



Early Years Policy

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Introduction

Ofsted: "The importance of Early Years is beyond question. Too many do not get the high-quality provision they need to make a secure start."

Succeed Happy Inspire Nurture Educate

At Bantock Primary we promise you a caring community where everyone can **SUCCEED**. We provide a **HAPPY** and exciting environment to **INSPIRE** you to learn and grow. We will **NURTURE** your talents and **EDUCATE** you in everything you do.

How we aim for children to SHINE within Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

SUCCEED – We will develop children's independence through their environment by providing the skills, knowledge, understanding, values and resources needed for becoming successful and confident learners at the foundations of their lifelong learning journey. Alongside the natural learning that happens from play, we support with a foundation of phonics and reading, mathematics, as well as links to curriculum areas that will support them in their school readiness from Year 1.

HAPPY – We will provide a fun, stimulating learning environment with quality provisions to challenge and support children's personal interests. Home visits and conversations with parents allow us to build an understanding of what will help them in engaging their learning and the children are motivated by praise and pride within school.

INSPIRE - We will provide a rich and varied curriculum alongside the stimulating learning environment to capture the inquisitive imaginations of young learners in a way that makes them want to learn. Learning that takes place both in and out doors as well as a part of the wider curriculum are enriched by interactions with adults, and can be both initiated by the adult or the child's imagination, interests or the links they have made to their learning.

NURTURE - We have key adults for children that build strong and caring relationships with children. This brings high levels of trust and respect between all members of the Early Years that value each other's opinions and ideas. Interactions between pupils and adults are most important, building respect, sharing ideas and developing language and vocabulary. They support them to show their unique selves and to thrive in what they do.

EDUCATE - We will ensure that children's own learning styles, interests and development is carefully observed and monitored to plan for the next steps of their learning journey to a high standard in a way that motivates their individual needs. Their Communication and Language, Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Physical Development, Literacy, Mathematical, Understanding of the World and Expressive and Artistic Design skills knowledge and understanding are taught and then developed through the learning environment and their independent application.

We will create opportunities to allow all children to **SHINE**.

Provision within EYFS at Bantock Primary School

"A clear focus on getting children ready for learning is evident in the nursery. Adults make the most of every opportunity to teach pupils the key knowledge and skills they need to use in their independent learning. Adults help pupils work together and develop confidence. Routines are already deeply embedded, and pupils know what is expected of them."

Ofsted Report, 2021

- Practitioners have exceptionally high expectations of themselves and the children. They have expert knowledge in regards to the areas of learning and development, alongside a clear understanding of how children learn to ensure the best for every child.
- The needs of each child are met both academically and emotionally, helping to develop each child's confidence and independence, regardless of their background or starting point.

- True potential can be nurtured and realised, through an individual education that is high quality, planned and delivered based on the needs of each child.
- A rich variety of academic and explorative activities are ambitiously planned for to support depth in learning.
- A mix of different approaches to pedagogy, including child initiated, adult guided, adult focussed and direct teaching, enable children to become powerful learners.
- We have welcoming, child friendly and stimulating indoor and outdoor areas that are flexible to the interests of the children.
- Routines are clearly established so that children can anticipate and feel confident in taking the next step.
- Clearly labelled and easily accessible resources enable children to become independent, explorative learners.
- High-quality cares ensures that wellbeing, health and safety is paramount and children are actively supported in developing a growing understanding of how to keep themselves emotionally stable, safe and healthy.
- Assessment is accurate and supports pupils in making their next steps in learning.
- Strong partnerships with parents in order to develop children's learning both in and out of school.

The 2021 EYFS Statutory Framework, along with the Development Matters (2021 Edition) form the guidance from the principles of practise within the Bantock Early Years, supporting effective practise.

The principles of previous EYFS frameworks, which guided the effective work of ALL practitioners are grouped into four distinct but complementary themes and are remaining key to EYFS practise:

- **A Unique Child** - every child is a competent learner.
- **Positive Relationships** - children learn to be strong and independent.
- **Enabling Environments** - supporting and extending a child's development.
- **Learning and Development** – the seven areas of Learning and Development

They are not addressed in isolation and are at the heart of school practice within Early Years.

In addition, there are seven areas of Learning and Development which are divided into three **Prime areas** and four **Specific areas**.

The three **Prime areas** are:

Communication and Language

The key skills of this area will develop confidence in communication, teaching **speaking, listening, attention and understanding** in a variety of settings and purposes.

Personal, social and emotional development

This is crucial for all aspects of life which will give the children the best opportunity for success in all other areas of learning. Each child needs a positive sense of him/herself and respect for others through the learning of **self-regulation, self-management and building relationships**.

Physical development

Gross motor skills and fine motor skills will improve the levels of co-ordination, control, manipulation and movement. It helps children to gain confidence and feel positive about being healthy and active. This promotes a positive feeling of well-being.

These areas provide a strong foundation for School readiness and next steps for learning, linked with National Curriculum areas.

In addition, these are then supported and strengthened by the **Specific areas** of:

Literacy

Learners will have a wide range of books read to them and will read simple texts for themselves by developing **word reading and comprehension** skills. Familiar books will help learners rehearse phrases and interesting vocabulary that will become

part of their own speech and ultimately, writing. They will also be provided with a range of opportunities for **writing** and mark making for a variety of purposes. The school uses Letters and Sounds to support our teaching of phonics.

Mathematics

We will develop confidence and competence in learning and using key skills in Maths. This includes counting, sorting, matching, seeking patterns, making connections, recognising relationships and working with **number and number patterns**.

Understanding the World

Crucial skills of problem solving, exploring and understanding will help children to make sense of the world, through learning about the **past and present, people and communities and the natural world**. Foundations are developed for the later teaching of Science, History, Geography and Computing.

Expressive Arts and Design

Creativity is fundamental to successful learning. It enables children to make connections and extend their thoughts, feelings and understanding when **creating with materials and being imaginative and expressive**. Expressive Arts and Design will include art, music, dance, role-play and imaginative activities.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The **Characteristics of Effective Learning** in the Prime and Specific areas of learning and development are interconnected. They describe the behaviours in which pupils learn and the way in which the child engages with other people and their environment- playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically. These underpin learning and development across all areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner. Staff will support pupils based on these learning needs and adapt practice as needed. These characteristics are:

- **Playing and Exploring**
- **Active Learning**
- **Creating and Thinking Critically**

More information about these can be found in the Statutory Framework for EYFS and the Development Matters Guidance.

The **Unique Child** reaches out to relate to people and things through the Characteristics of Effective Learning, which move through all areas of learning. It cements the perception that every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. Practitioners will support children through:

- Understanding and observing each child's development and learning, assessing their progress and planning for next steps
- Supporting babies and children to develop a positive sense of their own identity and culture
- Identifying any need for additional support
- Keeping children safe
- Valuing and respecting all children and families equally

Safeguarding Children

The school takes its child protection responsibilities very seriously and any concerns will be documented on a Safeguarding Concern form which will be followed up by the DSL and if deemed necessary, will be reported to an appropriate agency. The safety of the child is always of paramount importance. The full Safeguarding Policy is available in school for parents to read if they wish

Equal Opportunities

All pupils in this school are entitled to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum regardless of ability, gender, race and social circumstances. Both Gifted, talented and able children and those with Special Educational Needs are considered and the curriculum adapted to suit all levels of ability. We have a full Equality and Diversity and Cohesion policy available at school.

Special Educational Needs

Care is taken to assess the needs of each child from Nursery age onwards. Should a child have any special need, the parent will be informed at an early stage. Group and individual help is provided within the school where possible. We have links with various agencies through a Multi – Agency Support Team (MAST) and when necessary their involvement may be required to support certain children. Parents/Carers will always be informed if an outside agency is assisting us to support their child. We have a full SEND policy available at school.

The Cycle of Observation, Planning and Assessment

At Bantock we hold the individual child at the centre of our planning.

This is achieved through detailed observation and assessment during the adult's role of playing alongside children and the modelling of new learning. These observations and on-going formative assessment, as well as the professional discussions around them with other practitioners and parents are at the heart of effective Early Years practice.

Staff achieve this through:

- Observing and recording children as they act and interact in their play, every day, child initiated and planned activities using *Evidence Me* to form a child's profile.
- Cooperation with parents, through discussions during opportunities such as parents' evenings and home visits, allow for an effective understanding of what the child can achieve in their home environment.
- Considering the examples of development as stated in the unique theme: observing what children can do, and identifying the stage on their developmental pathway.
- Considering ways to support the child to strengthen and deepen their current learning and development.
- Considering the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care. This information is then effectively used to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all of the areas of learning and development.
- Formal assessment throughout the year including phonic awareness, writing development and mathematical awareness.
- A transition process that allows for an understanding of all pupils' development, achievement, learning styles and needs to be at the core of children moving across the phase and in to Key Stage 1. This will include initial home visits prior to joining the setting and classroom visits between Nursery and Reception and Reception and Year 1.

Baseline Assessment

Staff will carry out a baseline check on all children entering Nursery and Reception in all seven areas of development. These baselines are carried out for any child's starting point. Children will receive an assessment in Phonics and Mathematics on entry to Bantock Primary school in order for them to be planned for accordingly. Staff complete child initiated observations as well as 'Look Listen and Note' observations to help create a picture of what a child can initially do. This will inform staff of the development stage of the children and will set a baseline for where children progress to throughout their lifelong learning journey.

These observations, in addition to contributing towards the initial assessment of a child, also take place throughout the school year.

From September 2021, mandatory baseline assessments for Reception pupils will take place in the first 6 weeks of Reception through NFER in order to provide a snapshot of where pupils are when they start school and to measure progress at cohort level.

Bantock Primary EYFS began Baseline Assessments from September 2019 alongside the teacher assessment baseline based on observations. These observational based assessments will be used to measure progress of individual progress through out EYFS, rather than as a cohort.

For pupils in Nursery who are working below expectations for 3 year olds, the school will seek evidence of their Progress Check at 2 Years if it has not been provided, or use this as a baseline for meeting their needs in Nursery.

For pupils recorded as 0-3B in Nursery and Reception when assessed, the 2 Years Progress check will be used as the basis for this judgement to show that they are working well below the expected level of development for pupils entering Bantock. Evidence towards this will be recorded through Evidence Me and the objectives (2 Year Checkpoints for Guidance) used as targets to achieve in order to narrow the gap in their attainment.

Formative Assessment

Assessment is carried out through a mixture of informal observations, interaction with the child, recording and regular discussions with all staff. Children are observed working independently and together both indoors and outdoors. Children are assessed in Adult Focused activities against a WALT, where they are encouraged to follow the steps of the WILF to achieve successfully. Learning journeys, as well as English, Maths, Reading and Topic books in Reception, contain examples of a child's achievements throughout the year are updated and monitored regularly. Parents are invited to contribute towards their child's Learning Journey at Parent's Evenings and also have the opportunity to comment on their child's observations on Evidence Me.

Children also use self-assessment strategies by discussing their own child initiated learning, as well as discussing the steps of their learning against the WILF and deciding whether they achieved it or would need more practise. They will record this in ways appropriate When confident enough, children will also discuss their next steps to learning.

NFER Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is an assessment undertaken one-to-one with a teacher, using practical materials in the EYFS environment to provide an indication of the starting point of that pupil when they enter school. Children provide answers orally, or by pointing at or moving objects in response to instructions.

Children are assessed against the development matters framework, 0-3 years, 3-4 years and 4-5 years. Children with **SEND/more complex needs** who are not making expected progress will be further assessed against the SEND learner profile for PSED, Communication and Language, physical development and thinking skills. This allows individual progress to be measured and personalises learning to specific needs. These blocks are simplified, broken down outcomes to derived from the Development Matters statements, providing a clear and structured framework for evaluating each child's development. By using these detailed and manageable outcomes, we can ensure a thorough and consistent approach to monitoring and supporting the growth of every pupil in these crucial areas. Evidence towards these outcomes is practical and will be documented and assessed on evidence each time a child makes progress towards an objective. Assessment should be collected to ensure a comprehensive understanding of each child's progress. Staff must discuss pupils using this simplified framework with the SENDCO and the area of need will be identified. A child may not need the SEND learner profile for all areas of learning.

Summative Assessment

Throughout the year, information is shared with parents through termly target reports, at Parent's Evenings each term as well as in a concluding end of year report. This information is also shared during transition.

As well as this, The EYFS requires Bantock School to undertake summative assessments in which staff review children's progress and share a summary with parents. This takes place at two stages of the journey in the Foundation Stage:

- At baseline and end of Reception and N2 Nursery, the 7 prime and specific areas, a child's attainment is reported termly as an age band that they are working in, for example 0-3 years, 3-4 years or at Reception age related expectations and whether they are 'emerging', 'developing' or 'secure' within this band.
- At two further points in the year, attainment of the prime areas and literacy and maths will also be reported in this way. For N1 Nursery pupils, a baseline and end of year assessment will be reported, with progress being tracked through evidence.
- At the end of the EYFS (Reception) against the ELG – where a child's attainment is recorded as Emerging or Expected (1 = Emerging, 2 = Expected). All Reception pupils must be given an end of Reception Foundation Stage Profile Assessment, regardless of their start date.
- A child will be 4-5 Secure in the 7 areas if they have achieved a 2 in the associated ELGs.
- The way in which a child works is also reported as their Characteristics of Effective Learning (CoEL), taking into account how they Play and Explore, their Creative and Critical Thinking, and how they Actively Learn.

Transition and Admissions

Bantock prides itself in supporting each child through transitions. This is achieved through the following ways:

- Each child has the opportunity to visit the school prior to starting.
- The transition between Nursery and Reception is calm, happy and successful. The transition days at the end of the summer term, encourage a gentle transition between the year groups and gives the Reception staff time to get to know the children, both from our Nursery and those coming from other settings
- We aim to help each child develop the confidence to progress smoothly to Year 1 at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage including those who have not previously attended our setting. A full induction is completed with the FSCO.
- Home visits are completed for all pupils new to Nursery in order to begin building relationships with parents and get an accurate understanding of how children develop in their home environments.
- Home visits are also completed during the Summer term for pupils entering Reception from different settings or those who have not attended any nursery.
- The Early Years Lead has responsibility to record all new admissions for Nursery, and arrange inductions and home visits following the acceptance of Nursery Admission forms.
- The Nursery Teacher has the responsibility to support Nursery parents to make their application for a Reception place by the January deadline.
- When Reception places are allocated in April, the Early Years Lead has the responsibility to provide School Admission Packs to parents of Nursery pupils that have received a place at Bantock. The Early Years Manager will then contact parents of other pupils on the admissions list to request that they collect their admission pack. Attempts will be made

to find the current provision for pupils who do not attend Bantock and arrange Nursery visits to gain information about the child. The remainder of the induction process, including home visits will then be arranged.

- The Technology Lead is responsible for ensuring publicity of Nursery place availability through social media, school newsletters, current on-roll parent emails and direct interactions.

Nursery Provision

All children can access 15 hours of free Nursery Provision from the age of 3. At Bantock, this can be used as 3 hours each day from Monday to Friday, either in the morning or the afternoon. To access this provision, parents must register their children in the school office and the Early Years Manager will contact them prior to the term that they can access the provision (the term after their third birthday) to arrange the induction process. When registering at school, parents will also complete forms that include the Local Authority Agreement form (see Learning Platform > Admin > Admissions and Inductions) which parents fill to agree that the funding will be allocated to Bantock.

Depending on their circumstances, some parents will be able to access an additional 15 hours of free childcare, totalling 30 hours of free childcare. Parents must apply for this themselves by registering when their child is 2 years and 36 weeks old. They will receive a code which is given to the school in order to access their additional 15 hours. The Local Authority form will identify these extended hours will be allocated at Bantock.

The additional hours allows for the child to further access the learning environment, embedding their new knowledge and be further supported by staff in developing their skills and understanding.

Children having extended entitlement will begin at 8.45am and finish at 2.45pm, or if they have a sibling in school and it has been requested by the parent, 8.45 – 3.25 Monday to Thursday and depart when their sibling finishes on Friday. This will include a supervised lunch. Parents will need to bring in packed lunch for their children or pay for a school meal.

Learning Environments

Rich learning environments are crucial within the Early Years, as this is where children will demonstrate their learning through child initiated play. Assessment of this learning and development will ensure that activities and experiences meet their needs. The planning and preparation of the learning environments allow children to become independent and confident learners. The experiences that they have will show the characteristics of their learning styles. Children are also observed for their cooperation and relationships, understanding of rules and routines as well as communication and language building during this time.

Activities are freely accessible during child initiated play and through a range of well labelled resources that meet every area of the Early Years Curriculum, children engage in activities that interest them, and through adult interactions, learning can be emphasised, reinforced and challenged.

The learning environment is audited using the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS) to ensure that opportunities are provided and support all aspects of learning and development.

Adult Roles

Key adults work with all children within the Early Years setting to ensure each child's individual needs are met. All staff have caring, nurturing and motivating relationships with children to support their transition into the learning environments and encourage the children to achieve to their fullest.

All staff are included in assessment, through At Bantock Primary School, we like to give the following roles to staff in order for them to make accurate observations of children's learning during child initiated play;

- **Observer:** watches experiences during play without interfering, focusing on children's language, relationship building and independence and to help support planning for their next steps.
- **Play Manager:** scaffolds play and learning and observes against the outcome that has been planned for.
- **Questioner:** Provides open questioning and conversation starters for children to share their learning confidently, as well as challenging them in a way that allows them to think of their next steps for learning.

These roles can be further broken down into play architect, designer, manager, orchestrator; organiser, resourcer, observer, assessor, facilitator, mediator, co-player, scaffolder, trainer and advocate (Bruce, 1996; Dockett and Fler, 2002; Jones and

Reynolds, 1992). This takes into account the planning and preparation that each adult must do prior to learning, and the assessment and analysis that is needed following to plan for the next steps.

Staff will receive ongoing CPD that will support them in having meaningful interactions that support play and learning, for example question types, and this will also form part of monitoring.

Staffing Ratios

Nursery

For children aged three and over

- There must be at least one member of staff for every 13 children.
- At least one member of staff must be a school teacher as defined by section 122 of the Education Act 200232.
- At least one other member of staff must hold an approved level 3 qualification.

e.g. 1 Teacher and 1 Level 3 Teaching assistant for morning nursery.

For children aged three and over if a teacher is not in the classroom:

- There must be at least one member of staff for every eight children.
- At least one other member of staff must hold an approved level 3 qualification.
- At least half of all other staff must hold an approved level 2 qualification.

e.g. 1 Level 3/HLTA to 8 children. 1 level 2 to an additional 8 children.

Suitable students on long term placements and volunteers (aged 17 or over) and staff working as apprentices in early education (aged 16 or over) may be included in the ratios at the level below their level of study, if the provider is satisfied that they are competent and responsible.

e.g. A level 3 student can be included in ratios as a level 2 practitioner.

Reception

For classes where the majority of children will reach the age of five or older within the school year, there must be at least one member of staff for every 30 children.

- For all other classes there must be at least one other member of staff for every 13 children.
- At least one other member of staff must hold an approved level 3 qualification.

Professional Dialogue

Key to accurate assessment of EYFS pupils at Bantock Primary School is the professional dialogue between staff about pupil achievements that they have observed through the Learning Environment, as part of adult in the above roles, during adult focus and initiated and from communication with parents. This dialogue supports accurate judgements between staff and creates a picture for each child's learning journey.

Regular meetings between EYFS class teachers and phase manager also are based on professional dialogue that supports teacher judgement and acts as internal moderation.

Professional dialogues are also key in transition between EYFS and Year 1 teachers and so time is allocated for this to happen.

Moderation

Children's observations and evidence of work is collected within Learning Journeys and work books. This forms part of their EYFS Profile that summarises and describes attainment throughout their Early Years journey against the areas of learning at each age band, the 17 ELG descriptors and the characteristics of effective learning.

To ensure accuracy of the assessments made to form these judgements, the Early Years staff moderate these internally, in a collaborative way, informally through professional discussions between staff, as well as during meetings. The Local Authority may also wish to carry out external moderation as part of quality assurance and school will occasionally work with other local schools for inter-school moderation.