Early Years at Blaydon West Primary School

At Blaydon West Primary School, we are committed to providing every child with the best possible start to their educational journey. We prioritise strong, positive relationships with children and families, creating a warm, welcoming and nurturing environment where every child feels safe, valued, confident and ready to learn.

Our EYFS provision provides a stimulating, purposeful and language-rich learning environment where children are encouraged to explore, investigate, communicate and develop their independence. Through carefully planned experiences, high-quality interactions and appropriate challenge, we support every child to thrive, develop a love of learning and reach their individual potential.

We recognise that the early years provides the important foundations for future learning and development. Through high expectations, responsive teaching and a deep understanding of each child, we nurture the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning – supporting children to play and explore, actively learn, and create and think critically. We want every child to develop as a curious, capable and enthusiastic learner, building strong foundations that will support them throughout their educational journey.

Intention

At Blaydon West Primary School, our EYFS curriculum is ambitious, inclusive and carefully designed around the needs, interests and starting points of every child. We recognise that strong relationships, high-quality interactions and a language-rich environment are fundamental to children's learning and development. We want every child to feel safe, valued and confident, developing a lifelong love of learning from the very beginning of their educational journey.

Our curriculum is underpinned by the three prime areas of learning, which provide the foundations for children's development:

- Communication and Language – developing children's listening, attention, understanding and ability to express themselves, with a strong focus on developing vocabulary and meaningful conversation.
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development – supporting children to develop positive relationships, self-regulation, independence, resilience and a strong sense of self.
- Physical Development – developing children's gross and fine motor skills, coordination, strength and confidence in using their bodies safely and effectively.

These foundations are strengthened through the four specific areas of learning:

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

We provide children with rich, purposeful experiences across all seven areas, ensuring that learning is progressive, meaningful and built upon over time. Through carefully planned adult interactions, purposeful play and an enabling environment, children are encouraged to explore, investigate, communicate, solve problems and apply what they know and can do.

We explicitly develop the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning:

- Playing and exploring – encouraging children to investigate, experience and 'have a go'.
- Active learning – supporting children to concentrate, persevere and enjoy achieving what they set out to do.
- Creating and thinking critically – enabling children to make connections, develop their own ideas and find solutions to problems.

Across Nursery and Reception, we use our knowledge of child development and individual starting points to plan an ambitious and appropriately challenging curriculum. Through ongoing assessment and responsive teaching, we identify gaps in learning, address misconceptions and ensure that children receive the support and challenge they need to make progress.

Our ultimate aim is for every child to know more, remember more and be able to do more, leaving the EYFS with strong foundations across all areas of learning and the confidence, curiosity and positive attitudes needed for the next stage of their education.

Implementation

At Blaydon West Primary School, we recognise that effective implementation begins before a child starts school. We place great importance on creating a positive and consistent transition from home or previous settings, ensuring that children and families feel welcomed, valued and confident from their first contact with us.

Transition and Relationships

- We begin building relationships from the moment a child and their family first visit and look around our school, ensuring that families receive a warm welcome and have opportunities to share information about their child.
- Home visits are offered to all children before they start, enabling practitioners to develop meaningful relationships with children and families and gain a deeper understanding of their experiences, interests, strengths and individual needs.
- Children joining Reception from other early years settings are supported through visits to their current nursery or preschool, helping practitioners understand their development and ensure continuity of learning and care.
- Parent induction meetings and settling-in sessions provide families with clear information about EYFS, routines, expectations and how they can support their child's learning at home.
- We work closely with previous settings and professionals to ensure that relevant information is shared effectively, supporting continuity and enabling us to identify needs and plan appropriate provision from the outset.

A Carefully Planned and Responsive Curriculum

- Our curriculum is implemented through a balance of purposeful play, adult-led experiences, child-initiated learning and high-quality interactions, ensuring children have opportunities to revisit, practise and apply their learning.
- Staff use School Tool to monitor children's development and progress, identify next steps and plan responsive enhancements to provision. Assessment is used to inform teaching rather than becoming an additional task.
- In-the-moment enhancements are used to respond to children's interests, misconceptions and emerging needs, ensuring that learning remains meaningful, purposeful and appropriately challenging.

- Staff know the children well and adapt provision in response to their individual starting points, interests, experiences and needs, ensuring that all children, including those who may need additional support or challenge, can participate and make progress.
- Communication and language is prioritised throughout the day through high-quality interactions, modelling, questioning, sustained shared thinking and rich vocabulary.

The Role of Adults

- Adults are active and intentional play partners, joining children in their play to model language, extend thinking, introduce new vocabulary, develop concepts and deepen learning.
- Staff use their knowledge of child development to judge when to observe, join, model, question, scaffold or step back, ensuring that adult interaction enhances rather than interrupts children's play.
- Staff prioritise positive relationships and conflict resolution, supporting children to communicate their feelings, listen to others, solve problems and develop strategies for managing social situations with increasing independence.

The Learning Environment

- Our indoor and outdoor environments are enabling, stimulating and purposeful, providing children with opportunities to explore, investigate, practise skills and develop their independence.
- Outdoor learning is an integral part of our EYFS provision, rather than an extension of the indoor curriculum. Children have regular opportunities to develop physical skills, take appropriate risks, investigate the natural world and apply their learning in different contexts.
- Provision is continually reviewed and enhanced in response to children's interests, assessment information and identified next steps, ensuring that the environment remains ambitious, inclusive and responsive.

Inclusion and Professional Development

- We work closely with our SENCO to identify emerging needs at the earliest opportunity and ensure that appropriate adaptations, interventions and support are put in place. We work in partnership with families and relevant professionals to secure the best possible outcomes for children.
- Staff have a shared understanding of early child development and use professional knowledge to support children to make progress from their individual starting points.
- We work closely with our Early Years Adviser, drawing on specialist guidance, professional dialogue and current early years practice to continually reflect on and improve our provision.
- Ongoing professional development, collaboration and reflection ensure that practitioners continue to develop their practice and provide high-quality teaching and interactions across the EYFS.

Through this approach, we ensure that children experience a consistent, nurturing and ambitious educational journey from their first contact with our school, with provision that responds thoughtfully to who they are, what they know and what they need to learn next.

Impact

At Blaydon West Primary School, the impact of our EYFS curriculum is seen in children who are happy, confident and enthusiastic learners. Children enjoy coming to school, feel safe and valued, and develop a strong sense of belonging within our school community.

We know our curriculum is having an impact when children:

- Come into school happily and confidently, developing positive relationships with adults and peers and feeling that they are a valued member of our school community.
- Develop a strong sense of belonging, understanding that they are part of a team and contributing positively to our classroom and wider school community.
- Demonstrate the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning, becoming increasingly willing to explore, persevere, solve problems, share ideas and think critically.
- Make strong progress from their individual starting points, developing the knowledge, understanding and skills expected for their stage of development.
- Know more, remember more and can do more as they progress through Nursery and Reception, building secure foundations for the next stage of their education.
- Develop increasing independence, self-regulation and resilience, including the ability to resolve conflicts, manage emotions and respond positively to challenges.
- Communicate increasingly effectively, using a growing vocabulary to express their ideas, needs and experiences and engage meaningfully with others.
- Demonstrate curiosity and enthusiasm, engaging deeply in play and learning and increasingly applying what they have learned in new contexts.

We evaluate the impact of our provision through ongoing assessment, School Tool data, children's work, discussions with families and discussions with professionals from external agencies. This enables us to identify progress, recognise gaps or emerging needs and adapt provision accordingly.

Our greatest measure of success is that children thrive during their time in the EYFS. They leave Reception as happy, capable and enthusiastic learners who feel valued, have developed a strong sense of belonging and are well prepared with secure foundations for the next stage of their educational journey.

Early Years Lead: Natasha Simpson 2026-2027