

EYFS Policy

Beech Hill School



Approved by: Local Governing Body **Date:** January 2025

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Last reviewed on: December 2024

Next review due by: December 2025

Beech Hill Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

1. Aims

At Beech Hill we believe that every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. We understand that 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.

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children at Beech Hill access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- Close partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- Every child at Beech Hill is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage for group and school-based providers (Department for Education, 2024)

3. Structure of the EYFS

At Beech Hill the Foundation Stage includes the following classes;

- AM and a PM 3-4 Nursery Class
- 3 Reception classes

Beech Hill Nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children. We offer children who are 3-4 15 hours per week for 38 weeks of the year. We also offer pupils of working parents a maximum of 30 hours per week for 38 weeks of the year.

Nursery admissions happen across three intakes over the academic year.

- Pupils can join our 3-4-year-old unit at the beginning of the term following their third birthday.

We also offer non-funded additional 15 hours per week for pupils, depending on capacity in the 3-4-year-old Nursery unit. This must be paid for by parents/carers.

Pupils will start Reception in the academic year in which they turn 5.

Staffing

Nursery 3- 4-year-old unit- Pellon Lane	Reception Halifax 1, Halifax 2, Halifax 3
Teacher Level 6 EYFS Practitioner(s) Level 3 EYFS Practitioner(s) <ul style="list-style-type: none">Staffing dependent on the needs and number of pupils in the cohort	Halifax 1 Teacher and Nursery Manager EYFS Practitioner Halifax 2 Teacher EYFS Practitioner Halifax 3 Teacher and EYFS lead EYFS Practitioner
Additional staffing Support Assistant for Pupils with SEND Learning Mentor Lunch time supervisors	

At times the Foundation Stage will have visiting student teachers and Nursery Nurse students working in the setting alongside the staff. Other professionals may also work within the setting throughout the year. All parties will have an appropriate DBS certificate.

4. Curriculum

At Beech Hill we adhere to the Statutory Framework of the EYFS and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings. These principles are;

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

Principles into practice

A Unique Child

At Beech Hill we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others;

we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion of all pupils and Equality of Opportunity

The school's purpose is to deliver a well-planned, balanced and appropriate curriculum to meet the needs of the community we serve. We value the diversity of individuals within the school and believe that every child matters. All children at Beech Hill School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion, gender, socioeconomic background or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school and we take account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their personal best and have high expectations of all our children. Our curriculum design ensures that the needs of individuals and small groups of children can be met within the environment of high quality first wave teaching and 'Teaching to the Top'. Teaching to the top ensures we never put a ceiling on a child's learning so that they are able to maximise the opportunity to achieve their full potential and to impact in a positive way on pupil outcomes.

We do this through:

- Providing a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven Educational Programmes, using play as the vehicle for learning.
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-initiated and child-initiated, supported by the adult.
- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence using a wide range of teaching and learning strategies based on children's learning needs;
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Promoting equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- Planning challenging activities, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment.
- Including children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities and children from all social and cultural backgrounds.
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support and intervention as necessary
- Working closely with outside agencies, such as the Early Years Support team and Speech and Language Therapists
- Working closely with parents/carers to ensure all children's needs are met and we enable them to access the curriculum and make *at least* good progress.

At Beech Hill we recognise the importance of early intervention in supporting a child's physical, cognitive, social and emotional and behavioural development. Early intervention can take different forms, from home visits to support parents, school-based programs to improve children's social and emotional skills and additional support at school from appropriate staff (teachers, support assistants, learning mentors etc.)

Positive relationships

At Beech Hill School we recognise that children learn to be strong, confident and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents/carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents/carers have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this by:

- Using Seesaw as a communication tool between teachers and families which enables parents and family members have a window to their child's learning, giving families an opportunity to provide encouragement. The use of the built-in translation tools help Seesaw posts cross language barriers to those who do not have English as their first language.
- Talking to parents/carers about their child before their child starts in our school. Offering to visit all children in their home or pre-school setting prior to them starting school.
- Offering Stay and Play sessions where children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school.
- Inviting all parents/carers to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school.
- Offering parents/carers regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our Nursery and Reception classes.
- Providing parents with a log in to their child's online learning journal, allowing them to have regular access to their children's learning journeys. Providing opportunities for parents who don't have access to the internet to use school computers to access their child's online learning journal.
- Encouraging parents/carers to attend the termly parental meetings. There are three formal consultation meetings for parents/carers throughout the year at which the teacher and the parent/carer discuss the child's progress in private.
- Parents/carers receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year and will be informed of their next steps in development just before each of the consultation evenings; this allows for any discussions to take place during the meeting.
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents/carers including open days and parent workshops.
- Encouraging parents and carers to upload photographs and comments on Seesaw to record children's voice and achievements out of school. This gives staff the opportunity to develop the children's interests further. Parent/carer contributions on Seesaw are also used to support teacher assessments.

- Providing children with homework. Children are encouraged to complete regular Phonics and Maths based tasks and are given the opportunity to explore and record at home to further the learning done at school.
- Supporting parents with access to external services, for example Unique Ways.
- Providing support to parents with issues surrounding their child's behaviour, routines and toilet training.
- Sending home phonetically decodable reading books and library books and encouraging parents to make comments in their child's reading record.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. In accordance with the Statutory Requirements, each child has a named Key Person. Their role is to:

- Help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs.
- Help the child become familiar with the setting.
- Offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with their parents.

The Reception and Nursery staff work closely together. Teachers from each EYFS year group meet to discuss new intakes of children to support their transition into Nursery and Reception.

Enabling Environments

At Beech Hill School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development, where the children feel confident, secure and challenged.

The environment in our EYFS classrooms regularly changes to match the needs and interests of our cohorts. These changes happen termly in response to the information gathered from our summative assessment. The environment is also tweaked in response to teaching topics, pupil interests and any specific needs that are identified in the interim between summative assessment points.

Using summative assessment data, staff work together to create a 'Gap and Strength Analysis' (GSA) each October, December and April. The GSA identifies where the greatest areas of need and strength are within the cohort. Staff will then discuss how the needs and strengths can be translated into direct teaching and opportunities to ensure that the environment and provision directly reflects the needs of the cohort and promotes learning.

In both Nursery and Reception, pupils have daily access to the indoor and outdoor environments. Play-based learning is paramount and children have opportunities to direct their own learning with planned opportunities provided by staff. We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning and reflects the individual's interests, passions and abilities. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning. We ensure that resources and spaces are safe to use and checked regularly.

Provision

The term 'continuous provision' refers to the resources and areas that have been carefully created for our pupils to explore freely. They are safe to explore, as well as challenging and engaging. At Beech Hill we offer both indoor and outdoor continuous provision which include learning opportunities across all Educational Programmes within the EYFS Framework.

Pupils have daily access to the following continuous provision;

Indoor area

- Domestic role play area
- Imaginative role play
- Book library with props and puppets
- Sand and water play
- Creative workshop area including painting, junk modeling, collage materials
- Small construction play
- Small world play
- Interest and investigation area
- Maths area
- Mark making and writing area
- Malleable materials and tools
- Fine motor activities in the 'Busy Fingers' area
- ICT resources, such as the interactive white board, computers and ICT toys
- Jigsaws and puzzles
- Musical instruments

Opportunities for writing are in all areas of provision.

Outdoor area

- Climbing and balancing equipment
- Wheeled toys such as bikes and scooters
- Games equipment including bats, balls and hops.
- Large construction using crates, tires, bricks etc.
- Large scale mark making
- Books
- Large scale water play, using buckets, guttering, watering cans etc.
- Investigation equipment, such as magnifying glasses and binoculars

At Beech Hill School we believe that all children have the right to experience and enjoy the essential and special nature of being outdoors. The outdoor environment is a rich, dynamic and natural space for learning and development in children of all ages. The outdoor environment is defined as being the area outside of the classroom, an extension of the indoor provision. Its value as an essential learning resource has been recognised by many pieces of research and is outlined within the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage,

particularly within the principle of 'Enabling Environments'. For this reason, pupils will access outdoor provision every day. Suitable outdoor clothing can be provided so every child can stay safe, warm and dry.

Carefully selected resources, photographs and artefacts are regularly added to areas of continuous provision, inside and outdoors, to further develop and extend a theme or topic and in response to a child's interests. These resources are described as Enhanced Provision and outlined in the weekly planning.

Pupils in EYFS have uninterrupted opportunities of free-flow play between the inside environment and the outside environment. These opportunities are called play sessions. During these times adults support children's play and teach concepts and skills whilst pupils are engaged in activities based on their own interests and fascinations. At Beech Hill we consider different types of play-based learning:

Child-initiated play

Child initiated activity is a powerful opportunity for learning. Child initiated activity is wholly decided upon by the child, based on their own motivation and remains under their control. Learning shall be guided by expectations within the Early Years setting regarding a responsible use of space, time and resources. Practitioners shall maintain their focus on learning and actively use a range of strategies to support and extend learning through engagement with each child. This shall include introducing new words and ideas, the modelling of ways of speaking, posing new problems, encouraging negotiation of conflicts, and explaining or demonstrating approaches. Practitioners shall ensure that the learning environment offers a range of stimulating materials, outside and indoors, which each child shall be encouraged to use and combine in their own way to meet their own intentions.

Adult led play

Adult led activities are planned with the knowledge of each child gained through assessment and observation, and is designed to support each child's progress in each Educational Programme. Activities are initiated by adults and presented to each child in an open-ended way, with elements of imaginative play and active exploration, to increase the interest and motivation of a child. The adults build upon what a child knows and can do, as well as drawing on interests, and the use of materials or themes in child-initiated activities. As with child-initiated activities, the adults shall actively use a range of effective interaction strategies to support and extend the learning inside and outdoors.

Learning and Developing

At Beech Hill School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value each of the Educational Programmes and development equally and understand that they are inter-connected.

Curriculum

At Beech Hill we strive to provide a tailor made, thematic curriculum that engages and inspires our children, providing them with rich and memorable experiences which prepare them for their next stage of learning when they reach Year 1. There, they will have their skills built upon and progression made in a variety of new subjects. Therefore, the role of EYFS is imperative as it underpins all learning and lays the foundations to children's skills and development in order for them to progress and achieve their maximum potential. We support each child in working

towards achieving the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) at the end of Reception through deliberately planning opportunities within direct teaching and purposeful provision.

Our tailor made EYFS curriculum is based on the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. The non-statutory guidance from the Development Matters document is also used to support the implementation of the requirements of the EYFS. Our curriculum has also been developed in line with the rest of the school. This ensures that learning over time is sequenced effectively and there is progression; within the EYFS and then on into Year 1.

At Beech Hill we recognise that the seven Educational Programmes outlined in the EYFS are important and inter-connected. Three Educational Programmes 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 are the prime areas:

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

Children are also supported through the 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

Prime areas

Communication and Language

At Beech Hill we understand that the development of children's spoken language underpins all seven of the Educational Programmes. For this reason, we prioritise the development of communication and language. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners are able to build children's language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, gives children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, story-telling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from staff, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

English as an additional language

At Beech Hill we understand that speaking more than one language has lots of advantages for children, and that children will learn English from a strong foundation in their home language. For this reason, we encourage families to use

their home language for linguistic as well as cultural reasons. Children learning English will typically go through a quiet phase when they do not say very much and may then use words in both languages in the same sentence. EYFS staff communicate with parents about what language they speak at home, try and learn key words and celebrate multilingualism.

At Beech Hill we use the Chatterbox Language Screen and intervention to assess and support the development of pupils' speech and language across the EYFS.

At Beech Hill we explicitly teach language and vocabulary to pupils. This begins with concepts taught in Nursery, using the Concept Cat approach. This is then built on in Reception where Tier 2 vocabulary is explicitly taught using the Word Aware strategy. Taught vocabulary is revisited throughout the year to support retention. All taught vocabulary has been identified and mapped out across the curriculum.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

At Beech Hill we recognise that children's personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for them to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Strong, warm and supportive relationships with adults enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. Children at Beech Hill are supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary. Through adult modelling and guidance, children learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating and managing their personal needs independently. Through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceably. These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.

At Beech Hill we follow the Jigsaw whole school approach to support the teaching of PSED.

Physical Development

At Beech Hill we recognise that physical activity is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives. Gross and fine motor experiences develop incrementally throughout early childhood, starting with sensory explorations and the development of a child's strength, co-ordination and positional awareness. We use Squiggle Whilst You Wiggle and Dough Gym activities across the EYFS to develop gross and fine motor movements. By creating games and providing opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors, adults can support children to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being. Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination which is later linked to early literacy. Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practice of using small tools, with feedback and support from adults, allow our pupils to develop proficiency, control and confidence.

At Beech Hill we follow Real PE programme to deliver PE lessons.

Specific Areas

Literacy

At Beech Hill we believe that it is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. We understand that reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading.

To develop language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) we regularly talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read. We also enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together.

In Nursery children develop their phonological awareness through taking part in adult-led activities which promote listening skills. The Read Write Inc. Nursery guidance is used to support the teaching of phonological awareness. Through these activities, pupils develop their auditory discrimination and auditory memory. Activities to progress children's phonological awareness and interest in sounds are embedded prior to the introduction of systematic phonics teaching in Reception.

Skilled word reading, taught in Reception, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing). At Beech Hill we follow the Read Write Inc. phonics program to provide an explicit systematic approach to teaching children how to read and write.

Children across the EYFS receive at least one home reading book each week. The home reading books are phonetically decodable and are matched to each child's increasing knowledge of phonics and 'red' words. Pupils are encouraged to re-read their home reading books several times to develop their fluency and deepen their understanding of the book. In addition to their phonetically decodable home reading book, children can also access a library book to take home. Children are given access to a wide range of reading materials, such as books, poems, fiction and non-fiction reading materials to ignite their interest in books. Library books are designed to be shared between the child and their families to develop reading for pleasure. Children have the option to change this book as often as they like.

At Beech Hill children mark make every day. Children are encouraged to develop a preference for a dominant hand and develop an appropriate grip. Our younger pupils take part in unstructured mark-making activities, such as drawing a picture of their choice. When children are ready to write they are encouraged to rehearse out loud what they want to say, before spelling the words using the graphemes and 'red' words they have learnt. Nursery pupils take part in 'Squiggle Whilst You Wiggle' activities to develop their fine and gross motor control for writing. Reception pupils practise handwriting every day and learn correct letter formation. In the EYFS pupils write using print. Both the process and the product of children's handwriting is monitored as we understand how these factors form the basis of a fluent handwriting style which is developed in KS1.

Mathematics

At Beech Hill we understand that developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically.

At Beech Hill children are taught to count confidently. Nursery pupils develop their awareness of number through nursery rhymes and stories, social counting and using numbers in play. Children develop an understanding of how-to-count using the following principles;

- The one-one principle
- The stable-order principle
- The cardinal principle

Once children have developed their understanding of how to count, they can develop their understanding of 'what to count' using the following principles;

- The abstraction principle
- The order irrelevance principle

Children in Reception then move on to develop a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers. For each number, pupils explore comparison, counting, composition and change. Children are provided with regular opportunities to revisit key mathematical concepts through the EYFS to embed learning.

By providing frequent and varied opportunities to build and apply this understanding, such as using manipulatives, children develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary from which mastery of mathematics is built.

Manipulatives used in EYFS;

- Numicon
- Counters
- Counting objects such as compare bears
- Multi-link/ Unifix cubes
- 10 frames
- Part - whole models
- Dice
- Real life objects

Our curriculum includes rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures. We believe that it is important that children develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, 'have a go', talk to adults and peers about what they notice and are not afraid to make mistakes.

At Beech Hill children take part in daily structured maths group times. When teaching maths in the EYFS we use a 'teaching to the top' strategy and pupils are challenged through the use of questioning, demonstrating and reasoning.

We use Ten Town as a teaching aid to support number recognition and formation across the EYFS. We also use the White Rose Maths Scheme and supporting materials to plan and teach for mastery of maths.

Within each EYFS classroom there is an explicit Maths area which children can access independently during continuous provision. Resources within this area are open ended and are frequently changed to reflect what pupils have been learning in the structured maths lessons. It is here where pupils will practise and apply the concepts which they have learnt during the structured maths lessons independently. This area also consists of resources to support previous learning, allowing pupils to revisit and recap previous mathematical learning. Maths is not however limited to this area of the classroom and is often discreetly embedded throughout other classroom areas such as sand and water play, play dough, role play, games and ICT. Staff encourage pupils to explore concepts, experiment and investigate to develop their mathematical understanding through play in a range of areas within the classroom.

Understanding of the World

This area of learning 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. We firmly believe that our tailor-made curriculum reflects our diverse and ever-changing community and provides pupils with opportunities to learn about their own heritage alongside developing their understanding of other cultures and religions. Children are given opportunities to solve problems, investigate, make decisions and experiment. They learn about living things, their environment, the world around them and the people who are important in their lives. Children are also given opportunities to develop computing skills and to work with and use modern technology.

At Beech Hill we understand that the frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them. For this reason, our Reception pupils experience high quality educational visits linked to areas of interest and topics of study throughout the year. Pupils also have the opportunities to meet important members of society and throughout the year a number of visitors are invited into school to deepen pupils' understanding of communities and culture.

Pupils at Beech Hill have regular opportunities to listen to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems that foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains. Enriching and widening children's vocabulary to later support reading comprehension.

Our extensive grounds and forest school provide a wealth of opportunities for children to discover, explore and extend their natural talents. Here children learn first-hand about the riches of the natural environment whilst developing important life skills such as team work, problem solving and resilience.

Religious Education

Pupils in Beech Hill take part in the whole school Religious Education (RE) mornings twice a term. During these time pupils are explicitly taught about a range of religions and world. We have used the Calderdale Religious Education

Syllabus non-statutory units of work, along with Development Matters 2021 to develop a tailor made RE curriculum which enables our pupils to do the following:

- Encounter religions and other world views through books, times, places and objects
- Meet special people and visit a place of worship
- Develop their appreciation of and wonder at the natural world.
- Form an appreciation and value of human beings, enabling them to recognise and encounter diversity
- Express their own ideas and insights around questions of beliefs and meaning
- Investigate and respond to important questions for individuals and the wider community

Expressive Arts and Design

At Beech Hill we recognise that the development of children's artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. The quality and variety of what children see, hear and participate in is crucial for developing their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate through the arts. The frequency, repetition and depth of their experiences are fundamental to their progress in interpreting and appreciating what they hear, respond to and observe.

We provide opportunities for all children to explore and share their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of art, design, technology, music, drama, movement, dance and imaginative play activities. Children are given opportunities to make paintings, drawings, collages, models and use musical instruments. Children also learn new songs and rhymes and enjoy singing them with each other. Through various times during the year children are given the opportunity to participate in school performances and assemblies.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

In planning and guiding what children learn, practitioners reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and adjust their practice appropriately. The 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
- creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

5. Planning and Assessment

Planning

Practitioners consider the individual needs, interests, and development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in each of the Educational Programmes. Practitioners working in Nursery with the youngest children ensure a strong foundation for children's development in the three prime areas. The specific areas of learning provide children with a broad curriculum and with opportunities to

strengthen and apply the prime areas of learning. This is particularly important in developing language and extending vocabulary.

At Beech Hill a tailor made EYFS curriculum has been designed using the Early Learning Goals to provide the basis for progression of skills throughout the Foundation Stage. Schemes of work are used, where appropriate, to support planning.

The planning objectives within the Foundation Stage are based on our inhouse skills documents and are supported by Development Matters 2021. The planning is based upon themes with discrete phonics, maths and literacy directed teaching. Our medium-term plans identify the intended learning, with outcomes, for children working towards the Early Learning Goals.

There are three levels of Early Years planning:

1. **Long Term Planning-** Yearly planning which outlines the themes and topics to be covered in the year. These have been created by the Early Years Lead and Subject Leads.
2. **Medium Term planning** – Half termly planning, which indicate the knowledge, skills and concepts to be covered over a half term. These have been created by the Early Years Lead and Subject Leads and link each Programme of Study to the National Curriculum.
3. **Short Term Planning** – Weekly and daily planning which identifies specific activities related to clear learning objectives, additional resources to be introduced and the role of adults for that particular week.
4. **Child initiated planning-** daily planning which involves children being set next steps based on their interests displayed in child-initiated play. Children are encouraged to learn through their interests. Activities and resources are added to provision areas to encourage children to develop knowledge and skills through their areas and topics of interest.

The Reception and Nursery teachers work closely with Early Years Practitioners to plan for progression. At the end of each day all staff contribute to the evaluation of provision and plan changes or enhancements to support or extend children's learning.

The Role of Play

The curriculum is delivered using a mix of play-based learning and adult-initiated activities. We recognise that play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. We therefore plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are planned by the adults. During children's play, early years practitioners stimulate children's interests, respond to each child's emerging needs and guide their development through warm, positive interactions coupled with secure routines. Practitioners regularly reflect on the different ways that children learn and adapt our practice accordingly.

Group times

Children in Nursery and Reception take part in whole class and small group sessions which are tailored to meet their age and stages of development. These daily group

activities include phonics, literacy and maths session. Children also take part in daily story times (am and pm), emotional regulation activities and snack time. Children in Reception also take part in weekly Topic, Music, PE, PSED, Computing (Summer Term) and handwriting sessions.

At Beech Hill planning begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and identifying their next steps.

Assessment, Observation and Recording Systems

Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support. Assessment at Beech Hill doesn't entail prolonged breaks from interaction with children, nor require excessive paperwork. When assessing whether an individual child is at the expected level of development, the collection of excessive physical evidence is not required. Practitioners draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgement.

Formative assessment

Ongoing formative assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process at Beech Hill. It involves practitioners knowing children's level of progress, achievement and interests, to shape teaching and learning experiences for each child reflecting their knowledge.

Each child in the EYFS has an online learning journey, created using Seesaw. Children are observed in all areas of the curriculum and significant observations which show personal achievements, called 'WOW! Moments', are recorded in their learning journey. Each child's learning journey is built up throughout the year and shows evidence of progress and attainment over time. The aim of the learning journey is to build a unique picture of what each child knows, feels and can do as well as their particular interests and Characteristics of Effective Learning. This picture can then be used to pinpoint individual stages of development, learning priorities and plan relevant and motivating learning experiences to ensure pupils meet their next steps.

In addition to their online learning journey, Reception pupils also have a paper-based literacy journey. Weekly samples of adult initiated literacy work are collected across the year to build a picture of the pupils' capability to write across a range of contexts. Termly independent writing assessments are collected and placed in each child's writing journey. The assessment pieces are used to set individualised next steps for writing.

Methods of Observation

- Daily observations noting children's significant achievements are uploaded onto Seesaw
- Collection of photos and videos as evidence, to support significant achievements of children uploaded onto Seesaw
- Weekly mark-making and writing samples collected in individual writing journeys
- Look, listen, note sheets from group time activities
- Speech samples in English and child's home languages uploaded onto Seesaw
- Physical pieces of work
- Discussion with parents about their child's achievements at home

Parents

Parents are included in their child's learning journey and have the opportunity to provide own observations of learning achievements from home. Each parent has their own personal log in for

the Seesaw app which allows them to access their child's learning journey. Parent workshops are held in school to support parents in doing this, and also provide an opportunity for parents who don't have access to the internet to view their child's online learning journey. Parents are also able to view their child's writing journey when they wish.

We hold Parent Consultation meetings in the Autumn, Spring and Summer term which are led by the child's key worker. End of year reports are given out at the end of the Summer term and parents are given the opportunity to discuss them with the teachers. Throughout the year, teachers address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents and carers, and any other relevant professionals.

Baseline assessment

As each child enters the Foundation Stage, teachers and Early Years practitioners use their professional judgment, based on observations of individuals, to record children's level of development. Children are assessed across the EYFS 17 areas of learning using the Development Matters age-bands as a guide.

In addition to this, Reception teachers and Early Years practitioners assess the ability of each child in Literacy (including phonics) and Maths using a tailor-made baseline assessment. Our baseline assessments allow teachers to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching program for individual children and groups of children.

Expected Standards for pupils in Foundation Stage baseline assessments are;

- **Nursery 3-4-year-old unit**
Pre 3 secure = Typical
Pre 3 developing = At risk
Any other band below = Significantly below typical

- **Reception**
Nursery secure = Typical
Nursery developing = At risk
Any other age band below = Significantly below typical

Statutory Reception Baseline Assessment

Children will complete the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) within the first 6 weeks of joining Reception, regardless of when they join the class, unless they have been assessed previously.

The RBA is an age-appropriate assessment of mathematics and literacy, communication and language, that is delivered in English. It is clearly linked to the learning and development requirements of the EYFS.

The purpose of the RBA is to provide an on-entry assessment of pupil attainment to be used as a starting point from which a cohort-level progress measure to the end of key stage 2 (KS2) can be created. The RBA is not intended to:

- Provide on-going formative information for practitioners
- Be used in any way to measure performance in the early years, evaluate preschool settings or hold early years practitioners to account

- Provide detailed diagnostic information about pupils' areas for development

The assessment will be administered by a reception teacher or EYFS practitioner, working one-to-one with each pupil. The practitioner should be familiar to the pupil and those conducting the assessment should be fully trained and familiar with the materials. Administration instructions for each task and the recording of the assessment are provided via the online RBA system so that the assessment is delivered and scored consistently.

At the end of each term Early Years practitioners use their professional judgment, based on observations of individuals, to formally record children's level of development. In addition to this, Reception teachers assess the ability of each child in Literacy (including phonics) and Maths using a tailor-made assessment. This information gathered is recorded on tracking graphs using Target Tracker. Children are assessed across the EYFS 17 Educational Programmes using the Development Matters age-bands as a guide. This data is then used to track individual progress and identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching program for individual children and groups of children.

Summative Assessment

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile

In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, and no later than 30 June in that term, the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) is completed for each child. The EYFSP summarises pupils' progress towards the Early Learning Goals. The Profile is completed for all children, including those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). Reasonable adjustments to the assessment process for children with SEND must be made as appropriate.

Practitioners must indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are not yet reaching expected levels across the seven Educational Programmes contained in the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage. Each child's level of development is recorded as Emerging or Expected against the 17 Early Learning Goals.

At Beech Hill we have rigorous quality assurance processes in place to ensure that the data submitted for each child is an accurate reflection of their attainment.

Internal Moderation

Moderation is a collaborative process which is undertaken throughout the year. Reception teachers moderate their judgements with Year 1 teachers before submission of the EYFSP. The aim of this moderation process is to secure the consistency and accuracy of judgements made by different practitioners. This process also provides a valuable opportunity for professional development.

Inter-School Moderation

At Beech Hill we understand that it is important for practitioners to build a shared understanding of the ELGs and the national exemplification of standards. For this reason, we create opportunities to discuss our assessment of children's attainment with colleagues against the national standard. We work closely with staff in the Family of Learning Trust so that practitioners can share experiences and develop their assessment skills.

Once staff have secured their judgements, they will submit the final EYFSP to the Local Authority. At Beech Hill Target Tracker is used to record and submit EYFS profile data.

The EYFSP provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their attainment against expected levels, and their readiness for year 1. The profile reflects practitioners' own knowledge and professional judgement of a child to inform discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the EYFSP report and reception teachers provide a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective teaching and learning. These help to 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.

6. Safety and Welfare

At Beech Hill 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 understand that we are legally required to comply with the welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for EYFS (2021) and have regard to the Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) document. We understand that all staff are required to do the following:

- Protect children from maltreatment
- Prevent impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Ensure that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

We endeavor to meet all these requirements and staff receive annual safeguarding training to ensure their knowledge of the safeguarding requirements are up to date. The Designated Safeguarding Lead for the school overall is Samantha Bowling with deputy DSLs also in place: Sara Cockroft, Becky Creighton, Lewis Hoyle and Mandi Hunter. Any concerns about a child's welfare should be recorded and passed on accordingly. Our full safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in the school's Safeguarding and Health and Safety policies. The full Safeguarding and Health and Safety Policy are available in school for parents to read if they wish.

Staffing ratios

Staffing arrangements meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety. Children are adequately supervised and staff are deployed to ensure children's needs are met. Children are always within sight or hearing of staff.

We adhere to the strict adult to child ratios outlined in the statutory guidance for the EYFS.

For children aged three and over where a person with Qualified Teacher Status, Early Years Professional Status, Early Years Teacher Status or another suitable level 6 qualification is working directly with the children;

- There must be at least one member of staff for every 13 children
- At least one other member of staff must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification

For children aged three and over when a person with Qualified Teacher Status, Early Years Professional Status, Early Years Teacher Status or another suitable level 6 qualification is not working directly with the children:

- There must be at least one member of staff for every eight children
- At least one member of staff must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification
- At least half of all other staff must hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification

For children aged three and over, where a person with Qualified Teacher Status, Early Years Professional Status, Early Years Teacher Status or another suitable level 6 qualification is working directly with the children:

- For classes where the majority of children will reach the age of five or older within the school year, there must be at least one member of staff for every 30 children
- For all other classes there must be at least one member of staff for every 13 children
- At least one other member of staff must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification

Students on long term placements and volunteers (aged 17 or over) and staff working as apprentices in early education (aged 16 or over) may be included in the above ratios if they are competent and responsible.

Reception classes at Beech Hill are subject to infant class size legislation. The School Admissions (Infant Class Size) Regulations 2012 limit the size of infant classes to 30 pupils per school teacher (subject to permitted exceptions) while an ordinary teaching session is conducted. 'School teachers' do not include teaching assistants, higher level teaching assistants or other support staff.

Children's Records

At Beech Hill we maintain records and obtain and share information (with parents and carers, other professionals working with the child, the police, social services and Ofsted, as appropriate) to ensure the safe and efficient management of the setting, and to help ensure the needs of all children are met. The school enables a regular two-way flow of information with parents and/or carers. Confidential information and records about children are held securely on the school's computer system using SIMs. These records are password protected and are only accessible and available to those who have a right or professional need to see them.

It is necessary for the school to collect certain information when pupils start at Beech Hill. The following information for each child is recorded upon their admission:

- full name
- date of birth
- name and address of every parent and/or carer who is known
- which parent(s) and/or carer(s) the child normally lives with;
- Emergency contact details for parents and/or carers.

Further details of how we collect, manage and store data can be found in the schools Data Protection Policy and the Records Management policy.

First Aid and Medication

A large number of staff members across the EYFS hold paediatric first aid qualifications. These members of staff are clearly identified within each unit, and all staff are aware of who they are. We follow the school First Aid and Medical policy and procedures for the treatment, recording and reporting of accidents and injuries.

When children need medication at school, parents are required to fill out administering medication forms which require parents to outline the medication and dosage. In line with the whole school First Aid and Medical Policy, the medication is securely stored in a locked cupboard or fridge. We encourage parents whose child is taking medication three times a day to give it before school, after school and at bedtime. If a doctor has specified that one of the doses should be given at lunchtime, we request that parents/carers come into school to administer the medication. Medicines will not be administered unless one of the Co-Headteachers authorise the administration of the medicine. Written permission is also required from parents/carers. When medicine is administered, staff complete the dated entry of this, which is printed on the back of the form. Before administering medicines, staff should read this dates entry section on the form to check that the medicine has not already been administered.

Intimate care

Children in Nursery, and older children with SEND may require nappy changing. All parents will discuss their child's nappy changing routine with the appropriate member of staff. Procedures are in place for nappy changing as outlined in the Intimate Care Policy. When appropriate, parents are asked to read and sign the policy during the induction process.

Sleeping children

At Beech Hill we encourage children to rest/sleep in line with their parent's wishes/routine, although as our primary focus is that of the child, this may not always be possible and children in Nursery and Reception may fall asleep whilst attending the setting. Therefore, if a child wishes to sleep we will provide each child with a clean pillow and blanket. Our classrooms provide an environment which has access to areas where children can rest or sleep. Sleeping children are frequently checked to ensure that they are safe. All sleeps are logged, including the time and duration of each sleep and parents are informed. Our Staff respect the wishes of parents/carers and support established routines where possible. Staff at Beech Hill support parents/carers who are having difficulty establishing a sleep routine with their child.

Toothbrushing

At Beech Hill we take part in daily supervised toothbrushing with appropriate fluoride toothpaste. The aim of this is to educate our pupils on the importance of good oral hygiene and to improve and maintain their oral health. All resources used, including toothbrushes and toothpaste, demonstration jaws, sand timer, PPE and cleaning materials are supplied by Locala Calderdale PHEYS, Oral Health Team. Pupil tooth brushes are stored in systems that allow the toothbrushes to stand upright and not touch. Staff supervising and delivering the toothbrushing programmed have all receive training to ensure effective supervision of the program and infection prevention and control. Staff certificates are stored in the designated toothbrushing folder within each classroom. Our staff follow the strict guidelines for implementation provided by the Locala Calderdale PHEYS, Oral Health Team. These guidelines are displayed within each classroom and also stored in designated toothbrushing folder. Staff partake in a tooth brushing quality assurance audit at least once a year to ensure best practice is being followed. All pupils receive parental consent before taking part in the supervised toothbrushing.

Use of cameras and mobile phones within Foundation Stage

Upon admission we obtain explicit parental consent allowing us to collect evidence, such as photographs and videos with the specific purpose of documenting their child's learning and for assessment purposes. Parental consent is obtained if their child's photograph or video is wished to be used for any other requirements, such as appearing in the school news letter or appearing on the school website. Any consent obtained is documented and includes a record of how and when consent was obtained.

The use of personal cameras and mobile phones by staff and parents in the units is prohibited. If staff require use of a mobile phone, they must ask a senior manager for permission.

Risk assessments

It is important to us that all children in the school 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. Risk Assessments for both the indoor and outdoor learning environment are in place and are shared with all early years staff. Risk assessments are regularly updated by the Schools Health and Safety Officer. The purpose of our risk assessments are to ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose. Further details can be found in the school's Health and Safety policy.

Emergency Evacuation

An Emergency evacuation procedure is in place and displayed for all to see within the units. Some children may require one to one support to exit the building; if so, this is stated in their management plans and staff involved are informed of this role in the event of an emergency evacuation.

Behaviour

All staff employed at Beech Hill have a responsibility to consistently apply the school's behaviour policy. Parents/carers have the right to know about how their child is behaving at school. School staff and families work together to promote and value appropriate behaviour. If a child's behaviour becomes a barrier to their learning, a discussion will take place between teachers and parents/carers and an Individual Behaviour Plan may put in place. All children's behaviour is monitored using the Beech Hill behaviour step system. This system is clearly display and shared with children, parents/carers and staff to ensure a consistent approach to managing behaviour. The chart clearly defines the behaviours and the sanction or reward that will be followed.

The school agrees that emphasis should be placed on positive behaviour by rewarding success rather than focusing on failures and shortcomings. A number of rewards are used within the Foundation Stage including:

- Specific Praise
- Recording success in children's learning journeys
- Termly merit badges and merit treats
- 'Star of the Day' and 'Star of the Week' rewards
- Sharing achievements with parents
- Gold Book awards

All staff and older pupils should be a positive role model for younger pupils by treating others courteously; respecting their ideas; valuing their individuality and listening to their views. For more information, refer to the school's Positive Behaviour Policy.

7. Staff Professional Development, support and supervision

Training and development opportunities are provided for all Foundation Stage staff in line with the annual analysis of school priorities and individual needs. Regular meetings are held to discuss planning, assessment and progress of children. Early Years Practitioners attend weekly school staff meetings to be trained to a teacher's level on practices and procedures in the school. All staff are involved in yearly performance management meetings, where their role is reviewed, achievements celebrated and areas of development discussed. These meetings also provide opportunities for coaching and training, mutual support, teamwork, continuous improvement and confidential discussion of sensitive issues.

In accordance with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2024), Beech Hill School ensures appropriate arrangements are in place for the supervision of staff who have contact with children and families. This is in the form of Performance Management meetings throughout the year. Supervision acts as a means for ensuring that members of staff have access to the support, training and procedures they require for professional growth and development. Supervision fosters a culture of mutual support, teamwork and continuous improvement, which encourages the confidential discussion of sensitive issues.

The main functions of supervision are as follows:

- Safeguarding – ensuring that opportunity is given to raise and discuss any concerns regarding a child, family or member of staff, and that these concerns will be shared appropriately.
- Roles and Responsibilities – ensuring that the work the supervisee carries out is of a satisfactory standard, and that the work reflects the philosophy of the early years.
- Learning and Development (staff member) – to encourage and assist staff to reflect on their own performance and to identify and address developmental needs.
- Support – supervisees are given the opportunity to reflect on the impact of their work and obtain support with any problems or difficulties.
- Mediation – to ensure the relationship between the supervisee, the EYFS team and the wider school are effective.
- Learning and Development (children) – provide a forum to discuss learning and development of any child.

8. Monitoring and Evaluation

It is the responsibility of the EYFS staff to follow this policy. The Senior Leadership Team will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring system. This policy will be reviewed every year and will incorporate the views of all staff concerned. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.