



Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

In EYFS 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 EYFS (2021). The non-statutory guidance from 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 School we recognise that the seven programmes of study, outlined in the EYFS, are important and inter-connected. The three prime areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

- 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 areas of learning and development. 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.

At Beech Hill School we use the Lingo Chatterbox intervention to assess and support the development of pupils' speech and language across the EYFS. We also use Word Aware and Concept Cat to explicitly teach vocabulary.

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.

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 brushing their teeth, 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 School 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 the Real PE program 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 on a daily basis.

In Nursery children develop their phonological awareness through taking part in adult-led activities which promote listening skills. 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. The Read Write Inc. nursery guidance is used to support the teaching of phonological awareness.

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 scheme 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 closely 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 child and their families to develop reading for pleasure. Children have the option to change this book as often as they like.

During their reception year, each child has the opportunity to visit Halifax Central Library on a weekly basis. They will meet a librarian and receive their own library card. We also invite parents along to the library sessions and encourage them to borrow books for their children.

Children will hear stories from the EYFS repeated text library read fluently and without interruption daily. These texts will be read repeatedly throughout the year to support the development of vocabulary, language structures and foster a passion for reading.

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 writing 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 in preparation 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 teach 'Mastery Maths' to ensure children develop a strong grounding in number by delving deeper into the number system and are being regularly exposed to a variety of maths skills. We understand this is essential to develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically as they progress through school.

In Nursery, our 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 and then 20, 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
- Rekenreks
- 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 not be 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. We use Ten Town as a teaching aid to support number recognition and formation across the EYFS. Every child is also given a home login to use the Ten Town resource at home too. Logging in can be accessed via the website: <https://tentown.co.uk/>.

In reception, we also used White Rose Maths to plan and teach for mastery of maths.

Within each EYFS classroom there is an explicit Maths area which children can access independently during the play session. Resources within this area are open ended and 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 grounds and forest school site 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 to develop a tailor made RE curriculum which enables our pupils to;

- 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 response 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. We also take our pupils to Halifax Victoria Theatre to experience live performances.

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