newsletter and through direct emails. Curriculum flyers are also available on the website, which detail the topics covered and give ideas of how parents/carers can support learning at home. In addition to these updates, we provide a Weekly Newsletter via our Seesaw app. This provides a closer look at our learning from that week and offers tailored suggestions for extended learning and discussion at home. To mark the end of the academic year, we hold a Work Celebration, which gives a wonderful opportunity for parents to visit and share in the successes and progress of their child.

It is through play (both indoors and outdoors) that lots of learning takes place. The EYFS develops knowledge, skills and attitudes in seven areas which are split between *Prime* and *Specific* areas of learning.

The three 'Prime Areas' include:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal Social and Emotional Development

These areas are important because they lay the foundations for children's success in every aspect of educational life.

The four 'Specific Areas' include:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

These areas are important because they provide a wide range of experiences and opportunities for children to broaden their knowledge and skills. They are designed to engage, inspire, and promote independent thinking, collaborative discussion, and questions about their learning.

We also place a strong emphasis on providing a space where children feel confident taking risks in a safe environment. By encouraging them to challenge themselves and step outside their comfort zones, we help them build the perseverance and self-belief needed to tackle new experiences with curiosity rather than hesitation. Our core learning values are woven into every aspect of life in the Foundation Stage. We believe that by fostering a culture of curiosity and resilience, we empower our pupils to become lifelong learners. These values are not just abstract concepts; they are lived out daily through our interactions and the purposeful design of our curriculum. By encouraging children to be brave in their choices and reflective in their play, we help them develop the character and mindset necessary to navigate the world with confidence and kindness.

Children learn at different rates and respond differently to different educational teaching styles, so thorough and careful observation of pupils' learning is fundamental in order to tailor curriculum planning effectively. Our experienced team is constantly monitoring and observing each child's progress within the learning environment. We are proud to be champions of early identification of needs; by recognising and addressing specific requirements at the earliest possible stage, we ensure that every pupil receives the bespoke support they need to thrive and reach their full potential.

The pupils are learning all the time either through well-planned activities within our continuous provision in class/small groups and through focused teacher-led activities. When planning themes, the pupils' interests are taken into account to ensure that they are engaged, excited and motivated to learn. Practitioners are crucial in supporting play: well-timed questions, interventions and interactions with pupils extend their skills and knowledge and 'spark' their curiosity - learning is facilitated and all children progress well.

A daily phonics session supports the development of language, reading, writing, spelling, and speaking and listening. This structured approach ensures that the building blocks of literacy are established early and with confidence. Crucial to this development is the high standard of modelling provided by all staff. Whether through the use of rich, ambitious vocabulary in daily conversation or the careful demonstration of clear, consistent handwriting, our team provides a constant example for pupils to follow. By hearing precise speech and seeing letter formation modelled correctly across all subjects, children are immersed in a high-quality communication environment that reinforces their own learning.

A daily mathematics lesson supports number-work, measure, shape, and space. We place a high value on teaching mathematics through stories, which allows children to see numbers and shapes in a meaningful, real-world context. By grounding mathematical concepts in narrative, we promote an environment where children are encouraged to think for themselves and engage in creative problem solving, discovering that there are often many ways to reach a solution. These sessions are practitioner-led, pupil-focused and scaffolded with opportunities for both independent and collaborative learning. As our children progress through the Foundation Stage, the frequency and length of the more adult-directed activities increase to suit the *age and stage* of the child's personal development.

Beyond the classroom, our comprehensive co-curricular program is meticulously designed to cultivate curiosity and support the holistic development of every student. Through diverse offerings such as story time, puzzle club, and dedicated sensory sessions, we provide a broad spectrum of experiences that cater to both intellectual growth and emotional well-being.

The academic curriculum is significantly enhanced by a program of specially chosen school trips, curated to engage, inspire, and provide profound real-world context to classroom learning. These excursions are vital in fostering a deeper connection between theoretical knowledge and practical application.

Our science trip to Eureka! represents a prime example of this integrated approach, as it addresses multiple areas of our curriculum. From exploring concepts of personal safety to engaging with complex themes in science and geography, the visit provides a multifaceted learning experience. Furthermore, our Wildlings Forest School program encourages children to navigate calculated risks within a structured environment, fostering personal resilience and instilling a definitive, lifelong love of learning in the outdoors.

All children attending BHSA Foundation Stage have a personal account on 'SeeSaw' which is used as an important communication tool between home and school. We encourage parents/carers to add to this by uploading photographs and comments which support our brilliant home school connection. There will also be more formal opportunities in parent/carer meetings and written reports to ensure that parents/carers are kept informed of their daughter/ward's progress.

4. Roles and responsibilities

- The Head of Juniors has the responsibility for the leadership of and oversight of the Junior School curriculum and delegates responsibility to staff.
- The Deputy Head is Curriculum Lead and oversees subject leaders in Junior School.
- The EYFS Lead oversees and develops the EYFS curriculum, in collaboration with EYFS teachers to develop appropriate schemes of work which form the foundational knowledge upon which the KS1 and 2 curriculum builds upon.
- The Deputy Head and EYFS Lead work alongside the core subject leaders (English, and mathematics) to ensure that the progress of each pupil is tracked in all areas and that pupils are given appropriate challenge, support and intervention. They also work alongside other subject leads and the KS1 Lead to ensure pupils in EYFS are making progress across this stage and linking into subject specific areas as they move into KS1.
- The SENDCO ensures that pupils with specific learning needs have access to the curriculum.
- The Principal, Head of Juniors and Governors monitor the success of the curriculum.

5. Review

- This policy will be reviewed when there are changes in the law, or in accordance with the schedule drawn up by the Principal and agreed by the ATB.

Reviewed: February 2026

To be reviewed: February 2027