Burghfield Common Federation

Mrs Bland's Infant and Nursery School

and

Garland Junior School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

(EYFS)

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Purpose and Background
The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to the learning and development of all children from birth to five years of age. At Burghfield Common Federation (BCF) we offer Early Years education and care for 2–5-year-olds. This is structured in the following way:

- Little Acorns Class – Little Acorns Class offers places to our 2-year-olds and rising 3-year-olds.
- Acorns Class– Acorns Class is our readiness for school nursery. The children attend Acorns in the year before they move up to Reception.
- Reception – Maple and/or Beech Classes – The children start Reception in the September of the academic year in which they become 5 years old. At the end of their Reception year, the children move on to Key Stage 1.

We offer extended hours for all of the children in the early years. This provides parents with the flexibility of their children attending from 7.30am-6.00pm.

We base our practice on the Early Years Foundation Stage 2025 statutory framework. We strive to consistently provide a stimulating, engaging and exciting learning environment to match the needs of individual children while providing opportunities to apply and consolidate their skills as well as chances to encounter new challenges. Our curriculum has been designed with our children at the forefront of it. We have created progressive curriculum milestones for the children to work towards during their time at BCF.

Aims
Meeting the needs of every child lies at the heart of everything we do at BCF.

- We aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning.
- We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent learners.
- We value the individual child and work alongside parents/carers to meet their needs and help every child to reach their full potential.
- We foster independence and positive attitudes to learning - every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- Our school mission statement to develop **'Curiosity, Community, Creativity and Challenge'** underpins the work we do in EYFS.

Legislation
This policy is based on requirements set out in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), effective from 1 September 2025.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum
We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable children to achieve and succeed.

All seven areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

The ***`Prime'*** areas
The prime areas of learning are particularly important in the first 3 years and practitioners working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the three prime areas, which are the basis for successful learning in the other four specific areas. The three prime areas of learning are:

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

The ***`Specific'*** areas
The children will strengthen and apply their skills in the prime areas through the specific areas of learning. The four specific areas of learning and development are:

- **Literacy**
- **Mathematics**
- **Understanding the World**
- **Expressive Arts and Design**

In planning and guiding children's activities practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice.

The three **characteristics of effective teaching and learning** are:
1**. Playing and exploring** – children investigate and experience things and `have a go'
2. **Active learning** – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties
3. **Creating and thinking critically** – children have and develop their own ideas; they make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences, in which they can explore, think creatively and be active.

Teaching and learning in the early years is organised through a range of approaches and provides a balance of child initiated and adult-led activities:

- Planned focused activities where adults work with a small group of children at a time. Teachers will differentiate the activity to meet the needs of every child participating.
- Small group teaching of early reading and writing through our daily phonics programme.
- Whole class teaching for short periods of time such as shared story time, direct teaching (for example of maths), songs and rhymes, discussions and sharing work.
- Opportunities for teachers to work alongside children as they develop their own interests in particular areas of the curriculum.

The curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the EYFS. It also underpins learning and all aspects of children's development. Through play, children develop language skills, their emotions and creativity, social and intellectual skills. For most children their play is natural and spontaneous although some children may need extra help from adults.
Play takes place indoors and outdoors and it is in these different environments that children explore and discover their immediate world. It is here they practise new ideas and skills; they take risks, show imagination and solve problems on their own or with others. The role that adults have is crucial. The adults observe and listen and engage through meaningful and high-quality interactions. They value play and provide safe but challenging environments that support and extend learning and development.

Planning
Our staff are ambitious for all children, and plan activities and experiences for the children that enable them to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staff working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests and development of each child in their care, and consider whether the child needs any addition support. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability (SEND), staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding the children's activities, staff reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and take these into account.

Observations and Assessment

The new Early Years curriculum has made it clear that the adults no longer need to create lengthy written reports about each child. Instead, they need to demonstrate their understanding of each child through conversations and interactions with each child. The main objective of this is that staff focus on the things that matter most – spending more time with the children to help them develop and progress through high quality interactions.

At BCF the adults will capture the 'magic moments 'which capture achievements and progress. In addition to this, the adults will write a narrative observation for each child every half term to provide longer, more detailed observations of the children as they learn and play. Within these observations staff are able to make links to the **Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning**, (see above) reflect on next steps for the children and record any additional notes about things to follow up, such as skills that the children could practise or activities or topics of interest.

The purpose of observations and assessments are:

- To find out about individual children, their development, needs and interests
- To inform plans to support individual children, their learning and development, needs and interests
- To monitor children's development in all areas of learning
- Share information with parents/other professionals
- To evaluate effectiveness of our provision
- To meet the requirements of the Statutory framework for the EYFS

Observations of the children's achievements are collated in their own personal Learning Journeys which are shared with parents/carers. The child's progress is reviewed every half term and is regularly discussed with parents/carers. Children are actively encouraged to contribute to their Learning Journeys and to help plan for their own `next steps in learning'. Throughout their time at BCF parents/carers are welcomed in to share in their children's learning, both informally through our `open door' policy and formally during parent/teacher consultations.

When a child is aged **between 2 and 3**, staff review their progress and provide parents and/or carers with a written summary of the child's development in the 3 prime areas. This 'progress check' highlights the areas in which a child is progressing well and the areas in which additional support is needed. It also focuses on any areas of possible concern, which may indicate a disability, special educational need or developmental delay.

Teachers **in Reception** carry out the NFER statutory Reception Baseline Assessment. This has to be completed within the first 6 weeks of a child starting Reception. It is a short assessment to assess the child in early maths, literacy and communication, and language and provides a snapshot of where pupils are when they arrive at school. At the end of Reception, the teachers use the EYFS Early Learning Goals to make a best-fit judgement about a child's development, and their readiness for Year 1. Each child is assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

Within the final term of Reception, we provide parents/carers with a report based on their child's progress in Reception against the EYFS Early Learning Goals.

Safety including Safeguarding and Welfare

'Providers must take all necessary steps to keep children safe and well'
(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage page 21)

Children's safety and welfare at BCF is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment within our school and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. We have policies, procedures and documents in place to ensure the safety of our whole school community.

We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways –

- ✓ We talk to the children about healthy eating and the promote the importance of good oral health
- ✓ Every morning the children are provided with a nutritious fruit snack
- ✓ We allocate significant time for physical development
- ✓ We follow set procedures when children become ill

Paediatric First Aid (PFA) – All of the staff within the Early Years have a current Paediatric First Aid (PFA) training certificate on the premises and at least 1 person is available at all times when children are present, including in our wraparound care. This PFA certificate is renewed every 3 years as required.

Food Safety/Hygiene: The EYFS framework requires providers to take all necessary steps to keep children safe and well.

Before a child is admitted to the school, we ensure to obtain information about any special dietary requirements, preferences and food allergies that the child has, and any special health requirements.

We will prepare food in a way that:

- Prevents choking
- Meets each child's individual developmental needs
- Is in line with the DfE's Early Years Foundation Stage nutrition guidance

In the event of a choking incident that requires intervention, we will record details of the incident and make the child's parents/carers aware. We will periodically review the records to identify whether we can change anything in our practice to make eating safer and then take action as appropriate.
While children are eating, there will always be at least 1 member of staff in the room with a valid Paediatric First Aid certificate (from a course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex A of the latest EYFS framework). All children will be within sight and hearing of a member of staff while eating and are seated in a designated eating space.

Toileting and privacy
We make sure that there are:

- Enough toilets and hand basins available for the children
- Suitable and hygienic nappy changing facilities
- An adequate supply of necessary items such as clean bedding and spare clothes
- Separate toilet facilities for adults

Intimate care – During nappy changes and toileting, we will balance children's privacy with their safeguarding and support needs. We recognise and assist children with intimate care where needed, and ensure that the children are treated with courtesy, dignity, and respect at all times.

We have an Intimate Care Policy in place which has been designed to act as a guideline for anyone with responsibility for the intimate care of the children attending BCF. It outlines the guidelines for best practice and is annually read and signed by all staff based in the Early Years.

Sleeping:

'Sleeping children must be frequently checked to ensure that they are safe. Being safe includes ensuring that cots/bedding are in good condition'
(Statutory Requirements EYFS)

We have a sleep room set up in Little Acorns nursery class. If the children need a sleep as part of their daily routine, this happens after lunch. The amount of time the children sleep for is guided by parents. We follow the NHS Safe Sleeping Guidance and this is understood and adhered to by all members of staff within the nursery. This includes the following:

- The nursery has a 'Sleep Chart' whereby every child is monitored every 10-15 minutes during their sleep time. This is signed by the member of staff at each interval.
- A member of staff is present at all times with children when they are sleeping/resting.
- All playrooms are well ventilated, with room's temperatures of 16-22c (recommended guidelines); however, this may be higher during the summer months, where fans will be used to try to regulate temperature.
- After each sleep the bedding is changed.
- Staff will check the sleeping children to ensure they are sleeping in a safe position and not tangled in a sheet/blanket.
- The child's breathing will be checked by placing a gentle hand on the child's chest or putting the back of their hand near the child's mouth to feel for breath.
- Staff will ensure they are not hot or cold.

The role of parents/carers
We recognise the central importance of parents/carers as children's first educators. We believe they have a significant role to play in the lifelong education of their child. We strive to create and maintain partnerships with parents/carers as we recognise that together we can have a significant impact on a child's learning. We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child's care and education in many ways such as in person, by email or through our SeeSaw app.

The role of outside agencies
Working with outside agencies such as Educational Psychologists, the LA EYFS Team etc, is integral to our practice in order to meet the individual needs of our children. If we have concerns, we act early. At times we may need to share information with other professionals to provide the best support possible for a child.

Safeguarding and welfare procedures
We recognise that 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. We follow safeguarding and welfare requirements to provide a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment where children can enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

All practitioners are trained to be alert to any issues of concern in children's lives at home or elsewhere. See our child protection and safeguarding policy for more information on this.

Staffing ratios
We make sure that the appropriate statutory staff: child ratios are maintained in our setting to meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety:

- For children aged under 2, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 3 children.
- For children aged 2, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 5 children.
- For children aged 3 and over, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 8 children.

8.4 The designated safeguarding lead (DSL)
We have a DSL and Deputy DSLs across the federation who have lead responsibility for safeguarding children. They are also responsible for:

- Liaising with local statutory children's services agencies, and with the LSPs (local safeguarding partners)
- Providing support, advice and guidance to all other staff on an ongoing basis, and on any specific safeguarding issue as required
- Attending a safeguarding training course that complies with the criteria set out in annex C of the latest EYFS framework

8.5 Absence
We're required to promptly follow up on absences.

If a child is absent for a prolonged time or if their parents/carers haven't told us about the absence, we will attempt to contact the parents/carers and alternative emergency contacts.

See our attendance policy for more on this, including our expectations of parents/carers to report child absences.

Transition
Transitions are carefully planned for and significant time is given to ensure continuity of learning and care. At times of transition, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child and other settings.

For those children attending our Nursery –
We make home visits and hold transition opportunities for each child before they start any of our Nursery classes.

Before children start in our Reception classes –

- Our transition begins with the Early Years Leader visiting all nursery/pre-school settings. These visits provide an opportunity for the Early Years Leader to meet the children and talk to the key worker. Notes are recorded from these visits and are then shared with the class teachers.
- In the second half of the summer term, new starters and their parents are invited into school for a 1:1 meeting with the Headteacher and Head of School. At these meetings key questions are asked and time is given to parents if they have any questions of their own or any concerns they would like to flag or additional information they would like to share about their child.
- We then provide parents with an information pack, aimed to provide answers to some of the questions parents may have; it also contains ideas to make transition to school easier for the child.

We have a well-planned transition programme where children will attend shorter hours at the start of the term to ensure all children settle into school happily and confidently. The transition programme will be tailored to the needs of the children so can be extended for those for whom it would be of benefit. This will be a joint decision made by the school staff and the parents of the child.

At the end of the EYFS our Reception staff meet with Year 1 teachers to liaise and discuss the individual children and their specific needs. Children will have the opportunity to meet with their new teacher to get to know them through our Move-up Days.'

Links to other Policies

There are several statutory policies needed for EYFS – all this information is covered in our Federation policies below;

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	**See Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**
Procedure for responding to illness	**See Health and Safety Policy**
Administering medicines policy	**See Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy**
Emergency evacuation procedure	**See Health and Safety Policy**
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	**See child protection and safeguarding policy**
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	**See Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	**See Complaints Policy**