



The Beacon
Folkestone

Early Years
Foundation Stage
(Practice Guidance)
Policy

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to reach their full potential. A child’s experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure safe and happy childhood is important in its own right, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. When parents choose to use early years services they want to know the provision will keep their children safe and help them to thrive. The Early Years Foundation Stage is the framework that provides that assurance.”

The Early Years Foundation Stage 2012 (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. At The Beacon School, selected children will join our Nursery on a referral basis from Health and Educational professionals for the Observation and Assessment (O&A) process for their Education Health Care Plans. Those that are accepted for The Beacon School will start full time in the following September in one of three allocated Mixed Reception and Year One classes based on individual learning requirements.

The EYFS provides:

- Quality and Consistency
- Secure Foundation
- Partnership Working
- Equality of opportunity

Aims:

- To provide a high-quality learning and developmentally appropriate environment through which all children access a broad and balanced inclusive curriculum, that fosters their intellectual, emotional, physical, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- To enable all children to learn and develop skills, knowledge, attitudes and understanding which prepare them for their continuing education.
- To ensure continuous formative observational assessment (including Baseline), summative assessments three times a year and to ensure planning and individual next steps based on these formative assessments.
- To plan for each child’s individual care and learning requirements, focusing on countering underachievement and overcoming barriers.
- To promote positive attitudes to diversity and difference within all children and help children to value different aspects of their own and other peoples’ lives.
- To promote a positive, mutually respectful and interactive partnership between home and school in which individual progress is shared and next steps in learning discussed.
- To enable all children to develop positive dispositions for learning and high levels of well-being and involvement.
- To work together with professionals from other agencies to identify needs and to provide best learning opportunities for children.
- To enable children to make an effective transition from home to nursery and from nursery or pre-school to Reception and Year 1.

Since September 2012 we have followed the Department for Education Statutory requirements contained in the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework and The British Association for Early Childhood Education 'Development Matters' document.

The guiding principles, which underpin our practice in our Early Years class, are grouped under the following four themes.

A Unique Child

At The Beacon School we recognise that every child has potential to be a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise 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 praise and encouragement, as well as celebration/ sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning. We also encourage children to develop intrinsic inner motivation.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children at The Beacon School are treated fairly, regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

At The Beacon, 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, their capabilities and difficulties when planning for their learning.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with additional educational needs, children who are higher achievers, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and 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 children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide additional support as necessary.
- ensuring a healthy balance between child and adult – led activities.
- monitoring the children's well- being using the Leuven scales.

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 risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

We follow the whole school Behaviour policy; some children may require individual Behaviour Support Plans (BSP). These are written and reviewed in liaison with both the parent and the behaviour manager.

We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See Safeguarding Children Policy)

Welfare

“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.”

At The Beacon School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2012. We understand that we are required to:

- Promote the welfare of children.
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children’s stage of development and individual needs.
- Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

Communication and Interaction

Many of our children have speech and/or language delays/disorders. Some have severely delayed receptive and expressive language. Most children have significant social and interaction difficulties. It is vital that we provide an enriched language environment with the focus on overcoming barriers to learning and development.

Supporting children’s speech and language and social and interaction skills is embedded in our teaching/ learning approach, routines and environment.

We may need to use any of the following strategies to support the children:

- Use clear and graded language.
- Keep listening time short and supported by visual aids.
- Use visual timetables so children know what is happening.
- Display and use symbols throughout the environment and sets of symbols specific to set activities.
- Give thinking time.
- Maintain confidence by listening to and accepting all contributions.
- Encourage children to self- check and evaluate using phrases/questions such as; “good thinking, try again/ have another go, what do you think? Are you happy with that? Do you want to change that?”

- Use and encourage use of Makaton signing, Picture Exchange Communication System and Cued Articulation.
- Develop phonological awareness through rhyme, story and song with plenty of opportunity for overlearning.
- Assess and support children's speech sound production using Speech Link and individual programmes.
- Assess and support children's receptive and expressive language skills using Language Steps.
- Encourage functional communication skills within the natural environment and everyday happenings.
- Encourage development of pragmatic skills in the natural play/ social situation.
- Write personal and group social stories to support social understanding and skills.
- Use 'Social Use of Language Programme' (Social Foundations).
- For children whose home language is not English we provide opportunities for children to use their home language in play and learning. We also ensure they have opportunities to develop their use of English and we provide individualised sessions with the Speech Therapy HLTA to develop skills.

Positive Relationships

At The Beacon School we aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents and carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make.

We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating their children.

We do this through:

- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school.
- The Teacher or Nursery Leader offers to visit all children in their home setting prior to their starting school.
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts in the Nursery or Reception/ Year 1 class.
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress and allowing free access to the children's 'Learning Journey' books and folders.
- Encouraging parents to talk to their child's teacher if there are any concerns. There are formal meetings for parents regularly at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: assemblies, Sports Day, Christmas celebrations etc.
- Weekly photo diaries to promote good working relationships between home and school.
- Meet and greets with teachers and key workers to promote key information and first point of contact for all new parents.
- Sharing a home-school contact book to share information between home and school. This is a valuable link between home and school. This is particularly valuable for those parents who are unable to come into school on a regular basis.
- All children have a key worker to ensure that the child feels safe and secure.

- Supporting parents' knowledge and use of Makaton signing and Cued Articulation.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them. In Nursery and Year R/Year 1 classes children are given key workers to help and support them through their EYFS journey.

Some children entering Reception have been at the school on a Nursery placement during which time Observations and Assessments have been made to support the evidence base and for the child's Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP)

Enabling Environments

At The Beacon 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.

The Learning Environment

The EYFS learning environments are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The learning spaces are set up in learning areas, where children can find and locate equipment and resources. There is a central 'heart space' designed to provide a space for inclusive opportunities where children can learn and interact with children from different classes.

All classes have their own enclosed outdoor area. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers 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 the children to develop in all seven areas of learning.

Learning and Development

At The Beacon School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates, all our areas of play are linked to learning. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are all inter connected.

Teaching and Learning Style

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in the EYFS just as much as they do to the teaching in other Key Stages. Features that relate to the EYFS are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that teachers and teaching assistants have a knowledge of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;
- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children learning throughout EYFS;
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;

- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents;
- the comfort for children that they will be able to access the Early Years curriculum to give them more time to achieve their early learning goals and to be better learners by using the characteristics of effective learning.
- All judgments made will be in the best interest of each individual child;

All pupils, regardless of age, will access the Early Years curriculum within the three Reception/ Year One classes.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

The Planning within the EYFS follows the department's Long Term 3 Year Cycle Plan and Medium Term Plans which are based around termly themes, using the creative learning journey. These plans are used by the teacher as a guide for weekly planning; however, the teacher may alter these in response to the needs, achievements and interests of the children. This will be indicated on weekly planning.

At The Beacon School, we record judgements against the EYFS Profile and record assessments on the Target Tracker, the schools chosen summative assessment. Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress and assessment scales. We give an opportunity for the parents to discuss these judgements with the EYFS teacher at the end of the year.

Foundation Stage Profile

The Statutory EYFS 2012 framework requires that the EYFS Profile is carried out in the final term for the Reception year.

The purpose of the profile is to;

- Inform parents about their child's development against the Early Learning Goals and the Characteristics of Effective Learning.
- Support a smooth transition to Key Stage 1 by having a discussion between the EYFS and Key Stage 1 teacher.
- Help the Year 2 teacher plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all the children.

In the final term the teacher reviews all knowledge of the children to date and makes a final judgement as to whether the child's learning and development is best described by:

- The child best fits the level of development that is expected at the end of EYFS (Expected).
- Not yet at the level of development expected at the end of EYFS (emerging)
- Beyond the level expected at the end of EYFS (Exceeding).

In addition, the 'characteristics of effective learning', demonstrated by the child is included in their final year report as well as their achievements in all areas, which is shared with both the parents and the child's next class teacher.

The Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning

Playing and Exploring

"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."

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 and understand the need for rules. They can think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

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. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make choices.

Creating and Thinking Critically

"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."

Children should be 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 can move them around the classroom to extend their learning at planned times during the day.

Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of seven prime areas of learning which are split into categories:

Prime Areas:

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

Specific Areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics

- Understanding the World
- Expressive arts and Design

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities, based on the individual child's needs as well as targets being set from these to access during 1:1 learning boxes in both the Nursery and the three Reception/ Year one classes.

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the teacher to follow the principles stated in this policy.

There is a named Governing Body Pair responsible for Curriculum and the EYFS. These governors will discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners regularly and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion.

SLT, Specialism Managers and Curriculum Subject Teams will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

Appendix 1

Rationale for Zone One and Groupings

Appendix 2

Extract from Marking Policy (Early Years)

Appendix 3

Planning cycle

Appendix 1

Rationale for Organisation of Class Groupings in Zone 1

In Zone 1 there are seven classes made up of:

1. United Kingdom (Nursery)
2. Ireland (Reception and Year 1 sensory learning)
3. Sweden (Reception and Year 1 higher needs)
4. Spain (Reception and Year 1 Lower needs)
5. Italy (Year 2 higher needs)
6. France (Year 1 and Year 2 lower needs)
7. Austria (PMLD group)

In Nursery, and the three Reception and Year 1 groups the Themes and Principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage are adhered to. Every child is **unique** and follows his/her own special developmental pathway. All our pupils have a personalised learning plan with next steps in learning and development planned according to their specific needs. **Positive relationships** are promoted between parents and staff, staff and children and parents and children. Our environment is planned to maximise pupils' learning potential. Each class **environment** is adapted to provide experiences which respond to pupils' individual needs. All children in these class groups are allocated a Key Person who has responsibilities for monitoring their learning, development and well-being.

In The Beacon Nursery, which is a specialist provision the majority of the children will be on an Observation and Assessment placement. If out of county some children may already begin with an EHC plan. All children will be baselined on arrival and will be assessed in the same ways as the three Reception and Year 1 groups. The nursery is a mixture of N1 and N2 children. N1 will be in Nursery for two years and N2 children will be one year. Some children may follow the Move curriculum and Swiss Cottage (RFL) if low levels of progress. Some of our more complex nursery placements will be placed in Austria for their Observation and Assessment placement.

Most children in the Reception and Year 1 will remain within the three classes, following a 3 year rolling topic programme, to provide them with familiar adults and to establish solid foundations for future learning.

The timetables of these classes are matched as closely as possible to allow for children to move into different classes for particular sessions, according to their strengths and difficulties.

In **Ireland** children follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum with an emphasis on learning through exploration. Children are provided with rich learning experiences to stimulate and awaken the senses and to learn through play and playful teaching. These children are functioning developmentally within the age bands of 0-11 months and 8-20 for most areas of learning. They may be in 16-26 months for a few areas of learning (Ages & Stages, Development Matters document). Most of these children engage in solitary play and are learning to tolerate short spells of parallel play with adults and other children. For these children a change of staff at this young age can be unsettling. These children require a high level of continuous adult support to access all areas of the Early Years Curriculum.

In **Sweden** children follow the Early Years Curriculum with an emphasis on learning through exploration and discovery. Pupils are provided with challenging and playful opportunities across the prime and specific areas. These children can play in parallel with adults and other children and are being encouraged to initiate interactions with others. Some of these children can engage in adult led sessions in small groups alongside their peers. They may be able to engage in paired or small group sessions for 'Letters and Sounds' or 'Numicon' time. Other children may require one to one support for adult led sessions and access the 'Learning Box' system. The children in Sweden are functioning developmentally within the age bands of 16-26 months and 22-36 months for most areas of learning. They may be within 30-50 months for a few areas of learning.

In **Spain** children follow the Early Years Curriculum with some access, as appropriate, to Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum. The Early Years themes and principles continue to provide the essential underpinning for teaching and learning. Children are encouraged to develop strong characteristics of effective learning. There is an emphasis on fostering the skills of creative and critical thinking. These children are becoming more independent and can learn alongside their peers in small groups. These children will mostly be functioning developmentally within 22-36 months and 30-50 months' age bands. They may be within 40-60 months for a few areas of learning and some will have achieved some ELGs. Some of these children will achieve some of their Early Learning Goals during Year 1 and will then access the 'Year 1 extension objectives' (The Beacon Early Years Schemes of Work). Many of these children will need two years with consistent staff and routines. However, towards the end of their Year R some children will demonstrate they are ready to move into the next class (France). These children will transition to France and learn alongside Year 1 and Year 2 pupils, following the National Curriculum. Occasionally some Reception pupils make rapid progress and are predicted to achieve their ELGs in the prime areas and specific areas of Literacy and Maths by the end of the Foundation Stage. For these children, a supported transition to mainstream will be planned. Staff in this class are experienced in supporting pupils throughout a transition plan.

In **Italy** and in **France** the classes will be a mix of Year 1 and Year 2 students, this will be the first year that the pupils of The Beacon will begin to access the national curriculum at the level needed for them. They will make different rates of progress and will have their levels met through differentiation.

Italy class will be a mix of pupils that will need some individual learning time with the help of learning boxes to help them with their understanding of different concepts and some small group learning with a high level of adult support to help them learn and make progress.

France class will a mix of pupils that can access the curriculum with less adult support and through whole group and small group learning.

Assessment and Planning in Year R/Year 1

On-going formative assessment is at the heart of effective early years practice. Observations describing how and what each child is learning is integral to our practice and helps us continuously identify where each child is on their unique developmental pathway. The Key person determines the child's next steps in their learning and considers how best we can deepen and extend the child's current learning and development. The Key Person uses the columns within the 'Development Matters' Guidance of 'Positive Relationships' and 'Enabling Environment' to plan for next steps.

We continue this process of observing and planning through our pupils' Year R and Year 1 in Ireland, Sweden and Spain.

The pupils in Nursery and classes A&B are assessed using the Ages and Stages within the Early Years 'Development Matters' Guidance. In Class C pupils are also assessed using The Ages & Stages but for some pupils, who have moved into the National Curriculum, progress will be measured against the Year 1 objectives. The process of formative observational assessment continues throughout both years that a pupil is in these classes.

The Nursery and Classes A, B & C follow a 3 Year cyclical topic long term plan and Scheme of Work. For our Medium Term Planning we use the 'Creative Learning Journey' to plan appropriate, meaningful and relevant activity content within each topic. An emphasis is placed on the inter-linking of all areas of learning. Pupils are encouraged to make links in their learning. We believe that separating subject areas for our youngest pupils is not beneficial. Many of our pupils have difficulty in generalising and transferring skills from one context to another. Topic teaching supports our children in making essential links in their learning which will encourage them to become effective learners.

Appendix 2

Marking Policy- Early Years & KS1

Written feedback designed to inform adults as to the level of support given; we use the following codes in black biro:

Ind- independent	CF- correct formation
1:1- one to one support	IF- incorrect formation
W/S- with some support	VP- verbal prompt
CI- child initiated	GP- gestural prompt
PP- physical prompt	AD- adult directed
PPP- partial physical prompt	CA- cued articulation prompt
II-initial instruction	STG-sticker given (to record achievement)

Written and verbal feedback needs to be understandable for our pupils.

The rest of the school are using **green** pens to indicate a positive and **pink** pens to make pupils “think” ie. ‘pink for think.’

In Early Years, we use a simplified version of this, differentiated to suit the individual pupil or class group. For example:

Large **green** smiley on wall (nursery)

Green smiley face to indicate good work with simple written comment in green (as appropriate)

Green cue card smiley for end of lesson to signify “good learning”

By introducing EYFS pupils to **green for good** we are preparing them for the whole school colour coded system.

In addition, we use gold star stamps, stickers and certificates to praise and reward special achievement. Teachers and TA’s use these at their own discretion as we have a mutual understanding of when extra positive reinforcement is needed for the group or individual.

Special stickers or certificates are used to reward pupils’ significant personal achievement- often this may be linked with a home/school target or something we are targeting in a behaviour plan.

In addition, pupils are encouraged to self-evaluate/reflect. Adults use verbal questioning; “Did you do good learning?” “What did you learn/find out?”

Appendix 3

Year	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4 Easter	Term 5	Term 6
	Me and My World	Our Colourful World	Getting Around	A Long Time Ago	Growing/ Changing	My Natural World
Year A	Ourselves Special Events Diwali	Colours Special Events Children in Need Christmas	Getting Around Weather Special Events Chinese New Year	Castles Prince/princesses Special Events Holi Easter	Spring	Seaside
Year B	All about me Special Events Diwali	Colours Special Events Children in Need Christmas	Getting Around Vehicles Special Events Chinese New Year	Dinosaurs Special Events Holi Easter	Spring	Minibeasts
Year C	Getting to know each other Special Events Diwali	Colours Special Events Children in Need Christmas	Getting around Community and Professions Special Events Chinese New Year	Superheroes Special Events Holi Easter	Spring	Pets

The Beacon Equality Statement

The Beacon Folkestone is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity to all pupils, staff and visitors. Our Core Values are at the forefront of everything we do and we ensure all at The Beacon are treated equally regardless of age, disability, race, colour, ethnicity, nationality, religious belief, gender, gender identity, transgender, sexual orientation or marital status.

The Beacon strives to be an all-inclusive environment and is always looking for opportunities to broaden the knowledge and experiences of everyone who is involved with both our services, and the staff and clients of those using the services of our multi-agency hub.

Our aims for this year are to ensure there are more equal opportunities for pupils, staff, their families and the wider community, regardless of their disability and this forms an integral part of our School Improvement Plan.

The aims for 2016-2019 are to build and improve schemes to help bring down barriers for disabled children and young people and to broaden the experience of life both inside and outside the school community for all staff & pupils.

UPDATE SCHEDULE

Version	Date	Reason for Update	Next Review Date	Governors agreement
1	Sept 2016	Transfer & Review	March 2018	14.11.16