

Banwell Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Last Update:

September 2023

Approved:

Next Update:

To be reviewed

Introduction

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.” (DfE, 2021)

At Banwell Primary School we strive to give our children a strong foundation to grow and achieve as learners while feeling happy, safe and secure. We provide an enabling environment where everyone is valued and respected.

Principals into practice

At Banwell Primary School as part of our practice we adhere to the Statutory Framework of the EYFS and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings. The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- **A unique child:** We recognise that every child is 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 and rewards to encourage and develop a positive attitude to learning
- **Positive relationships:** We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships and aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families.
- **Enabling environments:** We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children’s development. Through observations we assess the children’s interests, stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging and achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning
- **Learning and development:** The learning environment is 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 classroom is set up in learning areas where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

Early years covers birth to the age of five and is delivered through play. The final year of the early years covers the reception year at school. At Banwell Primary School we welcome children from a number of different pre-school settings and build relationships with each of them to ensure we can tailor our provision to meet the needs of each child.

Aims

At Banwell Primary School, we know that a strong knowledge of child development is fundamental to the success of delivering our curriculum. We deliver a broad and balanced Early Years curriculum that inspires curiosity and ensures children are ready for the next stage of their education. The curriculum is sequenced

to ensure progression but importantly it is tailored to meet the needs of the cohort. By getting to know each unique child, in partnership with families, we can identify each child's starting points so that we can provide the right enabling environment and skilled adult support to ensure that every child makes good progress regardless of their starting point or level of development.

Play is an essential part of our Early Years curriculum and opportunities are provided for: play which is child-led; play which is skillfully supported and extended by adults and play which is guided towards specific learning outcomes. High quality play is enabled and supported by well organised environments, both inside and out, which respond to children's interests, and which widen those interests by introducing children to new materials, experiences and activities.

The Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning are key to helping children develop into confident individuals who view themselves as successful learners. The characteristics: playing and exploring; active learning and creating and thinking critically; are an important part of the planning and assessment cycle. We ensure all children are given opportunities to investigate and they are encouraged to make independent choices. We ensure the environment supports children to set their own goals and use different strategies when they encounter difficulties. The skills learned provide every child with a strong foundation from which they can embrace the learning opportunities offered throughout their journey at Banwell and fosters a lifelong long love of learning.

Learning and Development

Banwell's EYFS curriculum is underpinned by the seven areas of learning and development as identified in the EYFS Framework. The curriculum is designed to ensure children experience rich learning opportunities enabling them make progress across all areas of learning. There are clear progression documents, written in partnership with Early Years colleagues in the ELAN Trust, which inform planning and are used as part of the ongoing assessment for learning cycle.

The seven areas of learning and development are:

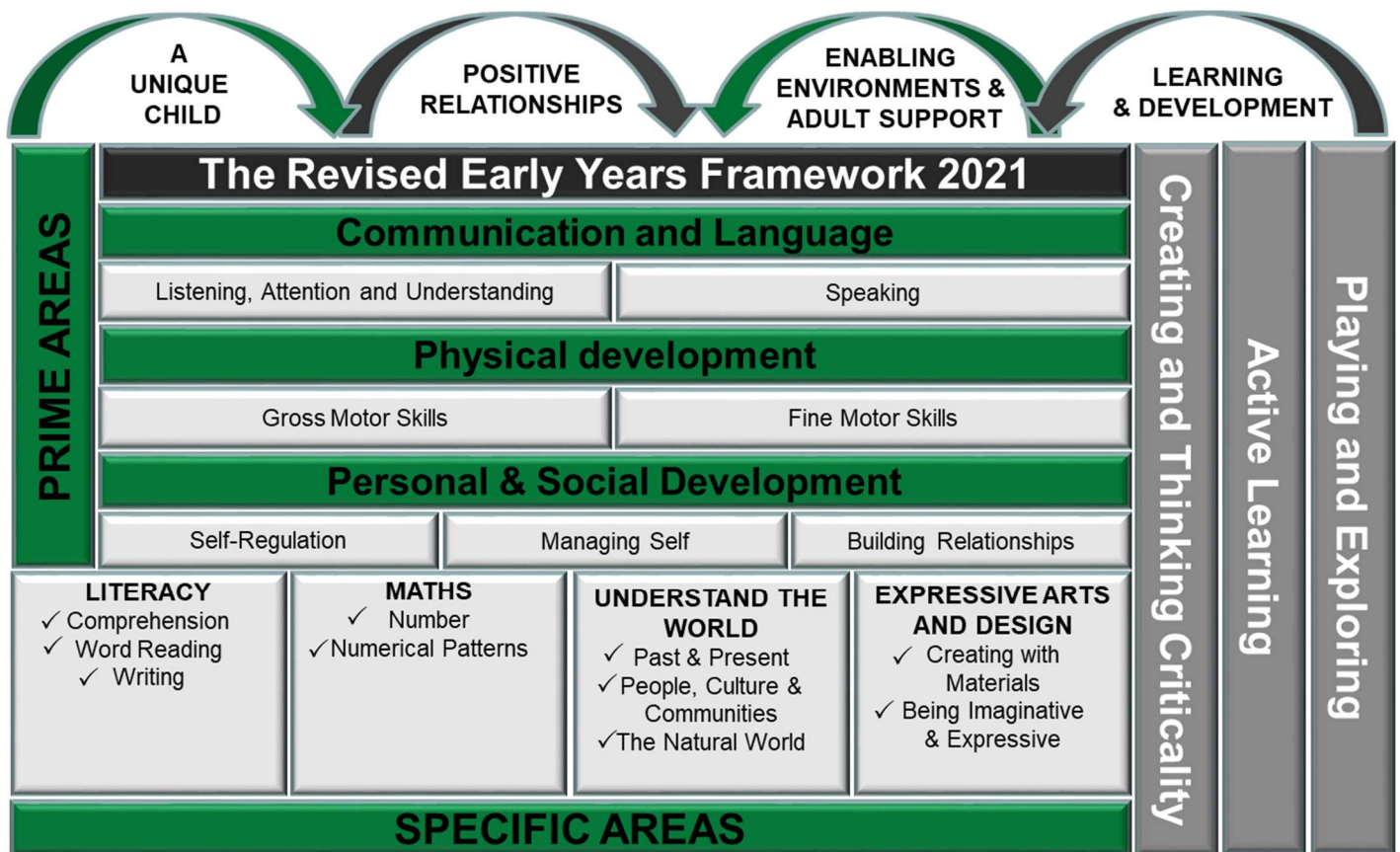
Three Prime Areas:

- **Personal, social and emotional development**- self regulation, managing self and building relationships
- **Communication**- listening, attention and understanding and speaking
- **Physical Development**- gross motor skills and fine motor skills

The three prime areas form the building blocks for all learning and through the following four areas specific knowledge and skills are taught.

Four specific areas:

- **Literacy**- comprehension, word reading and writing
- **Maths**- number and numerical patterns
- **Understanding of the world**- past and present, people, culture and communities, the natural world
- **Expressive art and design**- creating with materials and being imaginative and expressive



Assessment

Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children’s progress, understand their needs and to plan activities and support. Ongoing assessment (also known as formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process. (DFE, 2021)

When the children arrive in September we complete the national Baseline assessments plus school-based assessments to ensure we have a clear understanding of all children’s starting points and, along with the information from families and pre-schools we can plan accordingly. Termly assessments in all areas are completed. Phonics assessments are completed at the end of each step (three times a year in Reception). Interventions are planned for any child not keeping up both at these assessment points and through assessment for learning opportunities throughout the term.

As part of our daily practice we observe and assess children’s development and learning to shape teaching and learning experiences, inform practitioners’ knowledge of children’s levels of achievements and interests. All staff are mindful of the need to balance time spent observing and recording with actively developing children’s learning by modelling and intervening sensitively. Families are kept up to date with their child’s learning with regular updates about the curriculum and we work in partnership with parents throughout the year, both through organised parents meetings and regular informal conversations about their child’s interests and progress and how they can support at home.

During the final term of reception, the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) is completed for each child. We provide the parents with a report based on the child’s progress in the profile. In addition to this we also comment on the child’s characteristics of learning.

The profile provides Parents/Carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child’s knowledge, understanding and abilities, their expected attainment against expected levels and their readiness for year 1. (DFE, 2021)