



BARNARD CASTLE PREPARATORY SCHOOL

EYFS POLICY

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This is a Prep School policy

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EYFS Policy

“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.”

(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage March 2021)

At Barnard Castle Prep School, we provide a firm foundation via a curriculum that is broad and balanced in content and wide ranging in approach, helping to ensure future progress and success. We believe that we should create a learning environment that is motivating, exciting and caring in order to contribute to the children’s positive self-esteem and love of learning.

Aims

It is every child’s right to grow up safe, healthy, with enjoyment and achievement, making a positive contribution and with economic well-being. At Barnard Castle Prep School we aim to:

- Provide a safe, challenging, stimulating, caring and sharing environment which is sensitive to the needs of the child, including children with additional needs
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in firm foundations for future learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond
- Provide challenging and enjoyable opportunities for children to learn through planned, purposeful play in all areas of learning and development
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress
- Enable choice and decision-making, fostering independence, resilience and self-confidence
- Work in partnership with parents and carers and value their contributions.

What is the Early Years Foundation Stage?

The EYFS is a framework produced by the DfEE and sets the standards for learning and development for children from birth to five years of age. The final year of EYFS is the Reception year. All children begin school with a variety of experiences and learning and it is the privilege of the practitioner working in Reception to take on the task of building upon that prior learning and experience. This is done through a holistic approach to learning, ensuring that parents or carers, support staff and the Reception teacher work effectively to support children’s learning and development.



Effective practice in the EYFS is built on four guiding principles:

- Every child is a unique child
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments
- Children learn and develop in different ways

These four principles provide a context for the EYFS requirements and guide practitioners to supporting the development, learning and care of young children. The themes are broken down into four commitments which help put the principles into practice.

A Unique Child

At Barnard Castle Prep School we recognise that every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured when provided with appropriate opportunities and encouragement. Therefore we:

- Recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates.
- Use praise and encouragement, celebration assemblies, sharing circle times, reward stickers and a visually presented merit system to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.
- Welcome news of experiences and achievements that have taken place outside school, sharing these as part of developing the child as a whole
- Promote the concept of Growth Mindset.

Positive Relationships

At Barnard Castle Prep School we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families and to be sensitive and responsive to the child's needs, feelings and interests.

Parents as Partners ~ Home School Links

At Barnard Castle Prep School, we recognise that parents or carers are the child's first and most enduring educators. When parents or carers and practitioners work together in Early Years Settings, the results have a positive impact on the child's development. A successful partnership needs to be a two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise. Therefore we:

- Welcome parents into the school on 'Bump-Up' Day to enable them to understand and value the schools aims and beliefs
- We encourage parents to complete the 'Getting to Know You' admissions booklet.



- We invite children and parents to New Starters' Tea before School begins to meet the Class Teacher, as the key point of contact, and answer any questions before starting School
- We give parents a booklet, 'Welcome to Pre-Prep' which gives details of contact numbers, addresses and information about staff that will be key during the child's time in Reception
- Parents receive a weekly newsletter informing parents of whole school issues and events
- We have an 'Open Door' Policy, whereby parents and carers can come and discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner
- We share information regularly through the Home School Diary
- We keep parents informed of current curriculum and learning needs when relevant to their child.
- We share with parents the core texts we are studying and the tiered vocabulary for them to discuss and use at home.
- We invite parents or carers to view plays and concerts
- We encourage parents or carers to listen to their child read each night, to make use of phonics or 'tricky word' activities and to comment on reading progress in individual reading diaries
- We discuss pupils' progress and achievements with parents or carers at Parents Meetings
- We provide termly written reports summarising the child's progress in Reception and their developing learning styles.

An Enabling Environment

At Barnard Castle Prep School, we aim to create an attractive, welcoming and stimulating environment which will encourage children to explore, investigate and learn through first-hand experience. We also aim to make it a place where children feel secure and confident and are challenged to develop their independence and resilience. We recognise that active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence, they learn to make decisions, providing children with a sense of satisfactions as they take ownership of their learning.

Learning and Development

At Barnard Castle Prep School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are inter-connected.



We recognise the Characteristics of Effective Learning of the EYFS (Development Matters, July 2021), so encourage and facilitate a balance of:

- Playing and having a go
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically

We aim to respond to each child's emerging needs through planned, purposeful play with a balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities which will prepare children for more learning in Year One. Although we are exempt from the requirements of Teaching and Learning for EYFS, we provide a curriculum that fulfills these requirements and more to allow all the children to progress with a curriculum appropriate and unique to them.

When planning for Learning and Development in the EYFS at Barnard Castle Prep School we consider and include the seven features of effective practice (Development Matters. July 2021)

- The best for every child
- High quality care
- The curriculum; what we want children to learn
- Pedagogy: helping children to learn
- Assessment: checking what children have learnt
- Self-regulation and executive function
- Partnership with parents

Three areas of learning are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These three areas, the prime areas, are:

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

We must also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

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

Physical Development

Children have two PE lessons per week, with a specialist PE teacher who follows EYFS objectives and also develops specific sport-related skills, strength, co-ordination and dance moves. This enhances so many of the children's uses of their creative, expressive, co-operative, mathematical, and communicative abilities. Independence and resilience go hand in hand with age-appropriate focus in this area of the curriculum.

Children have weekly swimming lessons. This has been welcomed by families, as this vital life skill is incorporated into the School day, therefore freeing up valuable family time.

Barney Education

Our EYFS follows the same 'whole School' topic every term which underpins our delivery of character education. The children in Reception are introduced to our Barney Pillars:



FEEL

How you feel
within



BE

Who you are and
how you behave



SHARE

How you interact
with people



GO

How you learn and
make progress

by the use of our Barney superheroes:



These superheroes are woven through our EYFS curriculum and explained further in our weekly assembly themes.



Long Term Planning

Topics are planned for each of the three terms and the Early Learning Goals and educational programmes are distributed over the terms, to determine broad and balanced coverage. Some Early Learning Goals provide a focus for certain terms, particularly those relating to Understanding the World.

Medium Term Planning

We address particular aspects of the curriculum in more detail for each term and are able to include links between areas of learning and development and opportunities for ICT. Learning objectives, assessment opportunities and experiences for each area of learning and developments are identified. Topic webs are shared with parents at the beginning of each term.

Short Term Planning

Short term, weekly plans help address specific activities, differentiation and adult roles and responsibilities in order to help meet the learning needs of the children. It allows for flexibility in response to individual children's needs and interests and for revision and modification informed by on-going observational assessment.

Resources

The learning environment has been developed to encourage a positive attitude to learning. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. The learning environment changes with the children's needs, interests and passions. The environment must be well organised and enticing.

Observations

All planning starts with observing children both in their play and individually/group situations. These observations ensure that planning is bespoke to each child's needs and next steps are planned carefully. Any pertinent observations are recorded on the Tapestry Application or annotated within their learning books e.g. writing, reading, Maths or using the Apollo platform.

Assessment, Recording and Monitoring

At Barnard Castle Prep School we undertake assessment for learning. We analyse and review what we know about each child's development and learning and then make informed decisions about the child's progress. This enables us to plan the next steps



to meet their development and learning needs. All practitioners who interact with the child will contribute to the assessment process.

Formative Assessment

This type of assessment informs everyday planning and is based on on-going observational assessment of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles. Formative assessment may take the form of anecdotal assessments, focused observations, CEM Base assessment; other focused assessments e.g. sound/number work, annotated examples of work, photographs and parental information.

BASE Assessment

Base uses a combination of objective assessment and teacher rating to provide valuable information about each child as they enter their first year in full time education. The assessment provides a firm basis for measuring the relative progress of pupils through Reception and Key Stage 1. The progress measured provides a fair way of making comparisons because they take into account the starting points of individual children.

At the core of the CEM Base is an assessment of early reading, early mathematics, phonological awareness and short-term memory. The assessment is completed by an adult working with each child on a one-to-one basis and takes about twenty minutes. Personal and social development is assessed through teacher ratings of key features. Immediate analysis is available, with detailed feedback provided by the CEM Centre.

Pupils are assessed on entry to Reception. This assessment is repeated just before they leave the Reception class during the Trinity Term. This allows us to see the progress made by pupils during the Reception year. The follow-up assessment also assesses pupils' attitude to School and their behaviour.

Summative Assessment

Year 1 teachers are given a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities which will help enable effective transition from Reception to Year 1. For further information please see the Teaching, Marking and Assessment Policy.

Welfare

Please refer to the Prep School Pastoral Care and Welfare Policy.

Equal Opportunities

Please refer to the whole School Equal Opportunities Policy and Practice.



Inclusion

Please refer to the Prep School Curriculum Policy.

Safeguarding Children

We understand the responsibility to only release children into the care of individuals who have been notified to us by the parent, and to ensure that children do not leave the premises unsupervised. We take all reasonable steps to prevent unauthorised persons entering the premises, and have an agreed procedure for checking the identity of visitors.

It is important to us that all children in Reception are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards; this is achieved through discrete lessons as well as through taking opportunities for daily discussion and interaction.

We aim to protect the physical and psychological wellbeing of all children. For further information please see Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Health and Safety

Please refer to the whole School Health and Safety Policy.

Before and After School Provision

The School day begins at 8.35am and ends at 3.30pm. However, at Barnard Castle Prep School we appreciate the needs of our working parents. We therefore allow parents to drop their children at School from 8.15am where children will be supervised till the beginning of the School day. We also operate a breakfast club over in the Senior School Dining Hall from 7.30am for those needing an earlier drop off facility. After School provision is available from 3.30pm till 5:00pm. Children will be supervised either inside or outside with our qualified member of staff who holds a paediatric first aid certificate. Children who are not collected at 5:10pm will be walked over to the buses before being sent to the boarding house and accompanying Prep School boarders for tea. All Reception children who come to School and leave School on a School bus will be 'buddied up' with an older pupil who will ensure they get on the bus safely and will be met by a member of Prep School staff as soon as they arrive on School premises.

First Aid and Medicines

We are extremely fortunate at Barnard Castle Prep School to have a Medical Centre on site with a fully qualified nurse. They take care of all medical and first aid issues that



arise in the EYFS setting. The Reception classroom does have its own first aid bag to deal with minor cuts and scrapes and a record book, however, all other injuries are referred to the Medical Centre. The Class Teacher and Teaching Assistant are currently qualified in paediatric first aid.

Medicines may only be administered by the nurses and parents must deliver any medicines to the Medical Centre during morning drop off. For further information please see First Aid policy.

Within Barnard Castle Prep School we promote good health, including the oral health, of all pupils.

Procedures are detailed in the First Aid Policy on how to respond to children who are ill or infectious and how we take necessary steps to prevent the spread of infection and take appropriate action if children are ill.

Staffing and Organisation

There is one Reception Class at Barnard Castle Prep School, with a maximum intake of twenty children. We maintain an adult/pupil ratio of 2:20 within the Reception year; this includes the classroom teacher and a full time teaching assistant solely for the Reception class. The Reception class teacher is the 'key person' for each child, as required by the EYFS.

Effective supervision of staff is in place, due to their contact with families and EYFS children. They have a termly meeting with the Headmistress, in order to support them in their role and keep the Headmistress up to date with changes and developments. All Prep School staff know that they can speak to the Headmistress on Monday mornings should they wish to raise any concerns regarding care or teaching for EYFS children. Urgent matters can be raised at any time.

Admissions

The Headmistress of the Prep School will arrange to meet parents to discuss a possible application. She will explain that the number of places available are fixed, and that early registration is highly advisable. The number of Reception class places is currently limited to 20. Please refer to the whole School Admissions Policy for further information.

Academic Support

The Prep School Head of Academic Support, Mr Joy, is on hand to discuss any learning support concerns. School gathers information from parents about a child's significant developmental milestones prior to them starting School, via 'The Learning Journal' document which is completed before September. Wherever practical, the Reception class teacher visits a child's previous day care/ nursery setting before the summer



break, to observe them in familiar surroundings, liaise with key workers and look at assessment records.

Managing Children's Behaviour

At Barnard Castle Prep School we understand that we are responsible for managing children's behaviour in such a way that is appropriate to their age and stage of development. Please refer to the Prep School Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions Policy.

Reception to Year 1 Transition

The Reception and Year 1 teachers work closely to ensure the transition from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 is as smooth as possible. Therefore we:

- Encourage children to develop independence when dressing and undressing and when organising personal belongings throughout the Reception Year
- Plan for more structured activities to be undertaken during the Trinity term, encouraging less dependence on adult support.
- Provide Reception children with regular access to Key Stage 1 teachers during assembly, playtime and other activities around the school
- Pass on an end of year class summary to Year 1 teachers
- Plan for Reception and Year 1 teachers to meet to discuss individual needs of specific children
- Plan for Reception children to be taught by the Reception teacher in the Year 1 classroom, allowing them to experience the different aspects of a Year 1-style lesson
- Give Reception children the opportunity to visit their new Year 1 classroom and teacher for an afternoon on 'Bump-Up Day'
- Continue the 'Jolly Phonics' approach to phonics and spelling in Year 1, along with the introduction of Jolly Grammar
- Ensure there is a similar structure to the school day in Year 1
- Where possible, give Year 1 children the opportunity to continue to enjoy practical learning experiences which gradually become more formalised towards the end of the academic year

For Information

Should you wish to contact Ofsted to make a complaint:

Telephone: 0300 123 1231 (Mon to Friday 08:00 to 18:00)

<https://contact.ofsted.gov.uk/online-complaints>



At Barnard Castle School we operate an 'open door' policy for parents to contact us regarding concerns and questions. Teaching staff can also be contacted via the School phone number during school hours and via email between the hours of 7am and 7pm. Please refer to the Barnard Castle School Complaints Policy on our website if needed.