In reviewing this policy, the Governing Board has had regard to the Equality Act 2010 and carried out an equality impact assessment. It is satisfied that no group with a protected characteristic will be unfairly disadvantaged by this policy.
Contents

1. Statement .............................................................. .......................................................... 3
2. Principles and Aims of our Foundation Stage Policy .......................................................... 3
3. Admission arrangements ........................................................................................................ 3
4. Our Aims .................................................................................................................................. 3
5. The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum ....................................................................... 4
6. Planning and Assessment ....................................................................................................... 6
7. Resources .................................................................................................................................. 7
8. Staffing ...................................................................................................................................... 7
1. Statement
Berkshire Schools Trust (BST) is a multi-academy trust established under the Diocese of Oxford, incorporating both faith and non-faith schools. Our overarching aim is to provide a happy and secure environment in all our schools, which reflects the principles of the Christian faith while recognising that children in our schools may follow other faiths or none and helps to develop children’s spiritual growth and moral understanding.

Our aims are:

- to enable each child to develop his/her own academic potential
- to help each child to become an independent, caring and responsible person
- to develop in each child a curiosity, an enthusiasm and a willingness to learn
- to promote each child’s self-esteem and sense of self worth
- to provide a happy, secure and stimulating environment

2. Principles and Aims of our Foundation Stage Policy
It is our intention in all Early Years settings within BST:

- to provide a welcoming environment for children and their families
- to ensure that all children feel included, secure and valued
- to keep parents well informed about the curriculum and their child’s progress
- to build on children’s previous experiences and to celebrate achievement
- to stimulate positive attitudes and dispositions to learning and to encourage independence
- to value children’s interests, providing a balance of direct teaching and child-initiated activities
- to provide a solid foundation in the seven areas of learning through well planned, rich and stimulating experiences
- to make careful observations in order to support and extend children’s learning appropriately

3. Admission arrangements
Children may be admitted to Foundation Stage One in September, January or April in the term after their 3rd birthday. Children may start FS2 in the September of the year in which they become 5 years old (academic year 1st September – 31st August).

Parents should apply directly to the relevant school for a place in Foundation Stage One (FS1/Nursery). Under the local coordinated admissions scheme, applications for a place in Foundation Stage Two (FS2) must be made to Reading Borough Council and to the school if their admissions policy requires. Admission to FS1 does not guarantee a place in FS2.

Induction visits are held for children and their parents starting in FS1, these visits can be with a parent in the setting and a home visit. In FS2, induction visits are also held, with a meeting for parents. A home visit is also offered to parents. For those children joining us from other settings, a setting visit is arranged where possible.

4. Our Aims
Partnership with Parents

"Parents and practitioners should work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect within which children can have security and confidence."

Building good relationships with parents and keeping them informed about the life of their school and their child's progress is important to us and these are some of the ways that we facilitate this:

- Discussions with senior leaders prior to seeking admission
- Entry profile to which parents contribute
- Home-school link books/diaries for sharing information
• Parents’ Notice Board
• Curriculum information published each term to inform parents of children’s learning areas, together with curriculum talks.
• Newsletters
• Open door policy
• Parents’ evenings and regular informal ‘chats’
• Sharing children’s records with parents and asking them to contribute
• Curriculum workshops for parents
• Parent Teacher and Friends Association (where established)
• School website

5. The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum
The EYFS curriculum is for children aged three to the end of the reception year.

The EYFS is focused around the 4 core values:
1. Every child is unique
2. Children will thrive in an enabling environment
3. Positive relationships are intrinsic to the learning process
4. Active learning is vital for children’s development

The Early Learning Goals establish expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. The Development Matters markers are used as stepping stones of progress towards these goals.

We believe that well planned play, both indoors and outdoors is a key way in which young children learn with enjoyment and challenge and through play. And in a secure environment with effective adult support, children can:
• explore, develop and represent learning experiences that help them make sense of the world;
• practise and build up ideas, concepts and skills;
• learn how to control impulses and understand the need for rules;
• be alone, alongside others or co-operate as they talk or rehearse their feelings;
• take risks and make mistakes;
• think creatively and imaginatively;
• communicate with others as they investigate or solve problems;
• express fears or relive anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

The EYFS is organised into the following seven areas of learning. There are three Prime Areas and 4 Specific Areas.

Prime Areas
Personal, Social and Emotional Development
This area of learning is vital in developing well rounded and sociable young people. We do this through:
• Circle times discussing day to day problem solving in situations with which they are familiar.
• Learning to share and how to incorporate this into our games with others.
• Expressing our emotions in appropriate ways and learning how to do this.
• Finding out about respect and our individual rights.
Communication & Language
In this area of learning we endeavour to:

- provide opportunities for speaking and listening through games with adults, children, in small groups and as a whole class where appropriate
- provide opportunities for children to communicate their thoughts, ideas and feelings, and to develop conversation with children and adults
- encourage careful listening through games, stories, circle time, music etc.,
- promote children's emergent language through role play (e.g. taking orders in the café)
- encourage children to share and enjoy books together e.g. through paired reading and conversation
- develop sustained, shared thinking skills
- link language with physical movement e.g. in action songs and rhymes, cookery, gardening

Physical development
Physical development can be encouraged in many ways. We plan to provide the children with a range of opportunities to:

- develop and improve co-ordination, control, manipulation and movement
- help children gain confidence in what they can do
- access appropriate physical challenges, and a range of resources both inside and outside to develop skills such as climbing, balancing, throwing, catching, manoeuvring wheeled toys
- experience a variety of movement through dance
- develop fine motor skills and hand-eye co-ordination through drawing, cutting, painting, manipulating clay and dough, pouring sand and water, threading beads, construction kits, tools
- link language with physical movement e.g. in action songs and rhymes, cookery, gardening
- develop handwriting skills by supporting fine motor control and hand-eye co-ordination through activities such as malleable play, bead threading, jigsaws, pegs and pegboards, finger paints, drawing in sand trays

Specific Areas

Literacy
In this area of learning we endeavour to:

- provide an environment which promotes the written language: signs, labels, notices, a cosy book corner, environmental print e.g. magazines, menus, eye charts in the role play area
- promote children's emergent writing through role play (e.g. writing orders in the café) and in the writing area – using a variety of writing materials and responding to stimuli such as postcards, greeting cards, flap books, letters
- encourage children to share and enjoy books together e.g. through paired reading
- teach phonics through daily synthetic approaches

Mathematical Development
In this area it is our intention to:

- give children a variety of experiences to count, sort, match and order real objects
- develop mathematical understanding through practical activities and first hand experiences
- provide a meaningful context for maths e.g. stories, role play, real problems such as planning a party, cooking
- make regular use of number rhymes and songs
- provide opportunities to investigate shape and size, for example, in building and construction
- use and experiment with numbers, including numbers larger than 10
• develop positional language through small world play, e.g. positioning furniture in the dolls’ house or animals on the farm

**Understanding of the World**

In this area of learning, children are developing the knowledge, skills and understanding to help them make sense of the world. This forms the foundations for later work in science, history, geography, design and technology, and information and communication technology. We aim to promote this area of learning through:

• providing a wide range of activities indoors and outdoors that stimulate children’s interest and curiosity
• developing geographical concepts, features and language through small world play e.g. road mats, model villages, making landscapes in the sand tray
• recreating and exploring different aspects of their environment and the wider world through role play e.g. shops, hospitals, the post office, the travel agent
• using water play to investigate floating and sinking, absorption, water power, bubbles, ice, etc.
• using sand play to compare the qualities of dry and wet sand
• using recording devices, programmable toys and computers to develop ICT
• developing a sense of the past, present and future through discussion about events e.g. today we are doing this ..., yesterday we..., tomorrow we will ..., using photographs to compare, contrast, notice changes and sequence in chronological order e.g. photos of the children now, as toddlers, and as babies
• Learning about our own culture and beliefs and those of other people

**Expressive Arts and Design**

All children are wonderfully creative, and we strive to ensure that all children have experience by:

• Encouraging them to express themselves through art, music, dance, role play and imaginative play
• Providing opportunities for imaginative play in a range of contexts e.g. role play, small world play, construction, malleable materials, sand and water play, puppets, storytelling
• Giving opportunities for children to enjoy and respond to music
• Using a wide range of good quality materials with which children can explore and experiment
• Helping to become more independent in making choices, selecting resources and techniques, responding to stimuli.

6. **Planning and Assessment**

Planning is done by all members of the EYFS team and is based around the whole school’s curriculum.

Assessment is done in two ways. Formative assessment takes place on a daily basis where children’s learning is planned to incorporate their next steps at their own pace. Termly Summative Assessment takes place and at the end of the FS2 year teachers will report on children’s achievement of the Early Learning Goals.

Assessments take place using the following methods:

• Observations are carried out while children are engaged in normal classroom activities, in order to gain an insight into children’s interests and what they can do. A heavy importance is placed upon children’s achievements during their self-initiated tasks
• Observations are also carried out during focused group work/whole class teaching in order to assess children’s level of understanding related to specific skills and concepts
• Discussions with children about their interests and their learning take place
• All observations, assessments and recording are an integral part of teaching, as they inform future planning for children's needs

Thus, continuity and progression are ensured as the child passes from FS1 to FS2. Parents are involved and are given the opportunity to discuss achievements at various times throughout the Foundation Stage. End of stage reports are issued to parents at the end of FS1 and again at the end of FS2 and as the child leaves the Early Years Foundation Stage, his/her old and new teachers are heavily involved in ensuring a smooth transition into Year 1. Teachers will also provide a brief summary of the Child’s Characteristics of Learning on completion of the EYFS.

7. **Resources**
Resources are kept within the Early Years Foundation Stage and the majority are accessible to the children. These are labelled with photographs to allow the children to select resources independently. Those resources that are more appropriate for adults to prepare are kept out of reach of the children.

8. **Staffing**
Both the FS1 and FS2 classes have one teacher and up to 2 support workers. Each adult is responsible for the ongoing observational assessments of the children. Each teacher is responsible for using these assessments to inform future planning and also for class record keeping and target setting.