

Belgrave St. Bartholomew's Academy

Principal: Mr G.Barlow



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy 2023-2024

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EYFS Policy- Belgrave St Bartholomew's Academy 2023-2024

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 the age of 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 that children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow. (EYFS Framework –September 2021).

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of their Reception year (aged 5). The Academy's Early Years Foundation Stage accommodates children from the age of 3 to 5. At Belgrave we have a 60 place Nursery, which offers full-time provision. We have 2 reception classes with 30 children in each class. Parents are able to utilise the universal or extended hour's entitlement in order to access the provision at our school.

To ensure best practice we have key workers in the Nursery class (one to every 13 children) and one teacher and one Teaching Assistant attached to each of the Reception classes. Their role is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs and to help the children become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for each child and to build a relationship with parents.

In addition to this, we have support staff who also work within the classes and provide extra support and intervention where needed, for example 1-1 reading support or hand writing.

At Belgrave we ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. We promote teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and provide all of the children in the EYFS with a broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through both school and life.

At Belgrave St Bartholomew's Academy we have 4 overarching principles that shape practice in our EYFS setting. These are:

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- The importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn at different rates. (See 'the characteristics of effective teaching and learning' section below*). The framework covers the education and care of all children in early year's provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Intent

At Belgrave St Bartholomew's Academy we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children therefore giving them the strong foundation for their future. We aim to ensure that all our children develop into independent and lifelong learners.

"When we succeed in giving every child the best start in their early years, we give them what they need today. We also set them up with every chance of success tomorrow." (Development Matters, Sept 2020, revised July 2021).

Foundation Stage Curriculum

The Nursery and Reception follow the curriculum as outlined in the EYFS document.

The EYFS is based on seven key features of effective practice as set out in Development Matters 2020 (revised July 2021).

1. The best for every child
2. High-quality care
3. The curriculum: what we want children to learn
4. Pedagogy: helping children to learn
5. Assessment: checking what children have learnt
6. Self-regulation and executive function
7. Partnership with parents

As part of our best practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven areas of learning.
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- Provide early intervention for those who need additional support.
- Work in partnership with parents and where needed outside agencies.
- Plan challenging learning experiences for all our children, based on the individual needs of the child.
- Provide opportunities for our children to engage in adult led learning and self-initiated learning.
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and outdoors.
- Plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observations of children's needs, interests and stages of development across the seven areas of learning.
- Deliver a broad and balanced education where learning is sequential so that the children learn and remember one thing before they move on to the next.

EYFS Areas of Learning:

The EYFS is made up of three prime areas of learning. These three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving.

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language

- Physical Development

There are four specific areas of learning:

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

All seven areas of learning and development are important and interconnected.

In planning and guiding what children learn, practitioners reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and adjust their practice appropriately.

*** The 'Three Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning' are:**

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

Observation, Assessment and Planning

At Belgrave St Bartholomew's Academy children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first hand experiences, in which children can explore, think creatively and are active. We provide a well-balanced curriculum and our planning ensures that each child has the opportunity to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in every area of the EYFS. Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful activities and through a mix of adult led and child initiated learning.

Observations

The Early Years Foundation Stage practitioners use observations as the basis for planning and assessment where the primary focus is to understand each child in our setting.

Practitioners are skilled at observing children to identify their achievements, interests, what we want them to learn and their next steps for learning but we also trust that they 'know' our children because of the time they spend with them as well as their own expert professional judgement.

Both formal and informal observations of the children then lead the direction of the adult led and enhanced planning of the continuous provision in the learning environment. As a school we believe that if we are capturing the moment, we cannot be a part of the moment therefore, we only record relevant and significant observations that are then logged onto each child's online learning journey through their individual portfolio on Class Dojo.

Home observations are also encouraged using ClassDojo as we believe that parents also have a pivotal role in enhancing and promoting the learning at home.

Planning

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 EYFS, key group work, adult-directed and whole class work will be planned, as appropriate for the age and stage of the pupils.

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 interaction. 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 their next stage of education. Timetables are set for each year group and are adapted based on the needs of each cohort and the age of pupils within the setting.

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. At Belgrave we feel that the number and quality of the conversations children have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction books, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, story-telling and role play, where children share their ideas with

support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

For children whose home language is not English, all staff take reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning, supporting their language development at home. At Belgrave we also ensure that children have sufficient opportunities to learn and reach a good standard in English language during the EYFS, ensuring children are ready to benefit from the opportunities available to them when they begin year 1.

Assessment

At Belgrave St Bartholomew's 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. Practitioners also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers. This is all completed on Class Dojo. 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 or schools within the St Bart's Trust, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

Continuous assessment is an essential part of monitoring children's progress and is used as an aid for future planning. Parents and children are involved in discussions about general progress. An end of year report stating children's attainment is given to all parents at the end of their first year in school.

Inclusion

We value all of our children as individuals at Belgrave St. Bartholomew's Academy, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meet the needs of the individual child and support

them at their own pace so that most of our children achieve and even exceed the Early Learning Goals. We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so, work closely with parents and outside agencies.

All children will receive quality first teaching on a daily basis and activities will be differentiated accordingly. In addition to this where children have been identified as having a specific need, intervention programmes will be implemented. Teachers and Teaching Assistants plan programmes together and where needed with liaison with our Inclusion Manager/SENCO. (Please refer to the Academy's 'SEND Policy' for greater detail). The needs of children with English as an additional language will be met through planning and support alongside our 'Bi-lingual practitioners'.

Transitions

Transitions are carefully planned for and time given to ensure continuity of learning. At any transition, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child and other settings. At Belgrave St Bartholomew's Academy we recognise that starting school and moving up classes has the potential to be a stressful time for both parents and children. To this end we have established a strong set of procedures for transitions to be smooth as possible. All children starting in our Nursery receive a photograph of their key person and have home visits prior to their child starting Nursery. This gives children the security of meeting with their teacher in a safe, familiar environment and gives parents time to ask questions and share knowledge or any concerns they have about their child.

In addition to this all the children have 'stay and play' sessions in the Nursery to meet the other staff and get familiar with their new surroundings. Previous local Private Day Nurseries are contacted about children who will be coming from their setting to Belgrave St Bartholomew's Academy to share information and to support a smooth transition between settings.

All children starting Reception have transition days with their new class teacher and teaching assistant, parents are invited to attend and are familiarised with the school and school day by the EYFS Manager. Parents can ask questions and share information about their child. Those children coming from different settings to our Reception are visited, where possible, by the Early Years Manager and their progress and development shared by their Nursery key worker. We have a staggered intake in our Early Years in order to ensure that children who need extra support are given time at each start date to settle in.

All children starting in Nursery have a booklet to complete during the summer break to inform staff about children's interests.

In the summer term all of our Reception children visit their new Year 1 teachers for one week prior to them starting Year 1. Reception teachers pass on their knowledge of each child's development, progress and achievement towards

the early learning goals to ensure that all teachers have a well-rounded picture of the children prior to starting the new school year.

In the final term the Year 1 teacher will meet with the Early Years staff and discuss each child's development against the Early Learning Goals and the Characteristics of Effective Learning for each child in order to support a smooth transition to Year 1. This discussion helps the Year 1 teacher to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children.

Health and Safety and Safeguarding

All reasonable measures are taken to ensure the safety of all children in the EYFS.

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. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021' statutory guidance and adhere to the Academy's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

At Belgrave St. Bartholomew's Academy our pupil's welfare is our paramount concern and we will always act in the best interests of the child. We recognise the importance of providing a school environment where pupils feel safe and respected. We encourage pupils to talk openly and to feel confident that they will be listened to. We recognise that all adults within the school have a full and active part to play in protecting our pupils from harm and as such they will always exercise 'professional curiosity.' We will work closely with parents and carers to ensure their understanding of the school's responsibilities to safeguarding and promote the welfare of their children, which may include the need to make referrals to other agencies in some situations. We work closely with other professionals to ensure our children have the best support in their learning and development. These can include, our Extended Home School Link worker, school nurse, health visitors and social services. (See Belgrave St. Bartholomew's Academy Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy – school website)

We are a healthy school and participate in the free fruit and milk for under-fives scheme. For our Reception children we provide the universal infant free school meal and the menu is regularly monitored with the chef. We cater for those children who have special dietary requirements and have robust systems in place ensuring that all children receive the correct meal. Fresh water is readily available for all children and we encourage children to bring in water bottles with water only. Children are taught the importance of keeping clean and washing their hands correctly.

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years through our curriculum, for example by talking to children about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth

We also teach E-safety across our EYFS in age appropriate ways. The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy

Behaviour

In the EYFS children are encouraged to be motivated and are eager to join in. Through play the children are encouraged to share and cooperate well, demonstrating high levels of self-regulation and respect for others. Children are encouraged to keep on trying particularly if they encounter difficulties.

At Belgrave St. Bartholomew's Academy positive behaviour is expected and encouraged. All staff in the EYFS promote our school vision 'Loving each other as we love ourselves' and our school CCR values (Courage, Compassion and Respect). We operate a reward system and praise good behaviour and attitudes. Age appropriate strategies are used to develop a safe and secure environment for learning. (EYFS follows the Academy's Behaviour Policy).

Working with parents and the Wider Context

We strive to create and maintain partnership with parents and carers as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child's learning. We have an open door approach where all parents are encouraged to communicate with the staff if they have any concerns about their child and their development. We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child's education.

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers. Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. The progress check and EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities. Each child is assigned a key person/Teacher who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs. The key person/Teacher supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

Working with other services and organisations is integral to our practice in order to meet the needs of our children. At times we may need to share information with other professionals to provide the best support possible.

We draw on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on outings and inviting members of the community into our setting.

Home School Links

- Prior to seeking admission, parents are encouraged to visit the school and talk to the EYFS Manager, the Nursery Class Teacher or the Reception Class Teacher.
- A School Prospectus is issued to all parents of children being admitted to school. This outlines the ethos and the curriculum of the early years classroom, as well as the practicalities e.g. school uniform.
- In the Autumn Term parents are invited to a meeting with the Reception Class Teacher where general issues are discussed. We recognise that parents and carers are the children's first and most enduring educators. Parents are given

information on how they can support their child's learning. The importance of staff and parents working together as a team is emphasised and it is made clear that, should parents have any particular concerns or worries, opportunities are always available to discuss matters.

Class Dojo is used to support communication with parents.

- A parents' evening is held termly for Nursery and Reception.
- Parents are most welcome to come and help with a variety of classroom activities.

Good relationships and communications between parents and school form a fundamental part of a child's early education. Parents have a wealth of knowledge about their child. So, as a child begins their time with us, the parent is our greatest source of information. They will help us to understand the child, and give continuity to their care and education.

Intimate Care

"Intimate" care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. However, depending on a child's stage of development, they may need some support, for example, dressing, encouragement to wipe their bottom after toileting and changing underwear following an accident. In most cases intimate care is to do with personal hygiene. Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child. It is our aim that all children should be independent and we consider our role to be one of supporting and encouraging rather than doing.

Sleeping

Staff must ensure the safety of children when sleeping in setting as set out in

September 2023 - [Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

January 2024 - [EYFS statutory framework for group and school based providers \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

EYFS framework states:

Sleeping children must be frequently checked to ensure that they are safe. Being safe includes ensuring that cots and bedding are in good condition and suited to the age of the child, and that babies are placed down to sleep safely in line with the latest government safety guidance: Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) - NHS (www.nhs.uk). Practitioners may also find it helpful to read NHS advice on safety of sleeping children: Reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) – NHS.

To ensure staff keep all children safe when sleeping in setting staff will:

- Complete 10-minute checks on children who are asleep in setting and have a written record of all checks (**Appendix 1**)
- Ensure children are comfortable, safe and not using a bottle to reduce the risk of choking
- Ensure at all times the children's dignity, wellbeing and safety are promoted
- Staff will create a positive culture around sleeping and communication with parents regarding a child's sleep needs
- Signpost families to further information or services regarding sleep and bedtime routines when required

Parent responsibility includes:

- Sharing key sleep information with staff prior to entering the EYFS setting
- Sharing any updates on sleep patterns at home. For example, more sleeping during day time hours or struggles with sleeping at home during the night
- Continual open and honest communication with key workers and EYFS staff

Sleep Checks should include:

- Checking a child while sleeping should involve:
 - Placing a hand on their chest to check they are breathing or putting the back of their hand near to the child's mouth to feel for breath
- Ensuring that each child is well
- Ensuring that each child is not too hot or too cold
- Ensuring that all sheets or blankets are not wrapped around the child.

Equal opportunities

In line with the school's equal opportunity policy, all areas of provision will be made accessible to all children regardless of age, sex, gender, culture, race, religion, ethnicity, family background, special educational need, disability or ability. At Belgrave St. Bartholomew's Academy, no child will be disadvantaged or discriminated against. (See St Bart's Trust Equality and Diversity Policy).

Date: September 23

Review Date: September 24

Please note, all policies that are referred to throughout this document are available on our school website www.belgraveacademy.org.uk.

Appendix 1:

Child name	Time/Sign	Time/Sign	Time/Sign	Time/Sign	Time/Sign	Time/Sign	Time/Sign
Pupil A	11:10 <i>Example Sig</i>	11:20 <i>Example Sig</i>					