



# Brookdale Primary School

## Early Years Policy

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## WHY

At Brookdale, we recognise and value the importance of the EYFS in providing a secure foundation for future learning and development.

This policy has been developed in conjunction with the relevant guidance and legislation to ensure that each child has a happy and positive start to their school life in which they can build a foundation for a love of learning.

We ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. We promote teaching and learning to ensure children's readiness for the next stage of their education, and give children a broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

We seek to provide:

- **Quality and consistency**, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
- **A secure foundation** through planning for the learning and development of each individual child, and assessing and reviewing what they have learned regularly.
- **Partnership working** between practitioners and parents and carers.
- **Equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

## 1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Childcare Act 2006
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- DfE (2024) 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'
- DfE (2024) 'Early years foundation stage profile: 2024 handbook'
- DfE (2023) 'Development Matters'
- DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education 2024'
- DfE (2023) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'
- DfE (2015) 'The Prevent Duty'
- DfE and DoH (2015) Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years
- Early Education (2021) 'Birth to 5 Matters'
- UK Council for Internet Safety (2020) 'Education for a Connected World'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Statement
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Administering Medication Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Fire Safety Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Data Protection Policy

## 2. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board will be responsible for:

- Ensuring there is a policy in place to safeguard children that includes an explanation of the action to be taken when there are safeguarding concerns about a child, the use of mobile phones and cameras, and staff safeguarding training requirements. These issues are addressed in part in this policy and in further detail in Brookdale's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- Ensuring there is a policy in place in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff (including supply staff) or a volunteer. These issues are addressed in Brookdale's Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy.
- Monitoring the implementation of this policy.

- Ensuring that this policy does not discriminate on any grounds.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy, as outlined in Brookdale's Complaints Procedures Policy.

The EYFS lead, in conjunction with the headteacher, will have responsibility for the day-to-day implementation and management of this policy.

Staff, including teachers, support staff, supply staff and volunteers, will be responsible for:

- Familiarising themselves with, and following, this policy.
- Remaining alert to any issues of concern in children.

### 3. Aims

Through the implementation of this policy, we will aim to:

- Give each child a happy and positive start to their school life in which they can establish a solid foundation for a love of learning.
- Enable each child to develop socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally.
- Encourage children to develop independence within a secure and friendly atmosphere.
- Support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing.
- Work alongside parents to meet each child's individual needs to ensure they reach their full potential.

Four overarching principles shape will our practice:

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**.
- Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments with teaching and support from adults**, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between Brookdale and families.
- **Learning and development** is important. All children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates

To put these principles into practice, Brookdale will:

- Provide a balanced curriculum which takes children's different stages of development into account.
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- Work in partnership with parents.
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on individual needs, which are informed by observation and ongoing assessment.
- Assign each child with a key person to ensure that each child's learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs.
- Provide a safe and secure learning environment.

#### 4. Learning and development

In partnership with parents / carers, Brookdale will promote the learning and development of children to ensure they are ready for the next stage of education.

The EYFS provision and practice is based on continual observation of children's needs, interests and stages of development. Learning and development in school is planned to reflect these interests and individual circumstances in order to provide each child with a challenging and enjoyable experience.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape education programmes in EYFS settings. These are split into two important and interconnected sections – prime and specific:

The 'prime' areas of learning and development are:

- Communication and language:
  - Listening, attention and understanding
  - Speaking
- Physical development:
  - Gross motor skills
  - Fine motor skills
- Personal, social and emotional development:
  - Self-regulation
  - Managing self
  - Building relationships

The 'specific' areas of learning and development are:

- Literacy:
  - Comprehension
  - Word reading
  - Writing
- Mathematics:
  - Numbers
  - Numerical patterns
- Understanding the world:
  - Past and present
  - People, culture and communities
  - The natural world
- Expressive arts and design:
  - Creating with materials
  - Being imaginative and expressive

In organising and implementing educational programmes, Brookdale will ensure that a broad range of activities and experiences are planned, having regard to the characteristics of effective teaching and learning in the EYFS:

- Playing and exploring – children investigate and experience things, use what they know in their play and are willing to try new things.

- Active learning – children concentrate, keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy their achievements.
- Creating and thinking critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and use what they already know to learn new things, and develop strategies for doing things.

## 5. Assessment

Assessment plays an important part in helping Brookdale to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, plan activities, and assess the need for support.

Parents are kept up-to-date with their child's progress and development, and the key person will address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents.

Ongoing formative assessments are used to assess the day-to-day learning and development of children in the EYFS. Practitioners interact and observe children to understand their interests and learning needs, and use this information to inform practice and provision for each child.

The EYFS setting will undertake a summative assessment of the level of each child's development at certain stages. These are:

- Progress check at age two– a short written summary of children's development in the prime areas.
- Reception Baseline Assessment – a short assessment which is taken within the first six weeks of a child starting Reception year.
- The EYFS Profile – a comprehensive assessment completed at the end of the EYFS to provide a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, attainment against the early learning goals (ELGs), and their readiness for Year 1.

Brookdale ensures all practitioners within the EYFS actively engage children, their parents and other significant adults in their assessment processes. This provides a well-rounded picture of children's development and attainment.

Assessment processes do not prevent practitioners from spending as much time as possible interacting with children and directly supporting their learning and development. Practitioners are not required to record or document evidence to prove children's level of development.

Brookdale reports EYFS Profile results to the LA when these are requested. The LA is under a duty to return this data to the relevant government department.

Reasonable adjustments will be made to the assessment process for children with SEND as appropriate.

A child's Key Person discusses any cause for concern in a child's progress with the child's parents / carers, especially where this concern relates to the prime areas of learning. A strategy of support is agreed upon and consideration is taken as to whether the child may have SEND which requires additional support.

Brookdale takes reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children with EAL to use their home language in play and learning whilst also ensuring that these children have sufficient opportunities to reach a good standard of English. During assessment, if it is found that a child does not have a strong grasp of the English language, the Key Person contacts the child's parents to gain an understanding of their home language skills and whether there is cause for concern about a language delay.

## **6. Inclusion**

All children are valued as individuals irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. The Equality and Diversity Policy ensures that the needs of all children are met, regardless of any protected characteristics they have.

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy ensures all children receive the support they need and are given the best learning experience possible. SEND in the EYFS setting is monitored and managed by Brookdale's EY SENCo.

The EYFS curriculum is planned to meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace.

## **7. The learning environment and outdoor spaces**

The learning environment is organised so that children can explore and learn independently in a safe and interactive environment.

In both Pre School and F2, children have access to an enclosed outdoor learning environment, daily access to which is planned, unless circumstances, such as the weather, would make outdoor learning inappropriate and unsafe.

There are 7 toilet facilities available to the EYFS, and there are hygienic changing facilities located in the Pre School rooms containing a supply of spare clothes. Nappy changing facilities are also available.

## **8. Safeguarding and welfare**

All necessary steps are taken to keep the children in our care safe and well. Any safeguarding or welfare issues are dealt with in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, and all members of staff in the EYFS are required to read this policy as part of their induction training.

The DSL is Kate Ball (Headteacher). The deputy DSLs are Ruth Doig (Pre School Lead), Gill Knapton (Deputy Headteacher & EY Lead), Ian Knapton (Acorns Manager), Lucy Neal (SENCo)

The DSL will be responsible for safeguarding children and liaising with local children's services as appropriate. The deputy DSLs will undertake the duties of the DSL in their absence, but overall responsibility for safeguarding will remain with the DSL. The DSL and deputy DSLs undertake child protection training as required.



Staff receive safeguarding training that enables them to understand the safeguarding policy and procedures, have up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues, and recognise signs of potential abuse and neglect.

## **9. Mobile phones and devices**

For the purposes of this policy, the term “**mobile phone**” refers to any electronic device that can be used to take images or record videos, including tablets.

### **Use of personal mobile phones by staff members**

Staff members must not use personal mobile phones or cameras when children are present. Staff may use mobile phones on school premises outside of working hours when no children are present. Staff may use mobile phones in the staffroom during breaks and non-contact time. Mobile phones are safely stored and in silent mode whilst children are present.

Staff may take mobile phones on trips, but they will only be used in emergencies and should not be used when children are present. Mobile phones will not be used to take images or videos at any time during trips.

Staff who do not adhere to this policy will face disciplinary action. Staff will report any concerns about another staff member’s use of mobile phones to the DSL, following the procedures outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy.

Staff may use their professional judgement in emergency situations.

### **Use of mobile phones by parents, visitors and contractors**

Parents, visitors and contractors are not permitted to take photographs or record videos without prior permission. Parents may take photographs and videos only containing their own child during school events. Parents may take group photographs at school events but only with the informed consent of the parents of the children involved.

Brookdale strongly advises against the publication of any photographs or videos taken at Brookdale or school events on social media. Staff report all concerns about parents, visitors and contractors to the DSL, following the procedures outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

### **Use of Brookdale’s mobile phones and cameras**

Staff are provided with a school device to ensure that only school devices are used to take photographs and videos. School devices will have passcode protection.

School devices are only used for work related matters, e.g. recording and documenting a child’s learning. School devices are only used to take photographs in the presence of another staff member and only with the consent of the child’s parent.

Staff do not take photographs of bruising or injuries for child protection reasons. Instead, recording concerns and body maps are used to record observations relating to child protection concerns – these can be used on our online safeguarding platform.

School devices are not taken off school premises without prior written permission from the headteacher. Where staff members have concerns over material on a school device, they report all concerns to the DSL, following the procedures outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

## **10. Computing**

In F2, Computing lessons are used to give children the opportunity to use technology, equip them for the demands of the developing digital world, and prepare them for the next step in their education. When teaching Computing and utilising technology, e.g. laptops and tablets, Brookdale have due regard for the '[Education for a Connected World](#)' framework when shaping what children are taught. Brookdale aims to:

- Help children work more independently.
- Enable children to develop and enhance their work.
- Encourage children to collaborate on projects.
- Give children the skills and tools to access a wide range of information, ideas and cultures.
- Help children develop skills that can be used in other areas of the curriculum.
- Help children develop good control and coordination through using Computing equipment.
- Encourage children to represent their ideas, thoughts and feelings through technology.

The Online Safety Policy will be always adhered to. This includes installing internet filters, monitoring systems and antivirus software on all devices and ensuring children are supervised appropriately when using the internet. In the event of children accessing inappropriate content online, safeguarding procedures will be followed in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

## **11. Health and safety**

Brookdale promotes the good health of children in the EYFS, including the promotion of good oral health.

Practitioners report any accident or injury involving a child to their parents on the day it occurs, any first-aid treatment administered to a child is reported to their parents. Accidents and injuries are recorded in an accident log. The headteacher reports any serious accident, illness, injury, or death of a child whilst in Brookdale's care to Ofsted as soon as is reasonably practicable, but within 14 days of the incident occurring. Local child protection agencies will also be notified.

A first-aid box is in each classroom and the staffroom.

Medicine prescribed to a child by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist will be administered. Brookdale's Administering Medication Policy outlines the procedures for administering medicines. With parental permission, Brookdale will administer Calpol.

Any food or drink provided to children is healthy, balanced and nutritious. The headteacher notifies Ofsted of any incidents of food poisoning affecting two or more children within 14 days of the incident. Information about any dietary requirements, preferences, food allergies and any special health requirements a child has will be recorded. Fresh drinking water is always available.

Smoking is not permitted on Brookdale premises.

The Health and Safety Policy outlines the full health and safety policies and procedures.

Brookdale has a Fire Safety Policy in place.

## **12. Staff taking medication or other substances**

Brookdale implements a zero-tolerance approach to drugs and alcohol misuse.

The use of alcohol or any other substance that may affect the ability to care for children by a member of staff is not tolerated. If there is a reason to believe a member of staff is under the influence of alcohol or any other substance, they will not be allowed to work directly with children and further action will be taken.

Any member of staff taking medication which may affect their ability to care for children will seek medical advice. Staff will only be allowed to work directly with the children if it is confirmed that the medication is unlikely to impair their ability to look after children properly.

Any medication used by staff will be securely stored in locked stock cupboards or the school office.

## **13. Staffing**

A robust Safer Recruitment Policy is in place, which aims to ensure that members of staff employed in the EYFS are suitable.

Upon employment, all EYFS staff receive induction training to ensure that they understand their roles and responsibilities, including information about emergency evacuation procedures, safeguarding, child protection and health and safety.

Staff are supported to undertake the appropriate training and professional development to ensure children receive the best quality learning experience.

All practitioners receive supervision through their performance management process. If practitioners are experiencing difficulties with a pupil or family, they should refer to the child's Key Person/

The Pre School teacher will hold at least a full and relevant level 3 qualification alongside at least two years' experience working in an early years setting. All other EYFS staff will hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification.

There is at least one member of staff who has a current paediatric first-aid (PFA) certificate on Brookdale premises at all times. A PFS accompanies children on any school outings.

Any member of staff who has sole responsibility for looking after a group of children will hold a PFA certificate. All newly qualified staff with a level 2 or 3 qualification will be PFA trained. Brookdale organises PFA training to be renewed every three years. The list of staff who hold PFA certificates can be found in the school office.

Brookdale provides a staffing ratio in line with the safeguarding and welfare requirements set out in the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'. Only members of staff with level 2 English and Maths qualifications count towards the staffing ratios at level 3.

Brookdale adopt the following staffing ratios:

- For children aged two:
  - There will be one member of staff for every four children.
  - At least one staff member will hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification.
  - At least half of the other staff members will hold full and relevant level 2 qualifications.
  
- For children aged three and over:
  - Where a staff member with qualified teacher status (QTS), early years professional status, or another suitable level 6 qualification is working directly with the children, there will be one member of staff for every 13 children, and at least one other member of staff will hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification.
  - Where a staff member with qualified teacher status (QTS), early years professional status, or another suitable level 6 qualification is not working directly with the children, there will be one member of staff for every 8 children, and at least one other member of staff will hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification.
  
- For children in Reception classes:
  - Class sizes will be limited to 30 children per school teacher.

Only under exceptional circumstances, and where the quality of care and safety of children is maintained, will changes be made to the ratios. Parents will be informed about staffing arrangements and, when relevant and practical, will be involved in staffing arrangement decisions.

Each child will be assigned a key person whose role it is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs. The key person is the classroom teacher in both settings.

#### **14. Information and records**

Information will be stored in line with the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018, and with regard to Brookdale's Data Protection Policy.

The following information will be recorded for each child:

- The child's name and date of birth
- The name and address of every parent or carer who is known to Brookdale, including information about all persons who have parental responsibility for the child and which parent or carer the child normally lives with
- The emergency contact details of the child's parent or carer

The following information about Brookdale will be recorded:

- Brookdale's name, address and telephone number
- Brookdale's certificate of registration
- The name, address and telephone number of anyone who will regularly be in unsupervised contact with the children
- A daily record of the names of the children being cared for in Brookdale, their hours of attendance, and the names of each child's key person

The following information will be made available to parents:

- Brookdale's privacy notice for parents and children
- How Brookdale delivers the EYFS and how parents can access more information
- The daily routine and the activities offered in Brookdale's EYFS and how parents can assist their child's learning at home
- How Brookdale's EYFS supports children with SEND
- Details of the food and drink provided to the children
- Details of the policies and procedures in place in Brookdale's EYFS
- Staffing details, including the name of their child's key person and their role and a telephone number for parents to contact in an emergency

Ofsted will be notified if there are any changes to the following:

- The address of Brookdale
- Brookdale's contact details
- The hours during which care is provided
- Any significant event which is likely to affect the suitability of Brookdale or any person who cares for, or is in regular contact with, children to look after children

## **15. Parental involvement**

We believe that the EYFS cannot function without the enduring support of parents.

Parents are invited to biannual parents' evenings; however, Brookdale has an open-door policy and parents are welcome to talk to teachers at the start and end of the school day. Private spaces are utilised for confidential discussions between staff and parents.

Parents are asked to sign permission slips for any visits out of school, use of photographs of their child and using the internet at school on admission to school.

Parents are asked to complete admission forms, a medical form and to write a brief synopsis about their child to help Brookdale to understand their character and personality.

## 16. Transition periods

The following process will be in place to ensure children's successful transition to Pre School:

- The first visits to the setting are 'stay and play' sessions for children with their parents / carers.

The following process will be in place to ensure children's successful transition to F2:

- The first visits are within their pre-school settings, allowing the children to feel secure meeting a new adult in a familiar environment.
- In the Summer term, the children visit school at least once without the support of practitioners from their current setting or their parents / carers.
- In the Summer term, pre school and F2 staff meet to discuss each child's development in order to support a smooth transition to F2.
- An induction meeting for parents is held during the summer term
- A gentle introduction to full time schooling is applied to ensure children have the opportunity to build relationships with practitioners in a smaller group.

The following process will be in place to ensure children's successful transition to Y1:

- The first visits from the new class teacher are in their current classroom, allowing the children to feel secure meeting a new adult in a familiar environment.
- During the Summer term, children benefit from an induction day with their new class teacher
- In the Summer term, F2 and Y1 staff meet to discuss each child's development in order to support a smooth transition to Y1.

## 17. Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed annually by the governing board and the headteacher.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

All members of staff directly involved with the EYFS are required to familiarise themselves with all processes and procedures outlined in this policy as part of their induction.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is September 2025