



Balby Central Primary

Early Years

Policy

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Prepared by	EYFS Leader
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Version	Version 6
Changes	V3 Updated with resources used to support learning, approach and staffing V4 Updated with CUSP Curriculum V5 Updated



Part of
The Rose Learning Trust

Balby Central Primary Academy EYFS policy

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2022 statutory framework of the EYFS.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The **prime areas** are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 **specific areas**:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

The Characteristics of Effective Learning underpin our curriculum:

- **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

How We Support Your Child's Learning

- We offer fun and hands-on activities that help children learn in exciting ways.
- Our staff build positive relationships with children to boost their confidence and self-esteem.
- We use structured activities when children are ready, helping them grow at their own pace.
- We encourage play and exploration to spark children's curiosity and imagination.
- Adults join in with play, helping children learn by talking with them, sharing ideas, and using rich language and vocabulary.

Why Play Is So Important for Children?

- Children learn best through play. It helps them explore their interests and understand the world around them.
- Playing with other children helps them develop social skills like sharing, teamwork, and communication.
- Playing with adults gives children a chance to learn new words, understand rules, and revisit things they've been taught in a fun and supportive way.

Our Curriculum Vision

We design our curriculum to nurture the whole child—developing their skills, knowledge, and character. Each area is carefully planned to support who we want our children to become:

- Confident Communicators
- Emotionally and Socially Aware Individuals
- Curious Learners with Strong Knowledge and Understanding
- Engaged Readers
- Creative Writers
- Capable Mathematicians
- Physically Active and Healthy Individuals

The curriculum is planned under the following areas:

- We are communicators
- We develop personally, socially and emotionally
- We develop our knowledge and understanding
- We are readers
- We are writers
- We are Mathematicians
- We develop physically

Our curriculum is carefully structured using the CUSP (Curriculum with Unity Schools Partnership) approach, which ensures that children build strong, connected knowledge over time. Through carefully sequenced lessons, children revisit and deepen their understanding across subjects, helping them to retain key concepts and vocabulary. This approach not only prepares them for a smooth transition into Key Stage 1 but also lays the foundation for future learning. By focusing on high-quality content and purposeful progression, we aim to equip every child with the knowledge and confidence they need to thrive throughout their educational journey.

Reading is at the heart of our curriculum. We believe that books are powerful tools for learning, sparking curiosity, imagination, and a love of language. Through rich and varied reading experiences, children not only develop essential literacy skills but also build a strong foundation for vocabulary, comprehension, and wider knowledge. Reading drives learning across all subjects and helps children become confident communicators and critical thinkers. By immersing children in stories, texts, and discussions, we aim to nurture lifelong

In EYFS we also use the following to support us in the delivery of our curriculum to children:

- Maths Meetings
- Read, Write, Inc (phonics and reading)
- CUSP Curriculum
- Jigsaw (PSHE)
- The Power of PE
- Vocabulary sessions

Each classroom is equipped with continuous provision resources that support children in practising, deepening, and demonstrating their learning across the curriculum. These carefully chosen resources are linked to taught sessions and are displayed on accessible shelving, encouraging

children to independently explore and apply their knowledge. They promote open-ended thinking, allowing children to make connections, revisit concepts, and engage in purposeful play that reinforces their understanding. The resources available to children allow them to develop in all areas of the curriculum.

We regularly observe children as they engage with classroom provision to see how they apply their knowledge and skills independently. Both indoor and outdoor environments are thoughtfully planned to give children meaningful opportunities to use what they've learned during adult-led sessions. To celebrate and track progress, we may capture photographs and examples of their work as evidence of achievement. All photographs are taken using school-provided devices and are securely stored with password protection to ensure privacy and safety.

Inclusion

At Balby Central Primary Academy, we believe that every child is a capable and confident learner, with the potential to be resilient, self-assured, and successful. We understand that children grow and develop in unique ways and at different rates, and we celebrate these individual journeys. We know that children's attitudes towards learning are shaped by the feedback they receive, so we place great value on praising their effort, perseverance, and approach—not just their outcomes.

We embrace and celebrate the diversity within our school community, ensuring that every child and family feels welcomed, respected, and valued. Discrimination has no place in our school; inclusion and equality are at the heart of everything we do.

We are committed to giving every child the opportunity to achieve their best. Our planning takes into account each child's life experiences and interests, using these to shape meaningful provision, resources, and activities. Through regular assessment and monitoring, we identify next steps and provide tailored support to help every child thrive.

When additional support is needed, we work closely with parents to understand and meet their child's individual needs. This may involve creating a personalised support plan and, where appropriate, engaging our school SENCO and external agencies. (Please refer to our SEN Policy for further details.)

Keeping Safe

At Balby Central Primary Academy, the safety and wellbeing of every child is our top priority. We aim to help children understand boundaries, rules, and limits—and why they matter—through age-appropriate education and experiences. By offering choices and encouraging independence, we support children in developing essential life skills. We believe that taking risks is a natural part of learning, and we teach children how to recognise and manage potential hazards safely.

We are committed to protecting both the physical and emotional wellbeing of our children. This includes promoting good health, preventing the spread of infection, and responding appropriately when children are unwell. Children are encouraged to enjoy a healthy lifestyle, with daily access to fruit and milk for those entitled or whose families choose to purchase it. All EYFS staff are first aid trained and are fully informed of any medical needs, including allergies.

To maintain a safe environment, we carry out regular checks and risk assessments of our premises, furniture, and equipment. Children are also encouraged to take responsibility for their own safety by speaking to a trusted adult if they notice anything that may be unsafe.

Behaviour

EYFS uses the Pivotal behaviour system. Children follow three rules of 'Ready, Respectful and Safe'. It is important that children develop an understanding of these, what they look like and how they can demonstrate them.

When children demonstrate these they have their name put on a recognition board or build part of a whole class recognition model. They may also bring home a purple praise slip to show that an adult has recognised them being 'Ready, Respectful and Safe'. See whole school behaviour policy for more information.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

At Balby Central Primary Academy, our planning is shaped by the unique needs and interests of each cohort, ensuring that every child's individual development is supported. We carry out regular assessments to monitor progress and inform future planning, allowing us to respond effectively to each child's learning journey.

Assessment in the EYFS is continuous and takes place through both planned and spontaneous observations during child-initiated and adult-led activities. All EYFS staff contribute to this process, and observations may also include valuable insights from parents and other settings.

At the end of the Foundation Stage, each child's progress is summarised in an EYFS Profile, which includes a short commentary on their skills and abilities in relation to the three characteristics of effective learning.

All assessment information is shared during the transition process to ensure continuity between Reception and Year One, supporting a smooth and successful move into Key Stage 1.

The Learning Environment

Our EYFS classroom is thoughtfully organised to create a safe, secure, and stimulating space where children can explore, learn, and grow. It includes areas for active play, quiet reflection, and rest, supporting a range of learning styles and emotional needs. Resources are carefully arranged to promote independence, allowing children to access materials freely and apply their skills across different areas of learning.

We are proud to offer a dedicated, enclosed outdoor area that plays a vital role in children's development. Outdoor learning provides unique opportunities for exploration, sensory experiences, and physical activity on a larger scale than indoors. We plan purposeful activities and provide open-ended resources that support learning across all areas of the curriculum, encouraging children to be curious, creative, and confident in their environment.

(See Indoor Risk Assessment – Appendix 1 and Outdoor Risk Assessment – Appendix 2)

Use of Sandpits

At Balby Central Primary Academy, we recognise that sandpits offer valuable opportunities for play, exploration, and learning. However, we also understand the importance of managing health and safety risks associated with their use. To ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for all children, we follow these procedures:

- Only sand specifically designed for play is used, sourced from reputable suppliers.
- Sand is regularly refreshed, and between changes, it is sieved to remove foreign objects and rinsed with a diluted sterilising solution when appropriate.
- Spilled sand is promptly disposed of to maintain cleanliness and safety.
- Both large and small sandpit areas are checked daily by staff to ensure they are clean and safe.
- Children are always supervised while using the sandpits.
- We teach children about safe sandpit use and help them understand potential risks.
- When not in use, sandpits are securely covered with boards. Children are taught not to climb on these covers to prevent accidents.

Mud Kitchen and Digging Area

A risk assessment is completed for this area to ensure children have safe access to it
(See appendix 3)

Transition – Nursery to Reception to Key Stage 1

At Balby Central Primary Academy, we place great importance on smooth and supportive transitions throughout the Early Years and into Key Stage 1. Strong links between Nursery, Reception, and Year 1 ensure that children feel confident and secure as they move through each stage of their learning journey. To support this

- Children spend two weeks in their new class during the summer term, taught by their future teacher to build familiarity and confidence.
- Nursery and Reception classes share a well-equipped, enclosed outdoor learning area, staffed collaboratively by both teams. Children are encouraged to explore the full space, promoting independence and social development.
- Reception children begin attending whole-school assemblies twice a week in the summer term to ease their integration into wider school life.
- Parents are provided with guidance to support their child's progress in reading and numeracy at home.
- Year 1 teachers are given regular opportunities to visit the EYFS setting, helping them understand each child's learning style and needs.
- Transition meetings between Reception and Year 1 teachers focus on children's progress towards the Early Learning Goals and set clear next steps for Year 1.
- Nursery and Reception staff regularly carry out joint observations of nursery children to ensure continuity and shared understanding.

- Assessment data is shared during the transition process, including each child's EYFS Profile and a commentary on their characteristics of effective learning, which informs future curriculum planning.
- Reception, Nursery, and Year 1 teachers moderate together during the summer term to ensure consistency and accuracy in assessment.

Appendix 1 – Indoor Risk Assessment

Hazard Assessment	Who might be affected	Risk rating (L,M,H)	Control measures	Any further action
Bins Risk of children accessing disposed of foods and drinks	Children	Low	Children to put their finished milk and fruit into the bins provided. Children to be told not to take things out of the bins.	Children to be taught not to touch things that others have put into their mouths and to wash their hands before and after they have eaten.
Snack time Risk of eating with unclean hands	Children	Low	Children to be told to wash their hands before having their milk and snacks and put all rubbish in the bin.	Children to be taught to wash their hands before eating or drinking and to dispose of their rubbish appropriately
Play dough Risk of children eating	Children	Low	Children to be told not to put play dough or the play dough resources in their mouths. Children to be told to wash their hands after use	Playdough to be regularly changed.

Scissors Risk of children cutting hair/clothes/fingers	Children	Low	Children to be taught how to use scissors carefully	Staff to talk to children about what is not acceptable to cut.
Water trays Risk of slipping on spilt water. Risk of getting wet. Risk of drinking unclean water.	Children and staff	Low	Aprons are provided to reduce the risk of children getting wet. Children are made aware of the necessity of rolling up sleeves and not throwing water. Water trays are placed out of the immediate walkways. Spilt water is mopped up by an adult using the water tray mop regularly. Children to be taught to play carefully and sensibly in the water and not to drink the water in the trays.	Encourage children to walk in the classroom
Sand trays Risk of getting sand in eyes, ears, mouths. Slipping on spilt sand	Children and staff	Low	Children to be told not to eat or throw sand and to wash their hands after they have played in it. Staff to ensure that the sand in the sand pit is clean and free from foreign objects. Sand is to be changed on a regular basis. All spilt sand to be regularly swept up and thrown in the bin	Encourage children to walk in the classroom.
Doors Risk of trapping fingers or injury due to	Children and staff	Low	All doors to be clipped back if they are to be left	Children are taught not to play directly in front of

opening or closing doors.			open. Children are to be told not to touch/open the doors. Doors are to be held back whilst children are accessing the outdoor provision. Doors are not to be opened and closed by a child at any time.	or behind any door.
Access to Nursery kitchen area Risk of injury from trapping fingers, climbing on worktops	Children	Low	A baby gate separates the nursery environment and the kitchen area from the large equipment. This is opened only by an adult. Children to be taught that the children's kitchen cupboards must only ever be opened by an adult. Children are taught not to climb on the work surfaces.	The kitchen area is closed to children at all times unless they are supervised by an adult.
Cloakroom Risk of injury from tripping over coats/bags	Children and staff	Low	Children to be taught to put their bags and coats on their pegs when not in use	Staff to monitor this at all times.
Stools Risk of falling off and hitting their heads/injuring themselves	Children	Low	Children to be taught how to use and sit on stools properly	
Running Risk of bumping into others and objects, slipping, falling over, tripping	Children	Low	Children to be told to walk only in the indoor learning environment at all times	

Car mats/rugs/Cushions Trip hazard, risk off falling, tripping, slipping	Children and staff	Low	Children to be made aware to the hazard of rugs and mats and be encouraged to walk in all work areas. Children to be taught to be sensible with cushions – for sitting on	Curled up corners to be held down
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Staff to notify caretaker if they see anything hazardous, broken or that requires fixing asap.

Risk assessments must be carried out daily to ensure the environment is safe

Risk assessments must be shared with the children, staff and any visitors working within the foundation stage

Appendix 2 – Outdoor Risk Assessment

Hazard Assessment	Who might be affected	Risk rating (L,M,H)	Control measures	Any further action
Large Blocks Risk of dropping blocks on toes, fingers or other body parts. Risk of children falling off and injuring themselves.	Children and Staff	Low	Children will be taught how to handle and use the blocks carefully and safely. Children will put blocks out and put them away at the end of the day with adult supervision. Children will be told to only climb on single blocks/not balanced blocks.	Children to be shown how to carry, place and stack blocks safely
Shelter legs Risk of running into them and injuring themselves	Children and staff	Low	Adults to put bumpers around the shelter leg struts at the start of the day and put them away at the end of the day. Children to be made aware of the necessity of watching where they are going and not running around the covered area	Children to be taught not to run under the covered area
Water tray Risk of slipping on spilt water. Risk of getting wet. Risk of drinking unclean water.	Children and staff	Low	Aprons are provided to reduce the risk of children getting wet. Children are made aware of the necessity of rolling up sleeves and not throwing water. Water trays	Encourage children to walk to the area where they want to work outside

			are placed out of the way of immediate walkways. Children to be taught to play carefully and sensibly in the water and not to drink the water in the trays. Water tray is filled daily with fresh water and emptied by adults at the end of the day	
Sand tray/pit Risk of getting sand in eyes, ears, mouths. Slipping on spilt sand.	Children and staff	Low	Children to be told not to eat or throw sand and to wash their hands after they have played in it. Staff to ensure that the sand in the sand tray is clean and free from foreign objects. Sand is to be changed on a regular basis. All spilt sand to be regularly swept up and thrown in the bin Adults to put out and bring in the sand tray at the beginning and end of the day. Children to be taught not to jump on or off the sand pit if it is closed or pick up the sand pit boards	Encourage children to walk carefully around sand areas (not run).
Doors Risk of trapping fingers	Children and staff	Low	All doors to be clipped back if they are to be left open. Children are to be told not to touch/open the doors. Doors are to be held back with door wedged whilst children are accessing the outdoor provision. Doors are not to be opened and closed by a child at any time.	Ensure that doors are suitably clipped or wedged open.
Climbing frames Risk of equipment not being of correct standard of use. Risk of falling, slipping, tripping etc. Getting wet	Children	Low	Climbing frame to be checked daily by staff to ensure there are no loose parts. Staff to ensure that if wet the slide is wiped down and safe to use. Children are taught the climbing frame rules – not climbing on the outside of the frame, one at a time down the slide, one at a time down the pole, one at a time up the climbing blocks, no pushing or pulling others whilst on the frame.	Ensure children are taught how to be safe on the climbing frame.

Sensory Garden/digging area/planters Trip hazard, insect bites, pollen, soil	Children and staff	Low	Children to be told not to lift, carry or throw logs, boulders or stones. Ensure appropriate soil is used and children are trained to wash their hands after working in the soil. Children to be told not to eat flowers, unwashed vegetables and fruits or soil. Staff to consult medical lists before undertaking activities with children in the soil areas.	Children are taught how to be safe in these areas.
Bikes Risk of injury from falling off bikes or not using them correctly	Children and Staff	Low	Children to be shown how to mount the bikes correctly and a sand timer to be used to enable all children to have a go.	Adults to ensure that the bikes and scooters are maintained and safe for use.
Tyres Risk of children falling on or off tyres resulting in injury	Children	Low	Adults to show children how to use the tyres correctly and take focus groups onto the tyres regularly	
Gate locks Clasps are at child head height – risk of injury running/walking into the clasps	Children and staff	Low	Adults to ensure all gates are closed and clasped at all times. Children to be told not to open gates at any time. Children to be told to walk to the area that they wish to work in. Children are made aware that the gate clasps stick out	Visitors are told to close gates and clasp shut at all times
Weather conditions Risk of injury - burning their skin, falling, slipping	Children and Staff	Low	The outdoor area may not be used in adverse weather conditions to ensure safety is paramount. Adults to monitor the safety of outdoor areas during adverse weather conditions e.g. Soft play surface during icy conditions, limit the time spent outdoors when it is sunny/hot – ensure children are wearing hats and parents have applied sun cream. When raining ensure children are wearing wellies and waterproof coats when accessing outside. During windy conditions safety must be considered.	Staff to monitor daily and or hourly

Staff to notify caretaker if they see anything hazardous, broken or that requires fixing a.s.a.p and areas closed in necessary

Risk assessments must be shared with the children, staff and any visitors working within the foundation stage

Appendix 3 – Mud Kitchen and Digging Area Risk Assessment

Hazard	Benefit	Risks	Children's Voice	Assessed Risk	Control Measures	Who/When
Contact with soil	Exposure to beneficial bacteria to build healthy functioning immune systems Sensorial open ended material Normal childhood experience	Ingesting soil	It's fun to get dirty You need to clean yourself by having a bath or a shower You need to wash your hands	Low	Establish hand washing routines Children encouraged to follow a no consumption routine in this area	Staff member – to encourage children to wash their hands and wear an all in one when playing in the mud kitchen or digging area
Soil contamination	Children can be involved in checking areas before play (visually), creates sense of ownership and raises awareness of possible hazards	Ingesting absorbing contaminated soil	You tell a teacher You can dig it out	Low	Soil should be checked for contaminants daily before play Checking for contaminants is part of our daily inspection checklist Children encouraged to follow a no consumption routine in this area	Staff member and children – each day as part of daily inspection checklist
Washing Up – Children	Children learn good hygiene practices. Involving children in the clean up process creates a sense of ownership of the space and teaches valuable life skills	Wet floors Slips, trips and falls	Wash your hands and the pots and pans We use soap and get a towel	High	Staff to provide a bucket of soapy water at the end of the day for children to wash the equipment in the Mud Kitchen and digging area (under adult supervision.) Children are made aware of slip hazards All staff to monitor floor conditions and sweep/mop clean as necessary	Staff member and children – each time children use digging area and mud kitchen
Storage of – utensils and equipment	Involving children in the clean up process creates a sense of ownership of the space and teaches valuable life skills Development of muscle control	Accidental injury when getting out or putting resources and equipment away	I like washing up I can make a tower	Low	Pots and utensils to be washed and left to drain Store equipment and resources safely and carefully in the covered area Ensure all rusty, broken or damaged utensils or equipment are thrown away or reported to be fixed	Staff –to monitor
Water	Adds a new dimension to play changes in state of materials, tipping and pouring creating potions and soups	Flooding during heavy prolonged rain events Drowning Stagnant water	I like making soup I can make a potion	low	Containers provided do not allow falling in All staff to monitor closely during flooding/prolonged rain events and area closed if necessary	Staff - to monitor

	Awareness of science and maths – capacity and volume				All water containers to be emptied at the end of the day and cleaned regularly to prevent algae or mould Children are encouraged to follow the no consumption routine in this area	
Wet / dirty clothes/ shoes	Children become responsible for their own belongings Children practice skills of dressing and changing shoes	Children get cold	We have to wear the all in one suits When it's wet we need our wellies	Low	Children to put on an all in one over their clothes Children encouraged to put on willies when investigating/exploring and playing in this area Children are changed if they are wet	Staff – to monitor
Slippery surfaces	Opportunity to jump in muddy puddles and take risks	Slips, trips and falls	I like splashing Peppa pig likes jumping in muddy puddles	High	Suitable footwear to be worn Wet and muddy shoes to be removed before coming inside	All staff to monitor the safety of the area in adverse weather conditions
Gravel/pebbles/pieces of natural materials	Fine and gross motor skills from lifting, pouring, gathering, patting, squeezing, carrying, sorting, patterns, weighing, art Connection with nature Creative stimulus	Choking	I made pine cone buns I made soil and leaf soup	Moderate	Any children likely to explore by putting things in their mouth are identified and extra supervision is made available Children are encouraged to follow a no consumption routine in this area All children made aware not to put small objects in their mouths	Staff to monitor
Use of plants and other foraged natural materials	Connection with nature Creative stimulus Open ended material	Ingesting Allergies	I like collecting leaves I like the acorns	Moderate	Raise awareness of not eating berries or unknown plants or fungi Adults are aware of and remove all hazardous plants Children encouraged to follow a no consumption routine in this area	Staff – to monitor