



# EARLY YEARS SCHOOL BOOKLET

## **WELCOME TO OUR EARLY YEARS**

At Bramingham we work very closely together as a team. Your child will get to know each of us and we will each get to know your child. If you have any information you need to share with us, or any issues you would like to discuss with us, please feel that you can approach any one of the team.

### **Teaching staff:**

Mrs M Lockett            (Lead teacher)

Mrs L Brook

Mrs E Afolabi

### **Support staff:**

Mrs L Smith

Mrs L Noble

Mrs R Kirby

Other support staff to be confirmed.

We are based in a new, purpose-built Early Years provision. It is a multi-room mobile building with expanded outdoor area to include green, gazebo, verandah as well as soft-pore tarmac. We have been very excited to work in our new building during this last year. All the furniture is specifically designed for Early Years and it is newly appointed throughout, especially with Early Years children in mind.

## EARLY YEARS - PHILOSOPHY

At Bramingham Primary School, the Early Years Stage for your child plays a major role in laying the foundations for future learning. A positive attitude and self-image is encouraged and this encouragement will continue throughout their time at Bramingham.

Children are encouraged to develop confidence and independence. The experiences we plan for your child will take them from where they are now, build on their personal experiences and then extend their thinking and learning.

The Early Years Team plan together to offer new challenges and learning opportunities within the classroom setting, and in our outdoor area, gradually building up to a more formal and structured environment.

Health, feelings, thinking and spiritual matters are emphasised as well as physical, emotional and social development.



## PLAY

Many experiences planned for your child will be seen by your child as 'play'. This is important to us. When your children are playing they are gaining confidence, developing social skills and without realising it they are also learning. There will be opportunities for your child to choose from a wide range of play activities. At times there will be structured play activities planned and these will often involve a member of staff joining in playing. Children may be directed to specific planned tasks which may develop a particular skill, or several skills. It is important to us that the tasks and activities are seen as 'play'.

The Foundation Stage Curriculum Documents states:

'...play should include opportunities for children to engage in activities planned by adults and also those that they initiated themselves. Children should not make a distinction between play and work and neither should practitioners.'

'Play is vital to children's learning and therefore vital to school.... In play children gradually develop the concept of casual relationships, the power to discriminate, to make judgments, to analyse and synthesise, to imagine and to formulate. Play fixes habits of concentration which can be transferred to other learning.'



## EARLY LEARNING GOALS

The curriculum is planned following the Statutory Framework for the Early Years, this follows on from any 'pre school' experience that a child may have had and ensures that all children receive a balanced and challenging curriculum.

The work is planned within topics which cover each half term, the topic plans can be seen on our website.

The curriculum is arranged in seven areas of learning.

These are all important and inter-connected.

The 3 prime areas are:

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

There are then 4 specific areas through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. These are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the World
- Expressive arts and design

Although there are certain structured times when the children will be focusing on one area of the curriculum, all areas are planned for and developed alongside each other.

For example, a cooking activity will include maths - weighing, language - following instructions and discussion, science – looking at the changes that happen, personal and social development – hygiene, creative – by creating the decoration and physical skills to mix, spread and cut.

The following pages will give you an idea as to how these areas are developed and the goals that the children will be striving to achieve.



## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This area of development plays an essential part in all aspects of the children's lives and gives them the best opportunity for success in all other areas of learning. Children are encouraged to try new activities, initiate ideas and build relationships with their peers and adults. They develop an awareness of their needs, showing respect for their own culture and those of others. Independence is encouraged; the children are given opportunities to select their own activities and resources. Skills such as dressing and undressing, turn taking and sharing with friends are developed through a range of activities.



## COMMUNICATION , LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

In small and large groups, children listen attentively and talk about their experiences. A growing vocabulary is used with increasing fluency to express thoughts and convey meaning to the listener. Children listen to and respond to stories, songs, nursery rhymes and poems. Stories are made up by the children and then acted out in role play situations to develop their confidence. Children are encouraged to enjoy books and learn how to handle them carefully, understanding how they are organised. They will be taught that words and pictures carry meaning and that English print is read from left to right and from top to bottom.

A wide variety of activities are planned so that the children begin to associate sounds with patterns in rhymes, with syllables, and with words and letters. Daily, they are taught to recognise their own names and some familiar words. They recognise that words are used to communicate meaning. Children will be encouraged to write in many role play situations, their attempts will be celebrated and you will be able to see the different developmental stages each child will go through. Children will go through the stages at different times and it is essential that each attempt is seen as important in the development of each stage.

Through the many role play situations, and some direct teaching, children become aware of the different purposes of writing. We always encourage the children to write their names with appropriate use of upper and lower case letters.



## READING

This forms a very important part of a child's education and much of the time in Early Years is spent developing reading skills. A child needs to develop many skills contributing to reading. They will realise that speech sounds are represented by letters and understand that words are made up of groups of letters. Through playing games and seeing words everywhere they look, a child begins to read. A child will not begin to read until they are ready but once they start there is no stopping them!

In the Early Years, we are always reading stories and sharing storybooks together, this increases the child's interest and makes them want to read. At first a child may take home a picture book. This book is for an adult to share with them at home and to encourage the child to talk about the pictures and retell the story. They will also start to bring sounds home to learn. Once they are ready or have started to identify several sounds they will bring home 'sound cards' and 'scheme' reading books. These will be increased when the child is ready.

The school runs a Star Reader scheme to motivate and reward regular home reading. Children bring books home to share from the end of September. They are expected to share them with parents several times a week and take part in the whole school Star Reader scheme right from the outset. This rewards children who read at least three times each week (a minimum). If they maintain this regular reading diligently through a whole term they receive a book prize and a certificate. Parents are expected to record this regular reading in the home/school reading record so that staff know reading has taken place. As children increase phonic awareness the reading changes from 'story telling' to the child attempting to blend words together and then this progresses to texts of whole sentences and more fluent reading.

Each child will also visit the school library once a fortnight and take a library book home.

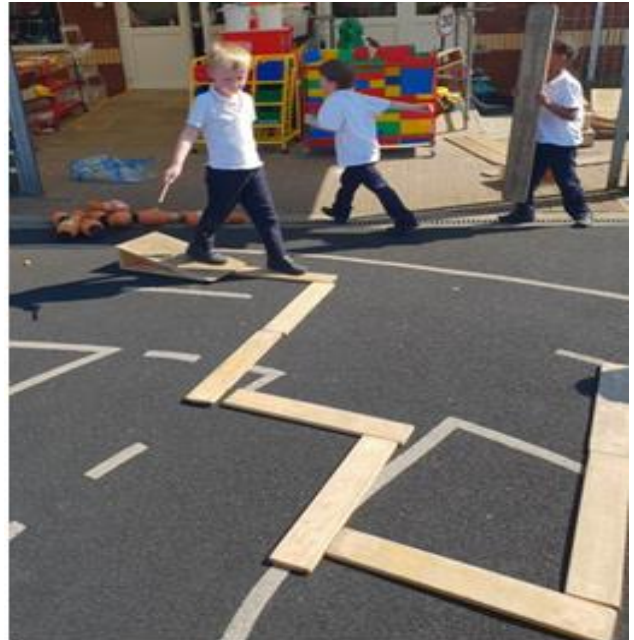




## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Children move confidently and imaginatively with increasing control and co-ordination developing an awareness of space and others. They use a range of small and large equipment and balancing and climbing apparatus, with increasing skill. They handle appropriate tools, objects, construction and malleable materials safely and with increasing control.

The children take part in structured P.E. lessons both in the hall and outside, they will need to change into their P.E. kit for this. We ask parents to send the child's named P.E. kit (see details in School Booklet). They will also take part in KS1 Sports Day in the Summer term.



The outdoor classroom is also an ideal area for the children to develop physically. There will always be a range of equipment out for the children to use which will help them develop their physical skills.

## OUTDOOR PLAY

This forms a very important part of the curriculum; we have an outdoor classroom that enables the children to have access to the outdoors throughout the day.

Our 'outdoor classroom' is resourced to cover all aspects of the curriculum not just climbing or riding trikes. Activities will be planned to match topics and an adult will be based outside to lead a structured activity, this is sometimes to develop physical skills.

There is a covered area which means that the children can go outside in all types of weather so please remember –

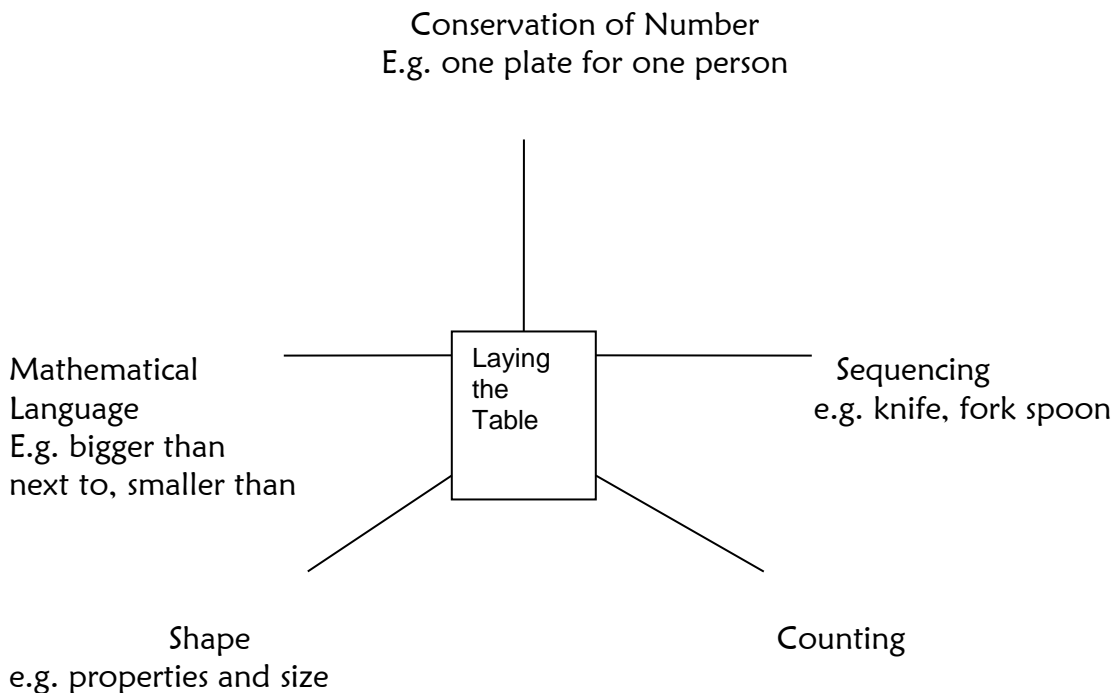
*"There is no such thing as bad weather,  
just inappropriate clothing"*



## MATHS

Children will have many planned opportunities in which to use mathematical language, such as circle, in front of, bigger than and more than, to describe shape, position, size and quantity. They will be encouraged to recognise and recreate patterns. They will be taught a range of number rhymes, songs, stories, counting games and activities. The activities will allow them to compare, sort, match, order, sequence and count using everyday objects. They will learn how to use numbers to 10 and will become familiar with larger numbers from their every day lives. They will begin to use their developing mathematical understanding to solve practical problems. Through practical activities children will begin to understand and record numbers, begin to show awareness of number operations, such as addition and subtraction, and begin to use the language involved.

For example, one activity such as 'Laying the table' could cover these mathematical areas:



## UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Children are encouraged to talk about where they live, their environment, their families and past and present events in their own lives. They are given opportunities to explore and recognise features of living things, objects and events in the natural and made world and look closely at similarities, differences, patterns and change. They begin to show an awareness of the purpose of some features of the area in which they live. They will be asked to talk about their observations, sometimes recording them. We will encourage them to ask questions to gain information about why things happen and how things work.

Asking and answering good questions is something we value highly across the school.

Opportunities will be given to explore and select materials, equipment and use skills such as cutting, joining, folding and building for a variety of purposes. They will use a wide range of technology, where appropriate, to support their learning such as programmable roammers, ipads, laptops, cameras as well as the interactive whiteboards.

Diversity of culture  
race & religion

Language of direction  
position, locations

**Small World Play e.g. trains,  
cars, playmates etc.,**

Predicting routes  
and journeys

Recall previous  
journeys





## EXPRESSIVE ARTS and DESIGN

Children explore sound and colour, texture, shape, form and space in two and three dimensions. They respond in a variety of ways to what they see, hear, smell and touch.

Through art, music, dance, stories and imaginative play, they show an increasing ability to use their imagination, to listen and to observe. They use a widening range of materials, suitable tools, instruments and other resources to express ideas and to communicate their feelings.

The children will be given opportunities to participate in dramatic play and expressive movement such as dance. These activities are vital as they provide opportunities for the expression of feelings and ideas as well as enhancing physical, emotional, social, verbal and intellectual development.



## **FOUNDATION STAGE PROFILE**

This is an ongoing assessment that is carried out on every child within the foundation stage during the year after a child is 4 years old.

Every child has a profile document that is broken up into the seven areas of the curriculum and within these areas there are a number of statements. Assessments are carried out through observation and formal activities. We appreciate that school is only part of a child's life experience. In order to construct judgments that are a true reflection of your child's learning and development we welcome your comments, both verbal and written, about your child's interests and development at home. We call these 'wow' notes. At the end of the year the results of the profile contribute to a written report which is sent to parents. The results of the profile are submitted to the Local Authority.

## **THE ROLE OF PARENTS**

"Parents are children's first and most enduring educators." The Early Years Team likes to work in partnership with parents to ensure that the children have the best start to their education. Parents play a very important role in all aspects of school life.

During the child's home visit parents have the opportunity to ask any questions and give any information they feel is relevant to the child.

Once the children have settled in school, parents are welcome to come in and work with children doing a range of activities. This is planned and organised in advance. Some parents can't make this a regular thing, but they are welcome to give the class teacher dates that they can come in and help.

Parents are invited to Parents Evening which is held twice during the year, this gives teachers the chance to talk with parents about their child's progress. Please remember that staff are always willing to see parents at a convenient time throughout the year or staff can be contacted by telephone.

All parents are invited to spend half a day with their child to experience school through their child's eyes, this normally takes place within a two week slot in the Spring term.

## **HERE ARE A FEW SUGGESTIONS ON HOW YOU CAN HELP YOUR CHILD WITH NUMBER AND LITERACY SKILLS**

### **Number**

"Language is a vital part of a young child's mathematical development and every possible opportunity should be taken to allow and encourage discussion"

Cambridge Mathematics (1983 C.U.P.)

## Ideas to help you

- Introduce your child to words and phrases such as:

- More than/less than
- Bigger/smaller
- Most/least
- In front/behind
- Over/under
- Above/below

These may be talked about as they arise in play and everyday situations. The home provides many opportunities to help your child with the language and value of number.

- **Playing Games – all counting games, matching games:**

- **Rhymes –**

- “One, Two, Buckle my Shoe”
- “12345 Once I Caught a Fish Alive”
- “Five Little Speckled Frogs”

and others you may remember from childhood.

- **Playing with containers at the sink or in the bath.** Talk with your child whilst playing:

- “How many cups fill the bowl etc?”
- “Which holds the most?”

- **Ask your child to lay the table for the family:**

- “How many cups, plates etc., have you used/do you need?”

- **Talk about packages in the cupboard-** order 3 or 4 in size starting with the smallest or largest.

- **Guessing games are a great source of fun.**

- “Are they heavy or light?”
- “What shape are they?”

- **Cooking**

Children love to cook. Let your child weigh out the ingredients, count spoonfuls and cake cases for you.

➤ **Shopping offers many learning opportunities**

If possible encourage your child to help: “Choose 4 apples, 1 tin etc.”

➤ **Help your child to identify colours correctly.**

➤ **When a child begins to write numbers** encourage them to hold the pencil correctly in the way suggested on page 19, begin in the right place and form numbers as recommended.

➤ **Television programmes** such as “ Numberjacks, Kerwhizz or Thomas the Tank Engine” may stimulate an interest in numbers.

Any number games and ideas in pre-school publications are helpful.

## **READING**

From the beginning, learning to read should be an enjoyable experience. Young children should be given many opportunities to listen to and share stories with you. Building up a child’s confidence with books is more important than ‘learning’ words in isolation.

### **Some Hints to Guide You**

Favourite stories may be memorised, the child can then ‘play’ at reading. Point to the words as you read them; this will help your child to understand that words convey meaning. Your child may begin to join in with you, especially with well known favourite stories or attempt to read a word or page by themselves. In the early stages this could be retelling a story from memory, copying your made-up story or a mixture of responses.

Encourage your child to turn the pages when you are sharing a story.

Talk about the pictures. They give clues about the text. Discuss with your child what they think the story is about and accept in a positive way their responses.

As letters become familiar (perhaps the ones in your child’s name) encourage them to point to them.

Be helpful and supportive. Accept early attempts even though they may bear little resemblance to the story.

Say the sound of the first letter of a word (this may involve two letters which create one sound e.g. sh, th).

Be helpful with harder words.

Join the local library.



Play games like “I spy” using letter sounds. Eventually your child will need to know both the sound and the letter name.

Play any memory game e.g. “Kim’s Game” and other matching games. Early Learning Centre has a wide selection from which to choose.

Story tapes and picture books are excellent ways of stimulating a child’s imagination.

Television programmes that refer to letters or sounds may also stimulate an interest in the reading process.

## WRITING

‘Children want to write. They want to write the first day they attend school. This is no accident. Before they went to school they marked up walls, pavements, newspapers with crayons, chalks, pens or pencils.... anything that makes a mark. The child’s mark says “I am”.’

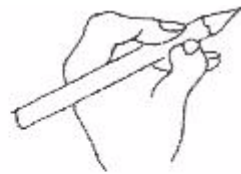
Graves

### Some hints to help you

Encourage your child to hold a pencil correctly.



*Right hand*



*Left hand*

Pencils should be held between the thumb and the first finger with the second finger under the pencil as a rest. Pencil grips help and are available from Smiths.

Praise squiggles – NEVER criticise. You may like to suggest that this is the way Mummy/Daddy writes and demonstrate how to write letters and words especially those in the child’s name. (It is ok to use capital letters for the initial letters but remember to use lower case letters for the rest).

The important thing is that your child believes they can write.

## PREPARING FOR SCHOOL

It would be useful if your child has had practice with the following routine activities:

- Dressing and undressing
- Fastening buckles, buttons and zips
- Using a tissue to blow or wipe their nose
- Independently using the toilet
- Demonstrating good eating habits
- Putting on their coat

It is essential to us and your child, that all clothing is clearly named.



# **STARTING SCHOOL**

This can be a very worrying time for both parents and children however, we do our utmost to make it as smooth as possible.

## **Visits to Previous Settings**

During the Summer Term, some of the Early Years staff visit the main nurseries and pre-schools. This is a chance to briefly meet the children and talk to the staff and look at the children's work.

## **Home Visits**

There is a once a year intake in September. This is the September after the child's fourth birthday. There will be up to 60 children starting, therefore the first few weeks are a settling in period. Start dates and times are detailed in the letter accompanying the Early Years school booklet.

We aim to visit all children in their homes at the end of the Summer Term. This is an opportunity to meet a couple of the staff members, share the child's interests from home, ask any questions and mention any concerns you may have.

## **Organisation of the Early Years**

The children will be in 'Squirrels' class, registering in one of the two rooms. Parents/carers are welcome to come in with their children whilst they are attending part time to ensure they are settled, either at 8.45 or 12.45. Once your child is attending full time, we ask that you leave your child with the adult who is welcoming children on the door between 8.45am to 8.55am.

At the end of the day the children will be collected from one of the two Squirrels' rooms.

Children are only allowed to be collected by parents or an authorised adult, please make sure you let the teachers know in advance.

Please read the school booklet which gives additional important information.