

### Intent

At Birchwood, we aim to provide motivating first-hand experiences whilst encouraging children to build resilience, ambition and a lifelong love of learning. We aim to build on the wealth of knowledge and skills children already have when they arrive and are actively developing relationships with our feeder settings. We recognise that all children are unique, celebrating and welcoming differences within our school community. Therefore, our curriculum is child centred following the interests and fascinations of the children in the current year group. We are passionate about children leading and engrossing themselves in their learning.

We aim to:

- Provide a curriculum that offers children a wide range of opportunities ensuring that we do not expect children to aspire to things they have never encountered. We will work on broadening their experiences providing opportunities to try new things and encouraging them to relish a new challenge
- Provide high expectations encouraging them to develop perseverance and self-belief so that they can problem solve and achieve far more than they expected
- Provide a learning environment that helps children achieve their potential and support those who need additional help in order to maximise their chances of achieving the Early Learning Goals
- Provide children opportunities to develop their sense of wellbeing and ability to regulate their feelings so that they feel confident in our community and are equipped with all the tools they need to transition to Year 1 effectively
- Develop the skills and expertise of staff working in EYFS through regular and comprehensive professional development either run by the EYFS Leads or attending courses run by other providers
- To work in partnership with parents/guardians and value their contributions
- To have in place effective procedures to ensure the safety of children when in our care.

### Implementation

Our curriculum follows the Early Years Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. This document specifies the requirements for learning and development in the EYFS and provides the prime and specific areas of learning we must cover in our curriculum. Through our knowledge of each child and formative assessments, the EYFS Team plan exciting and engaging activities that will move the children's learning forward. This may involve following a class theme where we take advantage of cross-curricular links in order to combine transferable skills and develop a wide-ranging vocabulary, which underpins the children's learning. This may also include following individual children's interests and making the most of those focused moments where the teaching and learning can be maximised in a one to one way with teacher and child. Each year creates its own unique blend of whole class, guided, adult directed play and child-initiated play activities dependant on the nature and needs of the class of individuals. We look forward at the start of a year to see where the class will lead us.

Children in EYFS learn by playing and exploring, being active and thinking critically and creatively and this takes place both indoors and in our outdoor areas. Our children have access to an outdoor space all year round and in all but the most challenging weather conditions. Children make their own decisions about where they learn best and teachers ensure that there are opportunities for all areas of learning both inside and outside.

The school follows the Letter and Sounds phonic programme, using a wide range of physical and online resources to support this. Every child has access to a phonics session every day with intervention opportunities for those who find this area of learning more difficult. We use the phonics session to also develop children's

expertise in handwriting. We will be reviewing our provision for phonics this year in line with the newly accredited synthetic phonics programmes and will identify a new programme to follow for September 2022.

We provide effective and focused intervention for those children who are finding learning challenging and are not on track to meet expectations at the end of the year. This will be provided in an inclusive way and support from parents is also enlisted at an early stage to ensure that the children have every chance to achieve the Early Learning Goals.

The EYFS team collect evidence of children's learning through work completed in their learning journal, observations, photos and videos that are shared with parents at our termly parent's evenings. This means that parents can engage with children regularly about their learning and can contribute to the knowledge we have of the child in school. Parents are very active and love to use 'From Me to You's' to communicate any messages with class teachers. At Birchwood we love to celebrate the children's achievements inside and outside of school and hold weekly celebration assemblies which parents can attend to help celebrate their child.

We love to provide children with opportunities that lots of them have not experienced before or that enhance their learning in school. We go on visits to support this for example a trip to the local library to advocate reading for pleasure and the importance of sharing stories as a family. We ensure that all of our visits are learning related and will provide the spark for further immersion in a theme or project.

By the end of the year, we provide opportunities for children to increase their independence in recording their work as developmentally possible to ensure they are well prepared for the move to Year 1. We also ensure that the pedagogy in Year 1 reflects the independent learning skills children have gained in EYFS working together as teams to develop expertise and confidence in all teaching staff.

The team in EYFS work tirelessly to ensure that children are surrounded by a kind, caring and happy environment, which helps them, develop the same skills in their journey through school. It is a positive place to be where resilience, perseverance and successes are celebrated and every child feels valued and respected.

### **Impact**

The impact of the EYFS curriculum is reflected in having well rounded, happy and confident children transitioning into Year 1. Our children are often amazing role models for others in school.

We measure progress and children's learning across the year through formative and summative assessment which are based on the teacher's knowledge of the child, their learning journal, mathematics and literacy folders. We aim to exceed the National and Local Authority data for children achieving a Good Level of Development. Almost all our children make more than the expected steps progress from their starting points.

Assessments are completed three times a year and shared with parents. In Summer 2, the EYFSP is completed where teachers' judgements are completed to show whether a child has met each of the 17 ELGs. They will be assessed as either 'emerging' or 'expected'. Whilst there is no judgment to state if a child is 'exceeding' beyond an ELG, teachers have a duty to provide a narrative for both parents and the Year 1 teachers.

Impact is also evident through our successful transitions throughout school. EYFS staff have a good understanding of how ELG's link to the National Curriculum, and through our robust planning and delivery of curriculum overviews in both core and foundation subjects, children leave the EYFS stage with the knowledge, skills and confidence to continue their individual learning journeys.

We believe our high standards are due to the enriched play-based exploration alongside the rigour of assessment and teaching the children have as they move through the early years – a rich diet of balanced learning experiences is undoubtedly the best way to develop happy, curious children.