



## Batheaston Church School Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

### Our Vision Statement

*In Apple Class, we believe that **together we achieve our best – every child, every day.**  
We create a joyful, imaginative and nurturing environment where children feel safe, known and valued.  
Through strong partnerships with families and rich experiences that spark curiosity and independence, we help every child to grow, flourish and thrive, both in our classroom and in the world beyond.*

At Batheaston Church School, we believe that **together we achieve our best – every child, every day.** In Apple Class, this begins with building a love of learning where every child's interests, talents and unique qualities are nurtured, challenged and celebrated.

A child entering Apple Class embarks on a creative learning adventure where magic, joy and curiosity shape each day. Our environment is rich in first-hand experiences, giving children time and space to explore, imagine and discover. Independence is encouraged, empathy is fostered and risk-taking is celebrated within safe, supportive and secure surroundings.

We recognise that children learn best when they feel *safe, known and valued.* To achieve this, we work in strong partnership with families, valuing the shared knowledge, trust and insight that only parents and carers can provide. Together, we build consistent relationships that help each child to thrive socially, emotionally and academically.

As an EYFS team, we are passionate about the education and well-being of our children, where adults feel joy too. We take the time to truly know each child and understand their individual needs so that our teaching and care can be both responsive and meaningful. We recognise that secure attachments supports language development, emotional regulation, attention and memory and resilience.

Our carefully planned activities offer rich opportunities to play, collaborate, test ideas, apply new skills and bring inner imaginings to life. Through this, we aim to develop the whole child, supporting academic growth, emotional resilience and social confidence so they can flourish within our classroom and in the world beyond.

In Apple Class, we strive to ensure that every child grows, shines and feels they belong—*together achieving their very best, every single day.*

### The EYFS standards seek to provide:

**Quality and consistency** so that every child makes good progress, and no child gets left behind.

**A secure foundation** through planning for learning and development of each individual child and assessing and reviewing what they have learned regularly.

**Partnership working** between practitioners and with parents and/or carers.

**Equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

## [Our Learning and development requirements cover:](#)

### **The areas of learning and development**

These outline the key areas that shape the activities, experiences and opportunities provided for all children.

### **The Early Learning Goals (ELGs)**

These set out the knowledge, skills and understanding that children should achieve by the end of the academic year, in which they turn five. Our role is to support children in working towards these goals through high-quality teaching and learning experiences.

### [Planning](#)

At Batheaston, we use Development Matters—the non-statutory curriculum guidance for the EYFS—as a key support resource when planning and delivering high-quality early years learning. Our curriculum planning is further guided by the BWMAT Progression Planning document, which breaks down skills and knowledge into carefully sequenced component steps. This ensures that children’s learning builds progressively and coherently across EYFS.

### [The EYFS is based on four guiding principles:](#)

**The Unique Child** – every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

**Positive Relationships** – children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**.

**Enabling Environment** – children learn and develop well in **enabling environments with teaching and support from adults**, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.

**Learning and Development** – children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of learning and development are equally important and inter-connected.

### [Objectives](#)

- **Provide a safe, happy, nurturing environment** where calm, caring adults ensure all children feel secure, valued and supported, and where their individual needs and interests are recognised.
- **Create a calm, predictable and enabling environment** that offers rich, continuous and linked provision, encouraging exploration, curiosity and challenge within a sense of safety and routine.
- **Promote warm, professional and trusting relationships** built on mutual respect and a sensitive understanding of each child’s experiences, feelings and family background.
- **Nurture strong, supportive relationships** that help children learn, regulate emotions, and understand their own and others’ feelings within a calm, consistent atmosphere.
- **Ensure high-quality, language-rich interactions** where adults model a shared communication, extend learning and actively embed new vocabulary through meaningful experiences.
- **Provide a broad, balanced curriculum** that equips all children with the best possible opportunities to enjoy learning and progress across all areas of development.
- **Support moral and social development** in line with the school’s ethos, helping children understand right and wrong and develop respectful, positive relationships.
- **Encourage active, first-hand learning** indoors and outdoors, using both verbal and non-verbal communication to support children’s engagement and understanding.
- **Develop motivated, independent learners** who show curiosity, resilience, confidence and a secure sense of self, supported by positive and predictable routines.

- **Embed physical activity throughout the day** to promote healthy development and support happy, active lifestyles.
- **Value and celebrate cultural diversity** within the school and wider community, helping children make sense of their physical world and their place within it.
- **Foster strong home–school partnerships**, ensuring a shared purpose, respected communication and open support. The class teacher acts as the key person, with all practitioners contributing to each child’s care, development and learning.

### The Areas of Learning and Development

There are seven areas of learning and development: 3 Prime Areas and 4 Specific Areas. All areas are important and inter-connected:

#### Prime Areas

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

*These three **prime** areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children’s curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving.*

#### Specific Areas

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

*These four **specific** areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.*

### Foundational Skills

Foundational knowledge in the EYFS is built through strong, consistent teaching that secures early reading, writing, phonics, and handwriting skills. With firm fidelity to our chosen phonics program, **Little Wandle**, adults provide clear, systematic instruction that builds children’s knowledge step by step. Our fully decodable reading books, sent home regularly, are carefully matched to the Little Wandle progression taught in class, ensuring that children practice and apply their growing phonics skills with confidence.

Handwriting is taught through the **LetterJoin** scheme, enabling children to develop accurate letter formation alongside targeted fine motor activities such as Funky Fingers and Dough gym. Consistent approaches across classrooms ensure shared expectations and familiar routines, allowing children to develop confidence, fluency, and independence in their early literacy skills.

Staff are proactive in identifying any gaps in foundational learning and take swift action when children need additional support. Through targeted catch-up programs and timely intervention, we ensure that every child keeps up rather than catches up, laying the strongest possible foundations for future success.

### Characteristics of Effective Learning

At Batheaston Church School we believe that the correlation between the well-being and social and emotional development of children has a significant impact on a child’s development of key skills that enable us to become **learners for life**. The *skill* to manage your thinking (engagement), the *will* to learn (motivation) and the *thrill* (excitement) all build upon a child’s capacity for future learning.

'In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their 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.
- **Creating and thinking critically** – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

### Parents – building trusting relationships from the start

*Strong transition practice starts with meaningful relationships that develop over time. When schools build trusting partnerships with parents and carers early on, children are better supported to start Reception feeling confident and secure.* At Batheaston we recognise the essential role that parents and carers play in their children's education, both prior to admission and throughout their time with us. We value the meaningful contributions they make to our school community and remain committed to fostering strong, positive, and collaborative relationships.

Our induction program is designed to ensure that parents and carers have multiple opportunities to engage with the school and become familiar with our provision. This includes a range of transition activities such as **Play and Stay sessions**, which enable children to experience the school environment, meet staff, and participate in early learning activities that support a confident and successful start.

As part of our induction offer, we also host a **Picnic in the Meadow**, attended by current pupils and their families. This social occasion provides an informal and welcoming opportunity for new families to build relationships, ask questions, and begin forming connections within the wider school community. It supports children in developing a sense of belonging ahead of starting school.

Effective communication underpins our partnership approach. We maintain consistent contact through weekly newsletters, parent workshops, and an open-door policy so that parents and carers remain informed and actively involved in their child's educational journey.

As part of our transition procedures, staff visit pre-schools and nurseries and homes to gather relevant information about each child's prior experiences, interests, and needs, ensuring that provision is responsive and appropriately planned from the start. Where appropriate, we also participate in Team Around the Child (TAC) meetings, with involvement from the SENDCo, to ensure coordinated and informed support for children with identified needs.

### Assessment

The Statutory Framework calls for two levels of assessment in the EYFS. **Formative assessments** involve noticing what the children do and say through observations. The teacher will assess and decide 'what next' in terms of planning, organisation, resources, the learning environment and future opportunities. Staff ensure that they do not take prolonged breaks from working or playing alongside the children to write observations. Any significant notes or learning stories will be added to the children's learning journals as evidence. In addition, children learn to document their learning experiences using Seesaw, enabling them to capture and share their progress with their families.

**Summative assessments** take place at specific points in the year to provide an overall picture of each child's development. These include baseline assessments, periodic reviews of progress such as end of term phonic and reading assessments, and the EYFS Profile at the end of the reception year. Summative assessments are

informed by a wide range of formative observations and interactions, ensuring that the teacher builds an accurate, holistic understanding of each child's learning and development.

The level of development children should be expected to have attained by the end of the EYFS is defined by the **Early Learning Goals (ELG's)**. The ELG's support teachers to make a holistic, best-fit judgment about a child's development in readiness for Year 1. We base these judgments using a range of evidence but mainly we draw upon our extensive knowledge of each child. Below are the 17 ELG's across each area of learning and development:

#### Communication and Language

- Listening, Attention and Understanding
- Speaking

#### Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- Self-Regulation
- Managing Self
- Building Relationships

#### Physical Development

- Gross Motor Skills
- Fine Motor Skills

#### Literacy

- Comprehension
- Word Reading
- Writing

#### Mathematics

- Number
- Numerical Patterns

#### Understanding the World

- Past and Present
- People, Culture and Communities
- The Natural World

#### Expressive Arts and Design

- Creating with Materials
- Being Imaginative and Expressive

In October and March, the teacher will meet with parents and carers to discuss their child's progress, including their social and emotional development, friendships, and how they have settled into school life. We will also share information about your child's dispositions and attitudes in class, helping you gain a clear picture of how they are approaching learning.

At the end of the academic year, your child's progress and achievements will be reported to parents in a written report. This will include a short commentary on each area of learning and development, as well as reflections on your child's social interactions, engagement in class, and overall wellbeing at school.

At Batheaston, we want to celebrate your child's successes and provide valuable information to support their smooth and confident transition into Year 1.

#### [Induction – The Transition into School](#)

At Batheaston the transition begins from the offer day, through to September. In May parents and carers are invited to meet the teacher, head teacher and SENco, where important information is shared, including the day to day routines of school life. As part of our induction programme, we offer a range of activities designed to welcome new families and strengthen relationships within our school community. These include:

**Picnic in the Meadow** – an informal gathering for new and current families to meet, chat and enjoy spending time together in a relaxed outdoor setting. Where the existing Apple class play host!

**Stay-and-Play Session** – an opportunity for children to explore their new classroom environment and interact with their teacher while parents and carers get to know school staff.

**Pre-school and Nursery Visits** – staff spend time with children in their familiar early-years settings to support a smooth and confident transition. Talking to a child's key worker can provide invaluable information.

**Home visits** – planned in advance in preparation for the start of term.

**Invitation to Meadowfest** – families are invited to our annual community celebration to experience the wider life of the school.

**Access to Free Second-Hand Uniform** – available to help families prepare for September and reduce financial pressure.

**Additional Transitional Visits for Pupils with SEND** – personalised sessions arranged to ensure children with additional needs feel secure, supported and ready for their start at school.

**Personalised letters** – sent by post, to each child in the last week of the summer break. Included is a special bracelet to wear on the first day of term.

**Induction in the first term** involves children attending school part-time for the first two weeks, with half the class attending in the morning and the other half in the afternoon. This gentle introduction to school life allows the teacher and pupils to build relationships within a smaller, more supportive setting.

### [Transition from Reception to Year 1](#)

Our aim is to establish a smooth and successful transition from the Early Years Foundation stage setting to year 1. This is facilitated by:

- **Strong communication and collaboration** between EYFS and Year 1 staff, ensuring shared understanding of each child's learning journey, progress, and needs.
- **Opportunities for children to visit the Year 1 classroom**, meet new adults, and become familiar with routines and expectations.
- **Information sharing with parents and carers**, helping them understand changes in curriculum, routines, and ways to support learning at home.
- **Use of baseline assessments and EYFS learning profiles** to inform planning and ensure continuity of learning.
- **A gradual increase in structure**, blending play-based approaches with early introduction to Year 1 learning styles.
- **Consistence routines** across EYFS and Year 1 where appropriate, supporting children's sense of security.
- **Carefully planned transition activities**, such as story times, joint play sessions, and buddy systems with older pupils.
- **A focus on emotional wellbeing**, ensuring children feel confident, secure, and ready for new challenges.
- **Professional development and dialogue**, enabling staff to share expertise on child development and pedagogy.
- **Ongoing monitoring and review** of transition practices to ensure they are effective and responsive to children's needs.

### [Role of the Foundation Stage Teacher](#)

Under the guidance of the Head Teacher, the Foundation Stage Teacher is responsible for:

- Organising and delivering the EYFS curriculum, ensuring clear progression and development across all areas of learning.
- Monitoring planning and the quality of curriculum delivery to maintain high standards of teaching and learning.
- Setting targets and tracking pupil progress termly, with particular attention to children from under-resourced communities (e.g., Pupil Premium, EAL).
- Using formative and summative assessments to inform and complete the final EYFS Profile.
- Submitting accurate and timely profile data to the Local Authority and MAT.
- Engaging in ongoing professional development to remain informed about current practice and developments in Early Years education.
- Participating in annual moderation, supported by the Trust, alongside colleagues within the Bath cohort.
- Maintaining strong and effective communication with parents and carers to support children's learning and development.

### Equal Opportunities

All children have an equal entitlement to a high-quality Early Years Curriculum. This entitlement applies irrespective of age, gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion or belief, disability, special or medical needs, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, or any other protected characteristic. Our curriculum promotes inclusion, removes barriers to learning, and ensures that every child is valued, supported, and able to thrive.

### Safeguarding

All staff complete annual safeguarding training and are regularly updated on new legislation and guidance. Ensuring that every child in our school is safe and feels safe is central to our practice. We teach children about boundaries, rules, and limits so they can understand their purpose. We also offer choices to help develop decision-making skills and encourage independence. While we believe that children should be able to take appropriate risks, we help them learn how to recognise and avoid potential hazards. Our aim is to protect both the physical and emotional well-being of every child. In addition, all staff hold a pediatric first aid certificate, which is renewed every three years.

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