



MOUNT

ST MARY'S | BARLBOROUGH HALL

EYFS Policy

ISI Regulatory Code – 14c

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Linked Policies: Risk Assessment, Health and Safety, Safeguarding, Critical Incident Policy

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Barlborough Hall School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.”

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Department for Education, 2014

At Barlborough Hall School, we are committed to providing a high quality early years education, which gives children a secure and confident start to their school life and nurtures a lifelong love of learning. We also encourage children to be ‘men and women for others’ through the teaching of our Jesuit aims and ethos.

In our EYFS department, we work in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework. As such, our curriculum, teaching and care of the children is based upon four key principles:

A Unique Child Positive Relationships Enabling Environments Learning & Development

1. A Unique Child

We recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, self-assured and self-aware. We acknowledge that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Children’s attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use consistent praise and encouragement, celebrate academic, creative and social achievements, and encourage children to develop a positive attitude towards their own education.

Inclusion

At Barlborough Hall School, we are dedicated to ensuring that our setting is inclusive, in line with the Equality Act of 2010. As part of our Jesuit ethos, we are a truly ecumenical and inclusive setting, where the diversity of individuals and families within the EYFS is valued and respected. Differences are celebrated and all children within the school are treated fairly regardless of race, religion, background or ability. All children and their families are valued within our school.

In our school we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children’s range of life experiences when planning for their learning. We set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of both genders, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic and religious groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

Meeting individual needs

We meet the diverse needs and abilities of the children in our Early Years setting by:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence
- using a variety of multi-sensory teaching strategies based on children's learning needs and strengths
- providing a range of opportunities to motivate / support children and to help them to learn effectively
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping
- planning challenging activities for all children regardless of their level of ability
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support or extension as necessary
- having a named SENCo who will advise and assist the EYFS team when required
- Involving outside agencies when we feel help may be needed in order to fully meet the complex needs of children under our care

Arrangements for pupils with SEND/EAL/G&T

Pupils with SEND/EAL or who are classed as Gifted & Talented will be identified as early as possible in their EYFS journey through a combination of teacher assessments, discussions with the pupil's previous teacher or Key Worker, baseline testing, our EYFS tracking document and discussions with parents. Individual Education Plans (IEPs) Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) or Group Education plans (GEPs) will be drawn up in line with the school's Wave Provision Model (please refer to the school SEN policy for further details).

Pupils identified as Wave 3 (who have a diagnosed and specific need) will automatically have an individual plan which will be written in consultation with the school SENCo and the pupils parents. Children at Wave 2 may have a Group Education Plan if/where appropriate and receive additional support in class. Any additional support or extension activities will be documented and targets for these pupils will be shared with parents regularly and at our termly Parent Consultation evenings and with the children in class.

Safeguarding

"Children 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."

In the Early Years at Barlborough, we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements. It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take measured risks, but need to be taught how to recognise, minimise and avoid serious hazards.

We ensure that all adults who look after children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so and that necessary checks have taken place. We maintain, review and update our records, policies and protocols in order to safely run the setting to meet the welfare requirements of the children. Correct adult to pupil ratios are adhered to and reviewed regularly to ensure compliance. All staff who work unsupervised with children hold a relevant Level 3 qualification or above.

We promote good health and hygiene, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill. We store/administer medicines in line with the school medicine policy and our own EYFS protocols. There is at least one paediatric first aider on site with the EYFS children at any time. Staff involved in the preparation of snacks are Food Hygiene trained.

We ensure that the EYFS premises, furniture and equipment are safe and suitable for purpose. These are checked regularly and action is taken where maintenance / repair is required. Staff receive regular INSET training on Health & Safety and their responsibilities with regards to this. Please see separate Playground, Classroom and Welly Walk Risk Assessments and EYFS protocols documents for further information.

The EYFS staff at Barlborough have all received training related to Safeguarding. This is updated and reviewed regularly. All staff are aware of who to contact should they have any concerns regarding a child's welfare or safety. The Head Teacher is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and the Head of Early Years is the current Deputy Safeguarding Lead at the school and have current Channel Awareness, Prevent and Safeguarding training. In addition to this, children and parents are made aware of who to go to if they have a safeguarding concern and posters showing the current safeguarding officers can be seen displayed around Barlborough Hall.

Behaviour is managed in line with the whole school behaviour policy. As such, corporal punishment is never used. Physical intervention may be taken for the purposes of averting immediate danger or personal injury to any person, including the child. Records will be kept of physical interventions by staff or serious behavioural incidents by pupils and all such incidents will be reported to the Head of Early Years in the first instance, and to other members of the Senior Leadership Team where appropriate.

We endeavour to meet these requirements and to protect and promote the physical and psychological well-being of all children.

2. Positive Relationships

At Barlborough Hall School we recognise that children in the Early Years learn to be strong and independent from the creation of secure, positive relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We know 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
- giving children the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during taster sessions, visits, open mornings and weekly Little Bird toddler sessions
- inviting all new parents to an introduction/transition meeting during the term before their child starts school where information will be given about the class they will be transitioning to
- inviting parents to Parent Information Evening where information is given about the daily routines of each class and what to expect throughout the year
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress at home through their contributions on Tapestry (our online learning journeys) and Parent Consultation evenings
- parents are given the opportunity to speak directly to a member of teaching staff at the start and end of each day
- offering parents the opportunity to comment more formally on their child's progress through whole school parental surveys and feedback forms on the back page of each child's school report
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns or worries
- weekly EYFS Newsletter (The Early Bird) to inform parents of current topics, reminders, requests and dates for their diaries
- providing feedback on their child's attainment through Tapestry and during Parent/Teacher meetings

- providing written reports on their child's attainment at the end of the Autumn Term and one at the end of the Summer Term
- providing a range of activities during the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: class assemblies, Bonfire Night, Sports Day, Easter Bonnet Parade, EYFS Nativity, school trips and events to raise money for our house charities and our sister school in Makumbi, Zimbabwe

Communicating with children

We recognise the importance of building good relationships with the children under our care to ensure that they get the best out of their learning and time at school. We do this through:

- Appointing a dedicated 'Key Worker' or 'Class Teacher' for each child in the setting
- Interacting positively with children, looking for the good in all they do
- Taking the time to get to know the children's interests and fascinations by encouraging parents and pupils to share these with us through Tapestry
- The encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management
- Observing children across all seven areas of learning and gathering evidence in support of this so that learning can be better tailored to meet the needs of individual children (observations are recorded on Tapestry, our online learning journey)
- Tracking children using both Tapestry and a paper tracking folder of the development matters statements and Early Learning Goals alongside teacher observations from bookwork
- Involving children in their current targets and the review and achievement of their own targets
- Looking closely at how children learn using the characteristics of effective learning so that we better understand their individual needs
- Ensuring children are aware of the boundaries and expectations of the setting in order to keep themselves safe
- Providing a nurturing environment where children feel comfortable sharing their worries and concerns with their Key Worker

3. Enabling Environments

At Barlborough Hall School, we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

Observation & Assessment

Children are constantly observed and their knowledge and understanding is assessed in line with the seven areas of learning and characteristics of effective learning. This is done in a variety of ways:

- Assessments at the start of the school year (Baseline Assessment for Pre Prep III)
- Assessments in the last term of the school year (Baseline Assessment for Pre Prep III) to show progress over time
- Gathering observational evidence in our online learning journey (Tapestry) of how children learn and their progress against the 17 Early Learning Goals (parents can also contribute to this to show learning and experiences at home)

- Marking bookwork in line with the school marking policy and setting small targets to allow children to improve their work (in Early Years, areas for improvement are often handled immediately e.g. improving formation of a specific letter, size of letters, use of sentence punctuation) and feedback is also given at that time
- Setting 'next step' targets for each child which are displayed in the classroom, recorded in each child's tracking folder and shared with parents at consultation meetings and in reports (targets can be for any of the areas of learning and are not always academic)
- Targets are also shared with pupils and they are involved in the assessing of their progress against each target where appropriate
- An assessment is made at the end of each academic year to show each child's progress against the 17 Early Learning Goals using evidence gathered throughout the year from baseline testing, teacher assessments, observations, bookwork and the professional judgements of the class teacher or Key Worker (this is reported to the Derbyshire LEA and will be moderated externally by Derbyshire County Council every few years)
- A formal written report to parents at the end of the academic year will indicate progress against all 17 ELGs and a judgement as to whether the child is at an EMERGING, EXPECTED or EXCEEDING level
- The end of year report will also include information on how each child learns by investigating their characteristics of learning

Planning and Differentiation

The planning within the EYFS revolves around the interests and fascinations of the children whenever possible. We use information from parents and get to know the pupils to plan the majority of our themes and topics. Within these topics, we cover a range of different knowledge bases and skills to ensure that the children receive a broad and balanced curriculum. Detailed weekly planning will show the learning objectives, activities undertaken, differentiation/SEN/EAL provision, areas of learning covered and a weekly reflection to identify activities that went well and things which require further consolidation.

Assessment information from baseline testing, teacher assessments, individual target setting and pupil tracking is used to effectively meet individual needs. Work will be differentiated in a variety of ways to cater for the different needs and abilities of pupils. Differentiation may be achieved through the type or difficulty of task, the level of support given, targeted questioning, by the outcome or end result of the activity or by other methods as deemed appropriate by the class teacher/key worker. Groupings for classroom activities will be reviewed regularly and pupils will be given the opportunity to learn in both mixed and similar ability groupings.

The Learning Environment

The EYFS classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. In each classroom there are areas where children can be active, quiet or rest. The classrooms are set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and use equipment and resources independently. The EYFS classes have access to their own enclosed outdoor area which is used regularly throughout the day as well as access to our school grounds, which we make the most of during our weekly 'Welly Walks'. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children the chance to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help to develop all 7 areas of learning.

4. Learning and Development

In accordance with the EYFS statutory framework, the learning and development of children at Barlborough Hall School revolves around the seven areas of learning.

Seven Areas of Learning

3 PRIME AREAS

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

4 CORE AREAS

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

We recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are interconnected. We recognise that the seven areas of learning cannot be delivered in isolation and seek opportunities to make links between them. We aim to deliver the curriculum through planned, purposeful teacher-led activities and independent, child-led play, presenting new concepts in meaningful contexts that enable the children to build on what they already know.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

Alongside the seven areas of learning we recognise and value how children learn and the methods by which their learning, knowledge and understanding becomes 'embedded'. As a result, we recognise the importance of the characteristics of effective learning. In particular, we value:

Play

"Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development."

At Barlborough Hall School we recognise the importance of children's play. Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves, build positive relationships with their peers, manage risk independently and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children and collaborate with others as well as working on ideas of their own. They communicate, negotiate and build close friendships with others as they investigate and solve problems.

Active Learning

"Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods."

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. At Barlborough, we achieve this by following the interests and fascinations of the children under our care, giving them some control and independence over their own learning and the opportunity to further develop their knowledge and understanding of topics and themes of direct interest to them.

Creativity and Critical Thinking

“When children 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.”

At Barlborough Hall School, children are given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children’s thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom, mixing them with other resources in order to extend their learning and understanding.

Policy Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of all EYFS practitioners at Barlborough Hall School to follow the principles stated in this policy. All EYFS practitioners and staff members who teach within the EYFS have access to this policy. It is the responsibility of the Head of Early Years and Nursery Manager to make regular checks to ensure that the policy is being implemented in everyday practice. The Deputy Head will oversee this process. Areas which require further development will be identified through annual review of the EYFS development plan, weekly EYFS staff meetings, formal and informal observations by managers and staff and through staff supervision and appraisal meetings. The Deputy Head will undertake an annual formal review of this policy for the purpose of monitoring the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than one year from the date shown below, or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

Governance

There is a named governor responsible for the EYFS who will liaise with the Head of Early Years regularly and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion. The governor currently responsible for the EYFS is Marian Bolton.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis to take into account changes within the setting, changes to statutory requirements or to reflect current guidance or best practice.

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
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	EYFS Protocols & Procedures
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	EYFS Protocols & Procedures
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy

Next review date: August 2020