



Barnet Hill Academy
FAITH • EXCELLENCE • KNOWLEDGE

Early Years Policy

01 Apr 2026
v3.0

1.0 Aims

- Personal, social and emotional well-being
- Positive attitudes and dispositions towards their learning
- Social skills
- Attention skills and persistence
- Language and communication
- Reading and writing skills
- Mathematical skills
- Knowledge and understanding of the world
- Physical development
- Creative development

The EYFS team believe that early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. Children learn in a complex way and are influenced by everything in their environment.

They use their senses to explore and make sense of the world around them.

They learn through play, hands on experiential learning, through conversation with adults and other children and through a variety of planned activities.

Staff will follow the Early Years Statutory Framework from Birth to Five and agree with and strive to implement in practice the principles stated for excellent early years education:

- Effective education requires both a relevant curriculum and practitioners who understand and are able to implement the curriculum requirements.
- Effective education requires practitioners who understand that children develop rapidly during the early years –physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially.
- Practitioners should ensure that all children feel included, secure and valued.
- Early years' experience should build on what children already know and can do.
- No child should be excluded or disadvantaged regardless of their need; inclusion is at the heart of this.
- Parents and practitioners should work together.
- To be effective the curriculum should be carefully structured.
- There should be opportunities for the children to engage in activities planned by adults and also those that they plan or initiate themselves.
- Practitioners must be able to observe and respond appropriately to children.
- Well-planned, purposeful activity and appropriate intervention by practitioners will engage children in the learning process.
- For children to have rich and stimulating experiences, the learning environment should be well planned and well organised.

- Above all, effective learning and development for young children requires high-quality care and education by practitioners.

2.0 Equal Opportunities

We believe that children should be treated as individuals and that they have equal access to the Early Years curriculum. All staff should have an awareness of what Equal Opportunities means in principle as well as in practice. Practitioners should plan to meet the needs of girls and boys, children with SEND, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children with EAL, children from disadvantaged backgrounds, children from all social and cultural backgrounds and children of different ethnic groups. Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

3.0 Learning and Teaching

Staff believe that learning for young children is a rewarding and enjoyable experience in which they explore, investigate, discover, create, practise, rehearse, repeat, revise and consolidate their developing knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes. During the Early Years many of these aspects are brought together effectively through playing and talking. This policy is based on requirements set out in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) for 2026

Effective learning involves:

- Children initiating activities that promote learning and enable them to learn from each other.
- Children learning through movement and their senses.
- Children having time to explore ideas and interests in depth.
- Children feeling secure which will help promote confident learners.
- Children learning in different ways and at different rates.
- Children making links in their learning.
- Creative and imaginative play activities that promote the development and use of language.

We believe that teaching is the process whereby children are systematically helped to make connections in their learning and are actively led forward to reflect and make use of what they have already learnt.

Teaching has many aspects, including planning and creating a learning environment, organising time and resources, interacting, questioning, responding to questions, working with and observing children, assessing and recording children's progress and sharing knowledge gained with other practitioners and parents.

Effective teaching requires:

- Working in partnership with parents.
- Planning experiences and activities that are challenging but achievable.
- Practitioners who model a range of positive behaviour.
- Using language that is rich and grammatically correct. Teaching new vocabulary through modelling and explanation.
- Using conversation and carefully framed questions.
- Direct teaching of skills and knowledge.
- Promoting positive attitudes to learning through interaction and support.
- Planning both indoor and outdoor learning environments.
- Skilful and well-planned observations of children.
- Assessing children's development and progress.
- Identifying the next step in children's learning to plan for individual children's progress.

4.0 The Areas of Learning

There are seven areas of learning and development that shape educational programmes in our setting. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas 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

Communication and language development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

• Physical development

Physical development involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

• Personal, social and emotional development

Personal, social and emotional development involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

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

The specific areas are:

Literacy

Literacy development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.

Mathematics

Mathematics involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.

Understanding the world

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

Expressive arts and design

Expressive arts and design involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

5.0 The Value of Play

Well-planned play, both indoors and outdoors, is an important way in which young children learn. It is the process through which children explore, investigate, recreate and understand the world in which they live. It is a vital component of children's lives and is the medium through which skills can be developed and practised. The role of the practitioner is crucial in developing high quality play in the learning environment. This includes planning and resourcing a challenging environment, supporting children's learning through planned and spontaneous play, and extending and developing children's language and communication in their play. Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults.

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- **Playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go';
- **Active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements; and
- **Creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

6.0 Planning and Assessment

Nursery and Reception staff plan the curriculum through topics adapted from the EYFS statutory framework, Development Matters, Kapow, and the Power of Reading (CLPE). These topics are carefully selected in response to the needs, interests, and developmental stages of the children, ensuring learning is meaningful, engaging, and appropriately challenging.

Assessment in the Early Years is ongoing, constructive, and consistently used to inform planning and next steps in learning. It is carried out throughout the year to monitor progress and support individual development.

Phonics assessments are completed using Bug Club assessments to track and support early reading progress.

7.0 The Role of Additional Adults in Early Years

The three EYFS classes (Nursery & Reception) are supported by their own Level Three Teaching Assistants who are valued for the special contribution that they make and are seen as 'practitioners' in the classroom. They are involved in planning, assessment, teaching and liaison with parents. They have a special role to fulfil and the following list is seen as some of the qualities and skills they bring:

- To assist in providing a full range of activities which meet the emotional, physical, social and intellectual needs of the children.
- To take groups of children for various activities in the different curriculum areas.
- To participate in the preparation of the learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, before the children arrive and with classroom management during the session.
- To make observations of the children and share these with other staff.

- To contribute to the planning of the curriculum to meet the needs of individual children.
- To contribute with regards to record keeping and reports as required by the teacher
- To provide first aid and comforting ill children if trained
- To help children acquire self-help skills including toileting and personal hygiene as necessary.
- To work closely with parents and carers, providing a welcoming environment.
- To assist with the tidying up of materials and organisation of resources used during the sessions.
- To help with the putting up of displays.
- To carry out lunchtime duties and attend staff meetings and courses when required.
- To attend Early Years meetings and contribute their knowledge and ideas.

7.1 Key Workers

We at BHA believe that children settle best when they have a key person to relate to, who knows them and their parents well, and who can meet their individual needs. Research shows that a key person approach benefits the child, the parents, the staff and the setting by providing secure relationships in which children thrive, parents have confidence and staff members are committed.

We at BHA want the children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in the setting and to feel secure and comfortable with the staff. We also want parents to have confidence in both their children's well-being and their role as active partners in the setting.

We aim to make the setting a welcoming place where children settle quickly and easily because consideration has been given to the individual needs and circumstances of children and their families.

At BHA the procedures are:

- We allocate a key person before the child starts.
- The key person is responsible for the induction of the family and for settling the child into our setting.
- The key person works with the parent to plan and deliver a personalised plan for the child's wellbeing and care.
- The key person acts as a key contact for the parents in day to day matters.
- We judge a child to be settled when they have formed a relationship with the key worker.

8.0 Methods of Assessment

EYFS staff use a range of methods for assessing pupils' learning and achievements:

- Practitioners' knowledge of children
- Written observations
- Information obtained from discussion with parents
- Photographs, videos and audio recordings
- Other samples of children's work
- Some formal testing (if and when needed)

9.0 Learning Journeys

Tapestry is an electronic 'Learning Journey' folder containing photographs/written observations. Tapestry builds a very special record of a child's experiences, development and learning journey through their early years and primary education. Using photos, videos, and diary entries, a teacher or early years educator, along with the child's parents or carers, and the child themselves if they're ready, 'weaves' the story of the child and how they are growing and developing. The Tapestry platform then works seamlessly to enable these memories to be kept as a permanent record of each child's unique journey. Parents are also able to upload children's home learning and communicate with key person and teachers.

10.0 EYFS Profiles

- The observations described above help teachers to assess each child's level of development against the early learning goals and to indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are exceeding expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). This is the EYFS Profile. EYFS Profiles are completed in the final term of the year in which the Reception child reaches age five, and no later than 30 June in that term.
- EYFS Profile results are shared with parents and carers.
- The Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning (see paragraph 1.9). These inform a dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assist with the planning of activities in Year 1.
- The School reports EYFS Profile results to the Local Authority upon request.

11.0 Transition

Staggered intake is used to help children settling into Nursery and Reception classes at the beginning of the academic year. EYFS Staff communicate with parents for the settling in needs of individual children and arrangements such as parents staying in with the child for the part of the session to settle them can be made. Similar policy is used for those new children that start later in the year.

Staff use the information provided by the parents through completing parents' questionnaire and pupils' survey of interests to make the settling in process as smooth as possible.

Reception teachers develop fair knowledge of pupils coming up from Nursery to Reception as they have the opportunity to observe them during the free activities, especially in the shared outdoor learning area. Nursery children are normally quite familiar with the Reception staff which helps them to settle in quickly in Reception Year.

Arrangements are also made for children in Reception to become acquainted with the Year 1 teachers and the Year 1 classroom.

At the end of the school year teachers will meet and discuss the children going from Nursery to Reception and Reception to Year 1. This transition time is extremely important and it is essential that the children are well prepared and parents have an understanding of the next step. Our whole school 'Meet the Teacher Day' at the end of the academic year include the Reception and Nursery classes.

12.0 Role of Parents

The EYFS Team is keen to develop an effective partnership with parents. We recognise that parents are the children's first and most enduring educators and that in order to have a positive impact on a child's development and learning it is essential to develop a close working relationship with Parents, based on mutual respect. The EYFS team are always happy to talk to parents about any issues as they arise. There are also meetings each term to discuss progress for each child.

Parents are encouraged to inform the EYFS team about their child's interests and needs, and their child's achievements outside the school. They are requested to complete surveys of interests, wow moment cards and all about forms on Tapestry.

At the end of the third term, we provide parents with a written progress report in relation to the Development Matters/Early Learning Goals (as appropriate).

13.0 Safeguarding and Child Protection

Please read our school policy which provides all the relevant information regarding our Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures.

13.1 Safeguarding and Welfare

The School ensures that policies and procedures are in place for the whole school that also meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation framework to keep all children safe and well. In addition, there are a few EYFS-specific policies and procedures; for example daily risk assessments of the indoor and outdoor premises and equipment.

Staff qualifications and ratios

Where a person with Qualified Teacher Status, Early Years Professional Status, Early Years Teacher Status or another approved level 6 qualification is working directly with the children, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 13 children

Where a person with the above qualifications is not working directly with the children, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 8 children

14.0 Promoting Health & Hygiene

At BHA, snacks and meal times are important part of the setting's day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy eating and Islamic manners including supplications before eating and thanking Allah SWT after eating. At snack time, we encourage fruits and healthy snacks from home. We encourage parents to prepare healthy lunches for their children and give them ideas.

Procedures:

We follow these procedures to promote healthy eating in our setting:

- Before a child starts to attend our setting, we find out from parents their children's dietary needs including any allergies.
- We display any allergies that a child may have so all staff and volunteers are fully informed about them.
- We take care not to provide food containing nuts or nut products and are especially vigilant where we have a child who has known allergy to nuts.
- We require staff to show sensitivity to children's dietary needs and allergies.
- We organise fruit times and lunch times so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate.
- We use meal times to encourage independence.
- We encourage drinking plain water. Children have access to fresh drinking water to fill their bottle waters when needed.
- We inform parents about healthy eating.
- We discourage sweet drinks, crisps, cakes, biscuits and juices. We reserve the right to return this food to the parent as a last resort.

15.0 Behaviour Policy

At Barnet Hill Academy we aim to create a positive atmosphere for our young children we believe children develop quickly in the Early years our provision enables them to develop their personalities, talents and abilities. Within the Early year practitioners aim is to do all they can to help and maintain a happy, secure, calm, orderly environment in which effective learning can take place to teach the children to become happy learners and to cultivate an Islamic ethos.

These are simplified at EYFS within the class as:

- Be happy
- Be kind
- Be polite
- Do listen
- Do sit properly
- Do work hard

Examples of strategies we use to support promoting positive behaviour and our Golden Rules:

- Sharing is caring
- We keep our hands and unkind words to our self
- Indoor voices
- Always tell the truth
- Respect each other's belongings.

We insure poor and unacceptable behaviour is dealt with immediately in fair and consistent manner.

Merit awards for positive behaviour, kindness, helpfulness, team work

Refer to the BHA Behaviour Policy for full policy information.

16. Smoking, Alcohol & Drugs Policy

We maintain a zero-tolerance approach to smoking, vaping, alcohol, and drug misuse on or around the academy site. All adults are expected to act as positive role models and maintain behaviours that support a safe, healthy, and respectful environment for children.

This policy reflects our statutory duties under the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, particularly regarding:

- Safeguarding and welfare requirements
- Staff suitability and ongoing fitness to work with children
- Health and safety

Key Principles

- Child-centred approach: The welfare and safety of the child is always the primary consideration
- Zero tolerance: No smoking, vaping, alcohol, or drug misuse on site
- Professional conduct: Staff must meet the expectations set out in the Staff Code of Conduct
- Early help and safeguarding: Concerns are identified early and acted upon promptly

- Consistency: This policy is applied in line with safeguarding and behaviour

16.1 Medication and Substances

In line with EYFS and BHA health procedures:

Medication must be:

- Provided by parents/carers
- Clearly labelled
- Accompanied by written consent
- Administration must be recorded in line with BHA procedures

17. Immunisation Policy

Parents and carers are encouraged to follow the NHS childhood immunisation programme.

The school will aim to:

- Provide accurate and up-to-date information where appropriate
- Maintain confidential health records where provided
- Follow UKHSA guidance in the event of infectious disease outbreaks
- Take proportionate action to protect children's health and safety

Immunisation is not a condition of entry or continued attendance.

17.1 Legal and Guidance Framework

This policy is informed by:

- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage
- NHS childhood immunisation schedule
- UK Health Security Agency infection control guidance
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984

17.2 Immunisation Records

- Immunisation information may be collected at admission or during EYFS registration
- Parents may provide information from the child's Personal Child Health Record (Red Book) during home visit.
- Records are stored securely in line with data protection requirements
- Information is used only for safeguarding and public health purposes

17.3 Managing Infectious Diseases and Outbreaks

Barnet Hill Academy follows a strict infection control approach within EYFS.

In the event of illness or outbreak:

- We will follow guidance from the UK Health Security Agency immediately
- Parents will be informed where necessary
- Exclusion periods will follow national health protection guidance
- Enhanced cleaning and hygiene measures will be implemented

Where advised:

- Temporary exclusion of unvaccinated children may be necessary to protect public health
- Decisions will always be based on official health advice and risk assessment

17.4 Partnership with Families

Barnet Hill Academy works closely with families to support children's health and well-being.

We will:

- Share reliable NHS guidance where appropriate
- Support parents in accessing health services
- Encourage engagement with GPs and health visitors
- Respect family choice and individual circumstances

17.5 Equality and Inclusion

We are committed to ensuring:

- No discrimination based on immunisation status
- Fair and consistent treatment of all children and families
- Sensitivity and respect for individual beliefs and circumstances

18. Physical Activity

At Barnet Hill Academy, we recognise that physical activity is fundamental to children's health, development, and lifelong wellbeing.

We are committed to providing daily opportunities for all EYFS children to be physically active, confident, and engaged in purposeful movement experiences that support their physical, emotional, and cognitive development.

This policy is underpinned by the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, which identifies Physical Development as a Prime Area of Learning essential for children's readiness for school and life.

We also reflect national expectations from NHS physical activity guidance, which highlights the importance of regular movement for healthy growth and development.

We aim to:

- Ensure all children engage in daily, purposeful physical activity
- Promote strong development of gross and fine motor skills
- Support children to develop coordination, balance, strength, and spatial awareness
- Encourage positive attitudes towards active lifestyles and wellbeing
- Reduce sedentary behaviour and promote active play throughout the day
- Ensure inclusive access for all children, including those with additional needs
- Embed safe, structured risk-taking within physical development opportunities

18.1 National Expectations (EYFS & NHS Alignment)

We follow national expectations that:

- Children under 5 should be physically active every day
- Activity should include energetic play and movement across the day
- Sedentary time should be minimised and broken up regularly
- Children should experience a range of movement types (e.g. running, jumping, climbing, dancing, throwing)

NHS guidance highlights that early year's physical activity supports:

- Healthy growth and weight
- Muscle and bone development
- Brain development and concentration
- Emotional wellbeing and behaviour regulation

18.2 Inclusion and Individual Needs

We are committed to ensuring all children can access physical activity by:

- Adapting activities to meet individual needs
- Providing additional support where required
- Ensuring accessibility for children with SEND
- Working with external professionals where appropriate

18.3 Partnership with Parents

We work in partnership with families to:

- Share the importance of daily physical activity

- Encourage active lifestyles at home
- Support understanding of healthy development
- Provide ideas for active play beyond the setting

19. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and updated in line with EYFS, NHS, and public health guidance and be monitored through curriculum planning and safeguarding audits.

The responsibility for implementing this policy is shared among the EYFS staff under the leadership and management of the EYFS leader. The Headteacher is responsible for checking that the EYFS learning and welfare requirements are met.

The school takes into account the views of parents, staff and outside agencies such as the Local Authority to evaluate the effectiveness of this policy and further improve the education and welfare provision.