



BENGEWORTH CE ACADEMY

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# EARLY YEARS' FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY 2022 – 2023

September 2022



**Bengeworth**  
Multi Academy Trust

Brilliant People • Better Schools • Bright Futures

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# INTRODUCTION

At Bengeworth CE Academy we believe that the Reception year should provide a secure, happy and stimulating learning environment in which children are able to develop to their full potential. Our starting point is what the children can do, and what they can nearly do. The whole child is considered to be important and through a range of personalised classroom activities the social, physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual aspects will be developed. We believe that young children learn through exploration, talk and play:

“Play is the child’s main business in life; through play he learns the skills to survive”  
(Lee 1977)

## AIMS

- To provide a warm, welcoming and engaging learning environment where all children feel secure and where solid foundations are developed and built upon.
- To develop positive relationships with adults and between children where high expectations encourage them to develop to the full potential both socially, intellectually, physically and emotionally.
- To value, encourage and develop each child’s unique learning potential.
- To develop each child’s self-esteem and independence within a safe, secure and positive atmosphere.
- To encourage self-discipline and respect for self and others based highly on the Academy’s Christian Values.
- To develop and foster all aspects of the child: emotional, social, physical and intellectual.
- To involve children in making choices and decisions and promote independent learning.

## OVERVIEW OF RECEPTION

The children will be welcomed by their teacher and invited into a classroom, which is bright and engaging with displays that value children’s work and promote collaborative learning. A range of books and resources will instantly capture their interest.

The Reception classrooms are organised so that when the children first start school they have a free choice of activities so that they can become familiar with the classroom and their teachers. As the children settle they will be introduced to classroom routine and Early Bird tasks as part of their soft start in the mornings.

We develop positive relationships with our children by valuing what they say and showing an interest in their lives. Positive relationships between children are encouraged through class activities and general discussion where each child’s contribution is valued.

We encourage each child's learning potential by observing, discussing and assessing their interactions and their work so that we can provide learning opportunities and activities that support and extend the children's learning both within school and at home. Home-school links are valued highly within our setting and parents are encouraged to support their child in reaching their full potential through daily reading, practising sounds and by making additions to their child's SeeSaw journal and COOL (Carrying On Our Learning) tasks.

To develop each child's self-esteem, we praise perseverance, resilience, effort and positive learning behaviours, giving rewards where appropriate by use of House Points (School behaviour policy) and through values marbles. We try always to praise positive rather than negative behaviour, in line with the Academy's Behaviour Policy. By providing personalised learning experiences to the children, matched to their abilities, children are always given the opportunity to succeed hence developing self-esteem. By setting high expectations that are known to the children, that are consistent and achievable, we are able to encourage self-discipline and respect for others.

On entering the Academy, we carry out baseline assessments, using the Academy assessment tool; Epiphany, Speech Link and WellComm. Through planning according to The New Early Years Foundation Stage and guidance from Development Matters 2020, we cover all aspects of the development of the whole child, to ensure they achieve a Good Level of Development (GLD) at the end of the Reception year. COOL Time evidence is tracked and shared with parents via SeeSaw and follows through into Year One.

The classroom and outdoor areas are arranged into specific learning areas and resources are clearly labelled and accessible to the children to develop autonomous independence. Children are encouraged to be able to articulate their learning, even within play, and Learning Ambassadors are taught to discuss their learning with visitors and members of staff. In the second half of the Autumn Term we introduce COOL time ambassadors to facilitate peer to peer coaching.

Children are encouraged, through a range of planned activities both indoor and outdoor, to select resources and to be responsible and respectful when using and tidying them up. Through high quality first teaching with their class teacher and/or classroom support professional, children are challenged and given opportunities to work independently; selecting resources to support their child initiated learning.

## ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS AND INDUCTION

Prior to seeking admission prospective parents and their children are encouraged and welcome to visit the Academy to discuss their prospective admission and meet the Early Years Lead and Team. Open Days are also conducted during October to promote the setting. Parents submit an application to Worcestershire County Council, who then allocate places accordingly. Once an admission list has been issued parents are invited to attend our 'Welcome Meeting' where they are informed of our induction procedure and receive their Reception Brochure and 'Pre School Pack', for their child to enjoy before they join us in the forthcoming September. Their child is also invited to a 'Stay and Play' session run through the latter of the Summer Term, as well a 'Teddy Bears Picnic'. Early Years staff liaise with each child's nursery provision; visiting where possible, exchanging information and providing personalised transition books where necessary. For any children with additional needs, we liaise with parents to carry out a home visit. Parents are informed of and encouraged to take advantage of our Open Door Policy, which aims to promote effective and consistent home - school relationships and links.

# INDUCTION PROCEDURE AND STARTING SCHOOL

The children start school on a part time basis for the first week in September, half of them visiting for the morning and half visiting for the afternoon with their class teacher whom they will have met during the Summer Term, during nursery visits and Stay and Play sessions. The initial one-week part time aims to help the child become familiar with the Early Years' Team and the wider school community. During the first four weeks the Early Years' Team use the school assessment tracker; Epiphany and Language Link to assess the children in relation to their abilities, personalities and learning styles. These assessments form the baseline from which targets are set to ensure all children are able to achieve their full potential during their time in Early Years. After the initial week of part-time, the children begin school full-time.

## PLANNING THE CURRICULUM

The curriculum in Reception is planned according to the requirements set out in the Early Years Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and Development Matters 2020 documents, which have been edited and discussed based on the expectations of the academy. Additional objectives, discussed with the Early Years Lead, Deputy Head of School and Key Stage 1 team, have been added to the Epiphany Tracker to ensure high expectations are evident. The Characteristics of Learning focus strongly within Reception and children are provided a wealth of opportunities to develop these core skills to ensure all other areas of Development Matters 2020 are achieved successfully.

Each half term or term has a specific cross-curricular topic, which aims to cover specific aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage. A yearly overview is created to ensure coverage across the year based on the expectation of **all** children leaving the Reception year with a Good Level of Development. Short term planning consists of weekly foci for the Prime Areas as well as topic-based activities which are planned progressively to ensure children have a range of opportunities to extend and enhance their learning within the Specific Areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Educational visits are organised and enterprise projects give children real-life learning opportunities half termly. Our Christian Values underpin all aspects of teaching and learning and Reception children are taught to respect and appreciate different cultures and religions within the Academy.

## CURRICULUM

### **Communication, Language and Literacy (Reading and Writing)**

*"The Reception year is a critical time for building on children's developing Literacy. Becoming literate depends on developing confidence and positive attitudes towards listening, speaking, reading and writing in children, and encouraging them to be keen to learn."*

The National Literacy Strategy

During their time in Reception we aim to develop the children's love of literature and ability to communicate, which is further developed throughout their years at Bengeworth. We use a range of reading approaches, such as visual, phonological and contextual to engage the children in storytelling, reading and writing as well as offering guided and quiet reading opportunities. Story telling is a major part of daily life in Reception, with language and vocabulary enrichment at the heart of all learning opportunities. Teachers act as role models to encourage children to value and respect books, providing them with opportunities to experience a wide range of literature. Children are also heard read on an

individual basis and parents are expected to hear their children at home frequently, making comments in the Reading Record. Children are encouraged to communicate effectively and respectfully, talking in full sentences which are modelled where needed by the class teacher or classroom support professional. Our specialist classroom support professionals support children with English as Additional Language as well as those children who have weaknesses within their Speech and Language.

Children are introduced to their letter sounds through The Twinkl scheme, which is linked to Letters and Sounds and elements of Read, Write, Inc.

Daily phonics sessions are taught to develop children's ability to segment and blend for reading as well as writing. Close links are made with Year 1 to ensure consistency in expectations. Nursery rhymes, poems, alliteration, songs and chants are used daily to reinforce and develop phonological awareness.

Materials and engaging stimuli are provided to encourage early and emergent writing and children are engaged in high quality writing activities such as Sentence Doctor, Write Dance and Dough Disco and Squiggle Whilst you Wiggle on a weekly basis. High expectations are set in regards to letter formation and sentence structure. Children are encouraged to hold their pencil effectively, with a pincer grip being used by the end of the year. Parents are invited to attend Phonics workshops and Curriculum evenings to be made aware of the Academy's expectations and ways to support their children at home. Half termly moderation takes place to ensure consistency across Reception as well as with Year 1. Reception and Year 1 work closely with their Year Leads to ensure progression of skills is evident.

Children's talk is highly valued with high quality open-ended questions (Chris Quigley B-A-D questioning and Bloom's Taxonomy) being used frequently to promote discussion and debate. We also teach children using Sentence Stems to allow them to explore their own and others ideas fully.

Through role-play, spiritual reflection and Personal and Social Development sessions, children are encouraged to develop as confident, clear speakers and listeners. Children are encouraged to not only share and value their own contributions but those of others and are encouraged to respect the views and opinions of others linking them to the schools Christian Values and learning behaviours.

For those children who show areas of need within Communication and Language (including reading and writing) personalised strategies based on those provided by the SALT team (Black Sheep Narrative, cue cards, Time to Talk sessions, modelling, Social Stories) are used to ensure all children have the opportunity to reach their full potential. Should a child need targeted speech support, they are quickly identified based on the steps identified in the Inclusion Policy.

## **Mathematics**

In Reception, we concentrate on securing the basic skills of place value, sorting, patterns, matching, ordering, sequencing, counting, colour, shapes, size, volume, capacity, money, measuring and weight.

Children are engaged in both practical and written activities such as sand, water, role-play, games, puzzles and counting apparatus both indoor and outdoor. All activities are planned according to individual needs and aim to extend their learning in order to allow them to achieve a Good Level of Development at the end of the year. Moderation takes place with Year 1 and feedback from the previous cohort based on in house analysis and Local Authority Data Dashboard, is taken on board to ensure expectations are high and assessments are accurate.

## **Physical Development**

The children have access to large spaces, physical activities and resources which promote the development of gross and fine motor skills daily. P.E. sessions are taught each week consisting of dance, games or gymnastics. They use a range of large and small apparatus to develop their gross motor skills both indoors and outdoors. They are taught to handle apparatus safely and how to move in a safe and controlled manner. The children will have use of the Adventure Playground and Trim Trail and have access to playground equipment (skipping ropes / bats and balls etc) during morning breaks and lunchtime to further promote fine and gross motor skill development. The outside learning environment is used to develop fine and gross motor skills as well as supporting the children's abilities to take risks and learn from their mistakes. Write Dance, Squiggle Whilst you Wiggle and Finger Gym activities are used to develop their fine and gross motor skills for writing. Forest School, led by our lead Forest School teacher, also contributes to the children's physical development. Within the sessions children are encouraged to take risks and develop their gross and fine motor skills.

Any children who are deemed to need extra support with fine and gross motor skills will identified and will have the opportunity to take part in 'Jimbo Fun' interventions.

## **Knowledge and Understanding of the World**

Children enter school with a natural curiosity and enquiring mind, which we aim to foster and enhance through exciting and engaging opportunities for historical, geographical, scientific and technological learning. We encourage children to ask questions and develop skills of observing, predicting, discussing and comparing. During their Reception year the children use their senses to learn about themselves, other people, their environment and features of the natural and man-made world. They use their developing vocabulary to describe their surroundings and are encouraged to explore its similarities and differences.

## **Personal, Social and Emotional**

Caring and nurturing relationships are highly valued and promoted through our whole school ethos. We value the need for developing self-esteem, self-confidence, self-respect and respect for others. We encourage confidence and promote independent learning throughout all areas of school life in all our children. Through our topic approach to learning children are made aware of and encouraged to appreciate different cultures, beliefs, traditions and religions as well develop a secure understanding of the role they play within the school community, linking to the school Christian Values. The children experience and celebrate the main Christian festivals as well as those celebrated by members of the cohort, for example Diwali and Eid. Through exploration of their surroundings and learning environment the children experience a sense of awe and wonder in which they learn how to work independently, play and co-operatively as a team and how to function and behave beyond their family. Carefully planned circle time sessions, linked to the new Emotional Health and Well-being agenda, reinforce and emphasise the caring and nurturing school ethos demonstrated throughout the school.

## **Expressive Arts and Design**

Children's creativity is highly valued and encouraged. Self-expression through the arts including dance, music, art, language, imaginative play and storytelling are promoted highly through engaging adult led and child initiated activities. Children have constant access to a range of materials and tools, which they are encouraged to use independently during child, initiated activities. Specific skills are developed through engaging adult-led activities.

Through drawing, cutting, painting, manipulating clay and dough, sand and water play, threading beads, construction kits and tools, children also develop the fine motor skills and hand-eye co-ordination.

## Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC)

Our outside space is highly valued in regards to how it supports the development of our children. Reception have their own outside space which is used daily to promote learning throughout all areas of the EYFS curriculum as well as develop social and emotional skills. Our outdoor learning environment is planned for and enhancements added weekly to enable children to build upon and develop their awareness of the world around them as well as problem solving skills.

Our children also have opportunities to learn outside the classroom through bi-weekly Forest School sessions, as well through educational visits half termly.

## THE VALUE OF PLAY

Play is a vital attribute to children's learning and development. Through play children practice new skills and experiment with familiar ones. They are able to explore new and familiar situations and experiment with new and familiar materials without fear of failure. Play allows children to be in charge of their own learning experiences and through play children are intrinsically motivated to learn.

Play provides children with opportunities to explore, create, investigate, practise, share, think, talk, construct, co-operate, find and solve problems. The experience of play enables a child to mix with other children, to discover how friendships are made and to observe other children's behaviour and reactions. Play is offered throughout all areas of our Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, such as a role-play, sand and water, construction, writing area, games and puzzles. Play is both planned for and encouraged to develop naturally through child-initiated activities.

The teachers' roles are to observe, plan, record, organise, extend, develop, resource and participate in children's play in order to enhance and promote higher order thinking and learning. To promote learning behaviours through play, referring to child initiated activities as COOL (Carrying On Our Learning) time, the children are able to articulate their learning to others. Throughout the year, COOL time activities develop into more targeted activities in which children are able to show embedded learning / skills as well as be further challenged in preparation for their transition in Year One.

We recognise and agree that:

*"Play.... is not trivial, it is highly serious and of deep significance."*

(Froebel)

## EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY AND INCLUSION

Every child is valued, has equal access to resources and is encouraged to participate in all classroom and school activities. Those children who need additional support are highlighted quickly and high quality provision is provided for them to support their needs. IPPs are written and reviewed to ensure they are able to reach their potential. Should external agencies be needed, the Inclusion Lead/SENCo will facilitate this, supporting the class teacher where necessary. The Inclusion Policy is adhered to and staff are supported by the Inclusion Lead in identify needs of specific children.



# ASSESSMENT

During the first four weeks of the new academic year we carry out a baseline assessment through the Academy's assessment system: Epiphany. We also assess the children using WellComm which indicates those children who need support within their Expressive and Receptive Language skills. Our Speech and Language Learning Support Professional also carries out Speech Link assessment to highlight any children who may have difficulties with speech sound production. Continuous assessments towards the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile are then made through our daily observations, which are recorded on SeeSaw and inputted into Epiphany on a half termly basis. These assessments are used to inform future planning. Children are assessed using WellComm as a means of screening their receptive language abilities (understanding of language). This assessment gives us early indication of children requiring school based support as well as those requiring support from the Speech and Language Team. These assessments are carried out again at the end of the year as well as in KS1 in order to track the children's progress. Data is analysed by the Early Years Leader and Deputy Head of School with clear strengths and areas of development identified and shared with the Early Years Team. Pupil Progress meetings held with the Early Years Leader and member of the Senior Leadership Team, highlight those children who may be under achieving and targets and systems are put in place to support them. These are reviewed in line with data on a half termly basis.

Throughout the course of the year we hold moderation sessions with our cluster schools, these are baseline, reading, writing and maths.

During the Autumn Term parents are met with to discuss how their child has settled into school and the progress they have made. Parents are met with again during the Spring Term to discuss progression and set and review targets, with a final year report being sent out at the end of the Summer Term. An open door policy is promoted and parents are always welcome to discuss their child's learning and progression with their Class Teacher and/or Early Years Lead. Walk in Tuesdays which take place on the first Tuesday of each month provide parents with an opportunity to share in their child's progress and achievements.

EYFSP data (Epiphany) and observations (SeeSaw) as well as a portfolio of the children's work are passed on and discussed with Key Stage One staff at the end of the Summer Term to inform and ease the children's transition from Reception to Year One.

## TRANSITION FROM EARLY YEARS SETTINGS TO RECEPTION AND FROM RECEPTION TO KEY STAGE ONE

To ease the transition from Early Years settings to Reception our Reception Team visit children in their nurseries and liaise closely with Nursery Staff and parents. Nursery Profiles are discussed and shared between the Reception Team and used to inform planning and class structures during the Autumn Term. Stay and Play sessions are held for parents and their children as well as Nurseries who bring their children during their usual sessions. Those children who require additional support, such as those with attachment concerns or EHCP (Educational Health Care Plans) plans are provided with opportunities to visit the Academy on a more regular basis during the summer term with either their parents or nursery staff. Staff may also carry out a home visit with the Inclusion Lead to further support these children. Personalised transition booklets are also made to further ease the transition of our children.

Reception forms a key part of the Whole School Plan and all staff are made aware of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the expectations of the Early Learning Goals (GLD: Good Level and of Development).

Transition from Reception to Year One is eased by 'Move Up Day' where the children meet and are engaged in activities with their new Year One teacher. Key Stage One staff receive EYFSP data and observations and liaise closely with the Reception Team. Key Stage One staff plan for and provide learning opportunities, which are Early Years based and still promote child initiated learning both inside and out of the classroom. The Early Years model of teaching and environment is continued throughout Year 1, with children engaged in COOL (Carrying On Our Learning) tasks when not receiving high quality small group with their class teacher or Classroom Support Professional. Key Stage One staff liaise closely with the Early Years Team to ensure planning meets the needs of the children, enabling them to fully achieve the goals on their Early Years Foundation Stage Profile before moving on to National Curriculum Objectives.

Phase meetings are held regularly to discuss teaching and learning initiatives (e.g using effective feedback/ White Rose resource), arising issues and to set and review targets specific to the children's learning as well as the learning environment. Staff meetings provide further opportunities for the phase to discuss and evaluate teaching and learning and discuss areas of need within each year group as well with other year groups across the MAT.

All staff including the Reception Team follow the school teaching and learning policy to ensure teaching within Reception is Good or Outstanding.

## **Review Date**

This Policy will be reviewed in light of new government documentation or guidance.

# Bengeworth

## Multi Academy Trust

*Brilliant People • Better Schools • Bright Futures*

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