

**Believe • Persevere • Succeed**

### **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy (2025 – 2026)**

This policy sets out the whole school expectations in contributing to an outstanding learning environment. It should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

Admissions Policy
Allergy Policy
Attendance policy
Inclusion Policy
Child Protection and Safeguarding
Pupil Image Policy
Acceptable Use of ICT and e-safety
Hygiene Policy
Food Policy
PSHEE Policy
British Values
Spiritual, Moral, Social, Cultural (SMSC)
Drug and Alcohol Policy
Collective Worship Policy
Supporting Medical Needs and First Aid Policy
Intimate Care Policy
Activate Handbook

Care and Supervision Policy
Collection of Children Policy
Positive Behaviour Policy
Anti-Bullying Policy
Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Policy
Trips and Outings
Planning
Differentiation
Continuous Professional Development
Target Setting & Tracking Progress
Intervention and Support
Assessment
Extra-curricular Provision
EAL Policy
SEND Policy
Able, Gifted and Talented Policy

## **Our Vision**

*To be recognised as a leading Prep school for girls, providing unforgettable learning experiences which inspire our girls to believe in themselves and to persevere and succeed in all that they do.*

## **Our Mission**

- Enable our pupils to be creative, courageous and ambitious learners through a flexible and rigorous curriculum
- Provide outstanding breadth of opportunities and experiences that inspire, captivate and empower pupils to embrace learning and strive to achieve their personal best
- Support our pupils in building emotional, social and physical well-being to enable them to delight in the wonders that lie ahead, be valued as role models and be well equipped as contributors of the future

## **Our Values**

- Care for all: We create and nurture an environment of trust and openness, where everyone feels secure, respected and valued
- Commitment to excellence: We challenge ourselves to pursue excellence for all, across all areas of school life
- Working together: We foster positive and respectful relationships which are based on compassion, kindness and integrity

In 2008 the EYFS Statutory Framework was introduced. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets standards for the learning, development and care of children from birth to 5 years old. In 2012 a revised version came into effect, however we found that it did not realise the academic achievements that our previous curriculum accomplished for our children. As a result, we applied to the Department for Education for exemption from the learning and development requirements of the EYFS.

This could only be granted if, following an OFSTED inspection, our own Early Years' curriculum was deemed to be effective. This was confirmed to us in the spring term of 2013 and an exemption was granted. However, we are not exempt from the EYFS safeguarding and welfare requirements.

Although the EYFS was revised in September 2021, we again sought exemption; this was agreed by the DfE, following a period of discussion with parents (who were in agreement that we remain exempt).

As a result, any inspections will be against the Independent School Standards for the learning and development of children aged 3 and over, as well as against the EYFS safeguarding and welfare requirements [ISI Inspection Report: January 2023].

Bowdon Prep is not funded by the local authority to deliver early educational places.

*In this policy the "Early Years" refers to all children in the Kindergarten (K1 & K2) and Reception.*

*The term "Infants" encompasses both Year 1 & Year 2.*

*The Early Years/Infants are collectively known as the "Lower School" (KG-Y2)*

*As a whole school, Reception, Year 1 & Year 2 are known as "Pre-Prep";  
Years 3-6 are known as "Prep".*

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## Section 1

### Early Years Foundation Stage (Kindergarten and Reception) at Bowdon Preparatory School

*Kindergarten 1 (K1):* academic year/term after the child has turned 3

*Kindergarten 2 (K2):* academic year in which the child turns 4

*Reception (RJ or RH):* academic year in which the child turns 5

#### Our Aims in the EYFS:

- To give each child a happy, positive and confident start to their school life in which they can establish solid foundations on which to expand and foster a deep love of learning;
- To offer each child a wide range of new and exciting experiences and give them the opportunity to consolidate, explore and test them out along with their own, individual experiences;
- To enable each child, through encouragement and high expectations, to develop to the full socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally;
- To offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited opportunities for development;
- To encourage children to develop independence within a loving, secure and friendly atmosphere;
- To support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing;
- To help each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and developing the confidence to work towards personal goals.

#### Admissions

Pupils are able to start at Bowdon Preparatory School after they've turned 3 (K1) and enter the school on a part-time or full-time basis. In Kindergarten, children can attend morning only sessions, but all pupils are expected to attend Reception class full-time. The majority of children who come to us have attended a variety of private nursery schools or local playgroups in the area. Please see the Admissions Policy for further details.

#### Induction and Transition

When a child is offered a place at Bowdon Preparatory School (BPS), we give each family a 'Transition Booklet' to complete with their child; this document is kept on file for future reference.

During the term before the child starts at Bowdon Preparatory School, the Lower School Phase Leader and the class teachers will organise a meeting with the Early Years' Key Person if the pupil has attended a nursery provision; they will also arrange to visit the child in their current setting. The child is then invited to a taster session at Bowdon Prep, when they will spend at least one morning or afternoon session meeting their new class teacher and becoming familiar with their new classroom and classmates. Parents are also invited to attend a Welcome Meeting, with the Headteacher and Lower School Phase Leader, at which relevant information is given to the parents (including a Welcome Booklet). This is an ideal opportunity to address any immediate concerns. Our uniform supplier is also present, along with the before-school and after-school Care Managers, the Bursar and a representative from the BPS Society.

In the first week of term in September, the Early Years' pupils enjoy settling into their new classrooms; over the first few days at BPS, both our Kindergarten and Reception girls are encouraged to leave their parents before entering the classroom, unless additional support is needed; this is to foster increased levels of independence. Parents and carers will be given daily feedback about how their daughter settled, to ensure the transition to the school goes smoothly.

## **Section 2**

### **The Early Years' Environment**

#### **Classroom Management**

The class teacher is responsible for planning and delivering the curriculum with timetabled assistance from teaching assistants. The curriculum will be planned and managed to provide for progression and will meet the needs and abilities of each individual child. A mixture of direct teaching to the whole class, group and individual teaching is used. Structured and purposeful play is an important part of the EYFS plans, including motor skills (jigsaws, cutting, and lacing), construction (Duplo, blocks), creative (painting, drawing, singing, drama), child-initiated activities and outside learning. The resources are reviewed and supplemented each term.

#### **Ratios**

In Kindergarten, we operate a 1:8 ratio for our pupils. We accept girls who have turned three-years old and four-year olds. The Lower School Phase Leader is Mrs Georgie Oakley, who is assisted by the Early Years team. If the Lower School Leader is absent, additional support is provided by the Headteacher, Mrs Sara Make-Peace Taylor.

In our two Reception classes (RJ and RH), we have two fully qualified, experienced teachers, who are supported by an Assistant Teacher; they plan together for each group of children. We aim for a teacher to pupil ratio of 1:10 (government guidance is 1:30, so the girls at BPS receive an exceptional level of care).

With the high staff-to-child ratio in the Early Years at Bowdon Prep, we are able to provide the girls with an excellent level of academic, social and emotional support, which is so vital at this stage of development.

#### **Role of staff and key person**

Due to the small class sizes at Bowdon Prep, the Class Teacher is the "key person" for all members of their class; they are supported as needed by the Assistant Teacher or Teaching Assistants in the setting. Their role is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to their individual needs, to help them become familiar with the setting and to build a secure relationship with the child and with their parents. All staff actively seek to form positive and respectful relationships with the children in their care. The formation of healthy relationships between adults and children is essential in enabling children's well-being now and in the future. On the rare and unavoidable occasions when the Class Teacher (key person) cannot be in the class, we aim to be consistent in who covers these absences.

#### **Classroom organisation**

The learning environments have clearly defined areas with labelled resources to ensure children can access them easily. They are set up in a way which provides children with experiences and activities in all the seven areas of learning (see below for details of Prime/Specific Areas of Learning).

The Early Years' classrooms and outdoor provision have a writing area, maths area, creative area, malleable area, transient art area, explorative area, reading area, role play area, construction/small

world area, outdoor area and carpeted teaching area. A variety of activities are planned for and set up in the different areas each day. The staff move to whichever area their focus for the session/day is.

### **Kindergarten**

Each child has their own labelled peg.  
We encourage children to take responsibility for hanging up their coat on the correct peg, taking their reading wallet out, putting their water bottle on the tray and then putting their “At Home” activities away in their bookbag at the end of the day.

### **Reception**

We encourage children to take greater responsibility for themselves in the Reception class. They hang up their coat and unpack their bags. Each pupil is familiar with the organisation within the classroom. They have access to all books and resources and are encouraged to select equipment for themselves.

### **Outdoor learning environment**

Pupils access the Early Years’ outdoor area both in learning sessions and during lunch time breaks. We ensure that the range of activities outside reflects the different curriculum areas, for example setting up quiet spaces for a maths game, reading and for construction. Physical activity often dominates, with climbing, running, cycling and other active games being key. The Kindergarten and Reception classes have separate lunchtime play sessions to allow for more space to explore and learn. The Reception children have access to the main playground during their morning play to enable them to mix and play with other Pre-Prep pupils in Year 1 & Year 2.

### **Before and after school care**

At Bowdon Prep we understand the need for wrap-around care for some of our families, with parents’ busy working commitments and schedules. Our wrap-around care ‘Activate’, operates from the Dining Hall, which is directly next to the Kindergarten department. This provision runs before school from 7.30am and until 6pm after school. The Kindergarten day finishes at 3.10pm and the Reception day finishes at 3.20pm. The teachers will remain with the children for a story session, songs or games until it is time to take your daughter through to ‘Activate’ at 3.30pm. There are lots of stimulating and enjoyable activities with caring, familiar members of staff that will support the children’s various needs. Girls attending school from Kindergarten (as long as they no longer need a sleep and are able to independently use the toilet) to Year 6 are eligible to attend ‘Activate’. There is a booking system which ensures that ratios of adults to pupils are safe and all necessary risk assessments are in place. There is also a Holiday Club (School of Play) which all pupils have access to during the holidays (aged 3-11 years); please contact the office for further details.

### **Food and drink**

The pupils in the Early Years eat a healthy school lunch with ingredients that are locally sourced. As a school, we follow the ‘Good Habits from Birth’ recommendations set out by the Government. The girls are encouraged to try a range of healthy foods at lunchtimes, supported by familiar staff. The girls say or sing a special prayer to give thanks for their food each day and enjoy an informal social time together in a familiar setting.

In Kindergarten, during the morning, the girls are provided with a healthy fruit salad which is prepared in our school’s kitchen with a choice of either milk or water to drink. Reception girls are asked to bring in a small, healthy snack each day and also have milk or water to drink. (Nuts are not allowed to be brought into school).

Within the Early Years, the children will, where possible, sit facing the member of staff with supervision responsibilities to ensure a safe eating habits. The girls will continue to sit at appropriately sized tables to ensure feet are on the ground and they are in a safe eating position.

We encourage all the girls to bring in a bottle of water which is always available to them. All members of staff within the Early Years who are involved in preparing and handling food have completed training in food hygiene.

### Section 3

#### The Early Years' Curriculum (KG and Reception)

Within our programmes of learning, pupils cover the guidelines and curriculum, as appropriate, as detailed in the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) [2014; updated February 2018, September 2021 and July 2025]*, which is available from the school office or to download at [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk).

We also refer to the *Development Matters in the EYFS (2012, updated 2021)* document, which can be found at [www.foundationyears.org.uk](http://www.foundationyears.org.uk)

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are seen as important and interconnected, but three areas are seen as particularly important for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving (DfE 2021); they support children's learning in all other areas and are known as the **Prime Areas**:

Area of Learning and Development		Aspect
Prime Areas	Communication & Language	<i>Listening, Attention and Understanding</i>
		<i>Speaking</i>
	Personal, Social and Emotional Development	<i>Self-Regulation/Understanding Emotions</i>
		<i>Managing Self/Sense of Self</i>
		<i>Building Relationships/Making relationships</i>
	Physical Development	<i>Gross Motor Skills/Moving and Handling</i>
		<i>Fine Motor Skills/Moving and Handling</i>

The **Specific Areas** of learning (through which the prime areas are strengthened and applied) develop essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully both academically and to operate successfully in society:

Area of Learning and Development		Aspect
Specific Areas	Literacy	<i>Comprehension/Understanding</i>
		<i>Word Reading</i>
		<i>Writing</i>
	Mathematics	<i>Number</i>
		<i>Numerical Patterns</i>
	Understanding the World	<i>Past and Present</i>
		<i>People, Culture and Communities</i>
		<i>The Natural World</i>
	UW (no ELG)	<i>Technology</i>
	Expressive Arts & Design	<i>Creating with Materials</i>
		<i>Being imaginative &amp; Expressive</i>

#### Progression to Reception Class

The curriculum is carefully planned and structured to ensure that learning is continuous and that the children make excellent progress with the development of their learning. Through the curriculum we



aim to develop a broad band of knowledge and skills, that encourage children to gain an understanding of the different ways of looking at the world. At Bowdon Prep, we aim to tailor education to individual needs, interests and aptitudes, to fulfil every child's potential. Each child will have access to a rich, broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum. We use diverse teaching strategies to develop the interests and talents of each child, and teachers will use their knowledge and skills to ensure English and mathematics are taught thoroughly alongside and within opportunities for enrichment and creativity.

Whilst paying due regard to achieving high standards in English and mathematics, the curriculum remains broad, exciting and challenging. Our curriculum promotes the general values of excellence, determination, equality, resilience, respect, inspiration and friendship. The curriculum is used to increase children's knowledge (for example, key concepts in mathematics); skills, including the ability to use the acquired knowledge; and understanding, as they grow and develop and become more aware of the world around them. The curriculum is also used to foster positive attitudes to the work and activities the pupils do at school, and at home, and to encourage independent thinkers and learners (the girls 'learn how to learn'). We ensure that the knowledge and skills gained are used across the whole curriculum and not simply in isolation, and that meaningful links are made between subjects in our half-termly themes.

### **Trips, Outings and Visitors**

Extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors play an important part in our curriculum and children's learning in our Early Years. We aim to make two visits during a year, for example to a local farm, zoo or theatre. Each time a trip is planned, a risk assessment is carried out, involving consideration of adult to child ratios, and steps that can be made to remove, minimise or manage identified risks. We actively seek parental support on trips, aiming for a ratio of one adult to four or six children (depending on the age of the children and the nature of the trip), with school staff always present. For safety reasons younger siblings are not invited along on school trips. We use reputable coach companies for transport to and from the venues. We follow the requirements of the EYFS regarding the records kept about vehicles in which children are transported, including insurance details and a list of named drivers. We have purchased booster car seats for use on these journeys to ensure children are raised higher on the seats and are seated in a safe position. The Teacher in Charge (TiC) takes a mobile phone for use in case of an emergency so that contact can be made immediately with the school. Visitors to school can really enhance the quality of learning and we invite 'experts', including parents, in to talk to the children. We are keen for parents to come into school to share their knowledge or skills. The EYFS' Educational Visits Co-ordinator is our Prep Phase Leader, Mrs McGrath.

### **Risk Assessment**

The Governors of Bowdon Preparatory School recognise and accept their responsibilities as employers and service providers to comply with Health & Safety legislation. However, all staff have responsibilities in the area of risk assessment, and staff should be proactive in their approach to risk management. It is the responsibility of Early Years' staff to assess and highlight any hazards and to ensure that systems are put in place to manage these. The Early Years has a specific risk assessment for the classroom areas, both indoors and outdoors. The Early Years makes use of model or generic risk assessments for educational activities and visits, which can be found on the teachers' shared drive (TEAMS). The Teacher in Charge (TiC) or Lower School Phase Leader will also contact or visit the venue prior to going on the trip, to carry out a risk assessment from observations made (referring to the venue's Risk Assessment as well).

It is the policy of the School that a risk assessment is carried out in respect of all activities, processes and substances, and that it is regularly reviewed and documented where necessary. This

responsibility rests with the Governors, the Headteacher and the Bursar, as stated in the schools Health & Safety Policy.

## **Section 4**

### **Teaching and Learning**

#### **Characteristics of Effective Learning**

The Kindergarten and Reception teachers and support staff plan activities with the characteristics of effective learning in mind. They highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them.

#### **The Three Characteristics are:**

##### **Playing and Exploring – *engagement***

- Finding out and exploring
- Playing with what they know
- Being willing to 'have a go'

##### **Active Learning – *motivation***

- Being involved and concentrating
- Keeping trying
- Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

##### **Creative and Critical Thinking – *thinking***

- Having their own ideas
- Making links
- Working with ideas

### **Play**

Learning through play is an important part of our Early Years' classrooms. We believe children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them – purposeful play. Using the girls' interests as a starting point, we are able to provide them with stimulating and active play experiences, in which they can explore and develop their learning, to help them make sense of the world. They have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own. They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experience at their own level and pace. Play gives our girls the opportunity to pursue their own interests and inspire those around them. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. We believe it is important that adults take an active role in child-initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating and extending their play. Getting the balance right between child-initiated play, where we facilitate purposeful play, and adult-led activities is very important to us.

### **Fundamental British Values**

The teaching and learning in the Early Years environment supports the British Values as laid down by the government: democracy, individual liberty, the rule of law, mutual respect and tolerance of those with other beliefs and faiths. Our literature within our reading scheme, and books available in the library, cover themes including tolerance, mutual respect and democracy. During personal, social and emotional development learning sessions we will explore these values in an age-appropriate way. We often use stories or poems as a starting point, as there is a natural connection between stories and discussions about friendship, relating to British Values of mutual respect. British Values are lived through the school ethos and are valued as a meaningful character-building part of the curriculum.

### **Special Educational Needs**

Within our Early Years setting we ensure that arrangements are made to support children with SEN or disabilities. The Early Years' staff carry out both formal assessments and informal observations throughout the year, and regularly monitor and review the progress made in all areas of learning. Where a child appears to be behind expected levels, we would refer to the methodology outlined in the SEND Code 2023 for gathering information and seeking 'Early help' (see Working Together). The Early Years' staff would liaise with the SENCO, Mrs Carol Delf, and follow the guidelines for seeking external help of specialists or request an EHC (Education, Health & Care) assessment. If a decision to involve external specialists is made, we would hold a meeting with the child's parents to discuss the need for extra support.

### **English as an additional language (EAL)**

The Transition Booklet filled out by parents on admission alerts us to those pupils for whom English is an additional language. Staff encourage the pupils to develop skills in their own language at home, and school provides targeted activities to build up confidence and skills in spoken and, where appropriate, written English. Teachers and parents work together to overcome any initial difficulties in communication and to foster a love of language through songs, poems, stories and rhymes.

We ensure all members of staff within Early Years are aware of the children for whom English is an additional language; we then encourage children to use their home language, as well as support their English language development at school and at home. We also aim to ensure that the girls have sufficient opportunities to learn English as an additional language, so that they can achieve a good standard of English (spoken and written), in order to communicate effectively in all settings. EAL assessments are undertaken, as appropriate, to ensure that children receive the correct level of support.

### **Planning, Teaching and Assessment in Kindergarten**

#### **Planning**

In Kindergarten, we believe that children benefit from a shared starting point in order to learn; we find themes are a great way to fire the imagination. Kindergarten have a two-year theme cycle so both age groups (K1 & K2) are working together on the same theme; topics range from 'A Brush with Colour' to 'Minibeast Mayhem'. Reception themes build on this. The themes are a framework but are flexible to ensure we also follow the children's needs and interests, school projects (including Science Week or European Week), local or national events (e.g. the Olympics, the Jubilee etc.) and many religious festivals. Every half-term the teacher plans the next theme and then organises visits and visitors that will enhance the learning, as appropriate.

In Kindergarten, all staff plan in detail on a weekly basis using observations and interactions with children to inform the direction in which the learning path should move. All Kindergarten weekly plans are displayed for staff and parents in the classroom and are summarised in the weekly newsletter. Although class teachers are responsible for writing plans, the Kindergarten team (i.e. Teachers and Teaching Assistants) attend weekly planning meetings to discuss all the children, to ensure that each child's learning is tailored to meet their needs.

#### **Teaching**

In the Kindergarten classes we ensure that there is a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities throughout the day. Although much of the time is spent with children self-selecting tasks, the interaction between the adult and child is essential, as the adult's response to the child builds understanding and therefore guides new learning. The adult's role is to continually model,

demonstrate and question what the child is doing. In some cases, the adult will ask a child to come and complete a task or game with them, at other times they will participate in a child's game, extending it where possible. During the summer term the children in Kindergarten 2 will experience many more adult-directed tasks, as they prepare for their transition to Reception. Specialist lessons in music, drama and PE, in the Kindergarten, ensure that pupils have a rich and diverse curriculum.

We include direct, carefully planned, adult-led experiences for children in the form of structured adult-led teaching and adult-led group activities. These are particularly important in helping children to learn specific skills and knowledge and it is often through children's play that we see how much of this learning children have understood and taken on. Each day we follow a visual timetable with set routines in place. Each morning the children are separated into groups to be taught in the more traditional sense for phonics/literacy/maths. The groups gather together on the carpet for the main teaching input and then an activity relating to the learning objective will follow (this could be an individual activity or a group game). The Kindergarten come together for carpet-time discussion, to focus on our themed work, PSED/Bowdon Prep/British values and stories. These sessions help to develop some of the vital habits of learning: learning as a group, listening to the teacher, taking turns to answer, sitting still, active participation and so on.

Reading and story-telling play a very important part of our day. Our aim is for the girls to have a love of reading. We also hope that they will leave the Kindergarten with a bank of stories they know well (both traditional and modern classics). We ensure that there is always time for a whole-class story at the end of the day and also that there are many opportunities to enjoy books at other times. Every child is given their own reading folder and book (starting with wordless books and progressing on to worded books when ready, according to our Little Wandle Phonics and Reading scheme); flashcard envelope with a new flashcard added as appropriate; and a variety of "At Home" activities, as appropriate, to support different areas of the curriculum. Each child has two designated days when they will have one-to-one time sharing their reading book and flashcards with an adult in school.

### **Assessment, observations and portfolios**

Assessment is an essential tool to improve the learning and development of children. It involves all members of staff observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations and to ensure progress.

To provide evidence of a child's progress in the Kindergarten, we use a range of strategies, all of which come together in the EYFS tracker. Next steps are discussed amongst the teaching team in our weekly planning meeting and in informal meetings; they inform planning for the week ahead. The teaching team use a camera or tablet to capture and note important observations. Parents are updated throughout the year on their child's progress and achievements through our Parent App 'Reach More Parents', our weekly newsletters and in their daughter's books. Parents and carers are encouraged to contribute through the use of our 'WOW' moment cards which record significant events at home. Please ask for 'WOW' moment cards and some will be put in your daughter's folder. Each child is given a 'Treasure and Gems' book to take home to record any achievements or experiences that are special or of interest to them. The children then share this during news time. The portfolio is given to parents when their child enters Reception or leaves our setting.

On entry to Kindergarten, we carry out CEM baseline assessments (ASPECTS) for each child. Throughout the year, staff also carry out informal assessments for maths and phonic awareness. During the last half-term an assessment on the child's knowledge of phonics, high frequency words and "Number" is carried out, which is handed on to the child's Reception teacher, showing each child's development across the seven areas of learning. An end of year ASPECTS assessment is also carried out to review progress. This information is also communicated to parents and carers in the child's end

of term reports and can be discussed in the various Parents' Evenings throughout the year (opportunities to meet the Class Teacher each term and also to meet with the Lower School Phase Leader too).

### **Planning, Teaching and Assessment in Reception**

At Bowdon Prep, there are two parallel Reception classes (RJ and RH). This group of pupils are taught separately from the Kindergarten. In the morning, the organisation is more structured in order for more focused literacy and mathematics activities to take place, including differentiated groups when appropriate. In the afternoon sessions the two classes are often joined together and put into smaller groups, to make fuller use of the whole learning environment.

We recognise that young children are active learners who thrive on child-initiated discovery and exploration. We find that in the all-girl environment pupils' learning skills, such as focus and concentration, develop to effective levels, enabling them to work with pleasing levels of independence from an early age. We believe that children learn confidently and effectively with guidance, and with the understanding that children learn in different ways and at different rates. We strive to encourage our girls to feel safe and secure in their learning environment, in order that they will take risks in their learning and avoid developing characteristics that hinder the development of key learning skills such as perseverance and resilience.

We use a variety of methods that enable all children to learn effectively, for example:

- Learning and stimulating activities that use and incorporate children's ideas
- Cross-curricular displays
- Styles of questioning that develop thinking skills (open ended questions etc.)
- Clear learning objectives, which are also communicated verbally – this will vary according to the developmental stages of the children
- The use of different interactions (e.g. individual, pairs, small group, class to class, ability groups, mixed groups, more able supporting less able)
- A variety of response methods (e.g. drawing, written, verbal, recorded, scribed, ICT)
- Children using a range of high-quality resources which support their learning
- Literacy and mathematics resources on display which support the children's learning

### **Planning**

Along with curriculum plans developed by the subject coordinators in English/literacy and mathematics, the early learning goals establish expectations for children to reach by the end of the EYFS and provide the basis for planning in Reception. While due consideration is given to DfE curriculum recommendations, we ensure that our curriculum is planned to suit the particular age and aptitudes of pupils; we also strive to take account of pupils' interests. Schemes of work have been reviewed and updated to take account of the primary curriculum.

The teachers plan together to deliver a carefully structured topic-based curriculum with objective led planning, providing strong foundations for mathematics, literacy and science; our curriculum focuses on developing the creative and enquiring mind. There are also opportunities to perform in music, drama and dance activities. A range of trips and visitors broaden pupils' experiences and learning opportunities. Specialist lessons in music, drama, French and PE ensure that pupils have a rich and diverse curriculum.

Teachers' planning also includes "At Home" activities; the girls are given home activities twice a week, on a Monday and a Thursday. The number of activities and time spent completing these activities will increase gradually, in preparation of Year 1.

### **Teaching**

By the end of the year, the majority of girls will have exceeded age-related expectations. However, we are non-selective on intake and some children, depending on their individual needs, will still be working towards some or all of the Early Learning Goals – particularly some younger children, some children with learning difficulties and disabilities and some learning English as an additional language. Differentiation of learning experience ensures that there is access and opportunity for all pupils to learn and to make progress (for example, to support the less able and extend the more able); attention is given at all levels to pupils reflecting upon the process of learning. We plan a richly resourced learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world.

We have also embedded our reading and phonic scheme, 'Little Wandle' to ensure continuity and progression in reading throughout our Lower School.

### **Assessment**

We use assessment to support, encourage and challenge the children so that they make appropriate progress and become motivated, independent learners. We achieve this through:

- Teachers sharing learning objectives with children throughout their learning
- Continuous observations and assessment linked to the learning objectives
- Verbal and written feedback to the children, to identify next steps in their learning
- Reflective assessment information which informs planning
- Tracking of pupil progress

In the autumn and summer terms in Reception we carry out appropriate Baseline assessments for each child. In addition to this, during each term, a teacher assessment is carried out, on the child's knowledge of phonics, high frequency words and "Number". The EYFS tracker is also used in Reception, to track progress. Teachers review all this, along with valuable assessment data outlining progress from Kindergarten, showing each child's development across the seven areas of learning, during their time in the Early Years.

Parents have the opportunity to meet with their child's Class Teacher three times a year to discuss progress; reports are also sent home at the end of each term.

In addition, Reception Parents are able to meet with the Lower School Phase Leader, Mrs Oakley, three times a year for an extended meeting (30 minutes), to discuss general progress, levels of happiness, learning styles and any barriers to learning.

### **Behaviour Management**

In the Early Years we employ the whole school behaviour policy, as appropriate for our younger girls, which aims to promote positive behaviour within the school and continue to develop ways of rewarding this. This is a means of promoting good relationships, so that we can work together with the common purpose of helping everyone to learn and reach their full potential. We ensure safety and well-being for all the pupils, by raising awareness of appropriate and positive behaviour, and we teach the girls that actions and choices have consequences. We believe that positive behaviour in children stems from learning the core skills and abilities that are embedded within all aspects of our school life. These include: independence and organisation, self-image and self-esteem, reflection and self-



control, resiliency and perseverance, cooperation and collaboration, motivation, attention, fairness, sociability, empathy and honesty. At no time is corporal punishment used or threatened.

Our EYFS rewards are given through stickers, house-points, “Golden Balls”, “Pupil of the Week” awards, Headteacher’s Award and “Well Done Bears”, that are given out each week to mark a child’s achievement, success and good behaviour.

The teacher will record any incidents in the pupil log on the Engage/CPOMS system, as appropriate, noting the behaviour and the consequence. This will be discussed with the child at the time of writing. For any serious incidents (e.g. biting, kicking, hitting etc.), the parents will be informed in order to establish good communication systems from the start and to enable the child to learn the correct behaviour, with consistent support from both school and home. It is hoped that this will lead to good choices being made in the future. (“Stop. Think. Make a good choice!”)

### **Staff Training**

At Bowdon Prep we provide induction training for all staff, including help in understanding roles and responsibilities, information about emergency evacuation procedures, safeguarding and child protection, health and safety issues and our equality policy. Staff are encouraged to undertake relevant training which can then be shared with the rest of the Early Years’ team for their professional development and to develop the quality of learning experiences for the girls. There are also weekly CPD sessions for staff to access. Each member of staff will have an annual appraisal by a member of the SLT. Meetings are held on a regular, informal basis between each member of the Early Years’ team and the Early Years Phase Leader, to support their role as a key person working with children and families (alongside Safeguarding Supervision Meetings each term).

Throughout the school, there are staff always trained in paediatric first aid on the premises, and accompanying the girls on any outing. This first aid training is renewed every three years, or as appropriate.

### **Partnership with Parents and Carers**

We recognise that parents are children’s first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We encourage parents to become more involved in observations of their children at home and compare them to the observations we have noted. We operate an ‘open door’ policy as we want parents to feel they can speak to us about their child at any time and feel comfortable in our setting. We value a close working relationship with families to create a fluid transition from home to setting and back again.

We do this through:

- Gathering information from the parents about their child before their child starts at our school
- Giving the children the opportunity to spend time with their class teacher/key person before starting at our school during induction sessions
- By inviting parents to parent/key person meetings and parent social evenings
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child’s progress and allowing access to their child’s EYFS tracker files on request
- Sending home a report on their child’s attainment and progress at the end of each term in Kindergarten and Reception
- Encouraging parents to talk to their child’s class teacher/key person or the Lower School Phase Leader, if there are any concerns (either via email/telephone, or ideally face to face)

- Arranging a variety of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents (fund raising days, themed activity days, book week, Harvest Festival, The Nativity, Summer Concert and Sports Day)
- Providing parents with information about activities in school via our weekly Bulletin, Newsletters and displays
- Using information boards to inform parents of a particular focus or interests in the Kindergarten or Reception (we encourage parents to share these with the children and to bring things in to support and/or to follow the interests up at home)
- Organising Parent Class Rep cluster group and coffee mornings (we provide opportunities to discuss subjects such as: fussy eaters, sleeping patterns, reading at home, school activities at home etc. and Workshops e.g. phonics or maths etc.)
- Sending home “At Home” activities weekly and yearly/termly curriculum maps (which sets out the main learning objectives to be covered and ways to help at home)

As well as the Kindergarten stay and play sessions once a week and termly drop-in sessions in the Reception, we offer a ‘Meet the Teacher’ transition session in the term before starting at Bowdon Prep. We also offer parenting sessions, including workshops, and a mid-year Early Years meeting regarding developments taking place throughout the year (for example, Open School or ‘Take a look through my book’ drop in sessions, during every term, for the children to show parents work/displays/activities that they have done).

Early in the first term, parents are also invited to a meeting so the settling-in period can be reviewed with the Early Years’ team. Parents are also invited to attend a parents’ meeting in the spring and summer terms to discuss wellbeing, achievement and progress, as well as any next steps/targets before they move into Reception or Year 1. The teachers are available most mornings and evenings to discuss more urgent matters, or an additional appointment can be made with the Lower School Phase Leader if necessary.

## **Section 5**

### **Health & safety and Safeguarding**

#### **Safeguarding**

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. Our Early Years setting has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in our care and follows the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance (2025).

All staff follow the statutory guidance when carrying out safeguarding duties and to promote the welfare of children: Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (updated 2023).

We also refer to the ‘Trafford Strategic Safeguarding Partnership (TSSP) [which recently replaced the Trafford Safeguarding Children Board’ (TSCB)] for guidance and information in undertaking safeguarding responsibilities. They have a number of resources and approaches including:

- TSSP e-bulletins, and schools e-bulletins which provide updates on key and current safeguarding issues and should be read by the school leadership, in particular the designated lead for safeguarding
- training support through materials for use in schools for foundation level training to staff and inter-agency training for designated safeguarding leads and others with pastoral responsibilities



- self-audit tools, for schools to use on an annual basis to ensure they are meeting their safeguarding responsibilities

The school **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** is **Mrs Sophie Hughes**. The Deputy DSLs are **Sara Makepeace-Taylor** (Headteacher), **Mrs Carol Delf** (Deputy Head/SENCO); **Mrs Georgie Oakley** (Lower School Phase Leader) all of whom support the DSL, with regards safeguarding children in the Early Years setting and the Lower School (Kindergarten – Year 2). **Mrs Heather Odiowei** deals with safeguarding matters in the before and after school club, Activate.

Lower School staff meet with the Headteacher or Lower School Phase Leader at least termly, for 1-1 Supervision Meetings. All staff in the Early Years complete the Statutory Supervision Record with the Lower School Phase Leader and are explicitly given training on following the school's procedures for whistle blowing.

The school must notify Ofsted within 14 days of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working or looking after children at the premises (whether allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere).

There is a section in our school Safeguarding Policy that directly refers to practice in the EYFS. It is important to note that members of staff do not use their mobile phones or personal handset devices in the classroom and are prohibited from taking photographs with their personal handsets in line with Bowdon Preparatory School Safeguarding Policy. Members of staff do, however, use school phones or tablets to take photographs as evidence to support the regular observation assessment cycle in the Kindergarten and Reception. These photographs are used in children's portfolios, in class displays and on the school website.

All parents are asked to state if they give permission for their child's image to be used on the school website and/or social media, through the paperwork in their initial starter packs.

All staff in the Early Years receive whistleblowing training and follow the process as per our whistleblowing policy.

### **Safety and Suitability of the Premises**

Regular safety checks relating to health and safety requirements/legislation, fire safety and hygiene are made by the Bursar, Headteacher and Caretaker within the Early Years' areas both indoors and outdoors, to review and put in place any developments that need to be made. Also, on a day-to-day basis, the Early Years' staff report any areas that need attention to the Lower School Phase Leader and/or the Caretaking Team, to ensure the areas are fit for purpose and are a suitable learning environment. Opportunities for staff to report Health and Safety Issues are also given at the weekly Lower School Phase Meeting; issues are then dealt with immediately or taken to the Health and Safety meeting for further discussion and action.

We do not allow smoking on the school premises at any time.

We follow our legal responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 (for example, the provisions on making reasonable adjustments).

There are adequate toilets and hand basins available to the girls. Regular reminders about hygiene and hand-washing are given to pupils during the day.

### **Managing medical needs: Health and medicines**

When starting at Bowdon Preparatory School parents/carers within the Early Years can access the First Aid Policy on our website, which explains the procedures to follow if their daughter has any illnesses, medical matters or first aid requirements. We also inform parents if a case of chicken pox, scarlet fever or head lice has been confirmed within the school. This gives parents the relevant advice and guidance on how to react to this.

A 'Permission to Administer Medicine' form must be completed and signed before any medication can be given to a child. Parents must give clear written instructions of required dosage etc. and hand medicine directly to a member of office staff or to a member of staff in the relevant Early Years class.

Only First Aid trained staff in the office can administer prescribed medicines to children. On no account are medications to be left in a child's school bag. Prescribed medicines will be stored correctly as advised on the bottle or packet. If the medicine should be kept in a refrigerator, then it will be stored safely and hygienically.

A member of office staff administering the medication must complete an Administration of Medicine Form, giving details of what medicine, dosage and when it was administered. The parent, when collecting the medicine from the office at the end of the day, should sign this form. If the parent is unavailable to sign the form, a photocopy of it must remain in school. The member of staff who issued the form must ensure the parent does sign and return the original form to school as soon as possible. For Early Years' children, we will discuss with parents the procedure for children who are ill or infectious. It is school policy that children should not return to school until 48 hours have elapsed following a bout of sickness or diarrhoea.

All staff should be aware of the dietary requirements and allergies of the girls in their care. They must pass this information on to any other member of staff who will be working with that cohort as per our allergies policy.

### **Managing Medical Needs: Accident or injury**

In the Event of a Minor Accident, Incident or Illness:

The School requests that parents/carers complete and sign the Data Collection Form (Curriculum, Care and Communication: Accident and Emergencies) enabling the Leader, or any member of staff so empowered, to give permission for emergency medical treatment for their child in the event of a major accident, incident or illness occurring at the school and there being no response from contact numbers provided by the parents/carers.

In the occurrence of such an event, the following procedures will apply:

- In the first instance, a First Aider will be notified and take responsibility for deciding upon the appropriate action
- A First Aider will assess the situation and decide whether the child needs to go straight to hospital or whether they can safely wait for their parent/carer to arrive
- If the child needs to go straight to hospital, an ambulance will be called. The parent/carer will also be contacted. A member of staff will accompany the child to the hospital and will consent to medical treatment being given
- If the child does not need to go straight to the hospital but their condition means they should go home, the parent/carer will be contacted and asked to collect their child. In the meantime, the child will be made as comfortable as possible and be kept under close supervision
- Parents/carers will be made fully aware of the details of any incidents involving their child's health and safety, and any actions taken by the school and its staff
- All such accidents and incidents will be recorded in detail and logged in the Accident Record Book or Incident Record Book. Parents/carers will be informed on the same day

and asked to sign an 'Accident Notification Form' to acknowledge the incident or accident and any action taken by the school and its staff

- The Head teacher and other relevant members of staff should consider whether the accident or incident highlights any actual or potential weaknesses in the School's policies and procedures, and act accordingly, making suitable adjustments where necessary.

There is a first aid box available at all times within the Early Years' area that has all appropriate contents needed for treating minor injuries.

*Please also refer to:*

*Appendix 1: Non collection of children procedure*

*Appendix 2: Procedures when a Child is discovered to be Missing at, or away from, the setting*

*Appendix 3: Physical contact & Physical restraint*

## **Section 6**

### **General Information**

#### **Information and records**

Up to date records are made within school on the Engage system. Confidentiality of records is maintained about staff and children, with access only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them. Parents and/or carers may access all records about their child, provided that no relevant exemptions apply to their disclosure under the 'Data Protection Act (2018)' [which incorporates GDPR]. The retention period for any records in relation to individual children must be 'reasonable'.

#### **Information about the Child**

When a child starts in the Early Years at Bowdon Prep, we gather information including: full name, date of birth, name and address of every parent/carers who is known to the school, information about any other person who has parental responsibility for the child, details of which parent(s) the child normally lives with, emergency contact details for parents and/or carers, password and other named people to pick up at home time.

#### **Information about the Provider**

Information (including name, home address and telephone number) is held on each member of staff that is employed on the premises and anyone who is in regular contact with the children attending the provision. DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks are carried out on all staff and on anyone who comes into regular contact with the children at BPS.

#### **Complaints**

At Bowdon Prep (EYFS: Kindergarten & Reception) we aim to provide the highest quality education and care for all our children. We aim to offer a warm welcome to each individual child and family and to provide a warm and caring environment within which all children can learn and develop.

We believe children and parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their concerns. Our intention is to work in partnership with parents and the community generally and we welcome suggestions on how to improve our group at any time.

A parent who is uneasy about any aspect of the Early Years provision should first talk over any worries and anxieties with the Early Years Phase Leader. If necessary, the issue can then be taken to the Headteacher.

If this does not resolve the issue or if the problem recurs, the parent should put the concerns or complaint in writing and request a meeting with the Headteacher who will address the matter within 28 working days. Please see the school Complaints Policy for stages and procedures.

### **The role of the registering authority**

In some circumstances, it might be necessary to bring in the local authority registration inspection unit, who have a duty to ensure laid down requirements are adhered to. The registering authority would be involved if a child appeared to be at risk or where there seemed to be a possible breach of registration requirements. In these cases, both the parent(s) and Bowdon Prep would be informed and a development worker would work with “Children’s Schools and Families” to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by appropriate action.

### **OFSTED involvement**

A parent has the right to contact the Ofsted helpline or the Independent School Inspectorate if they so desire. Providers must provide Ofsted, on request, with a written record of all complaints made during any specified period, and the action which was taken, as a result of each complaint.

There are several local officers who represent the Trafford area and you can contact them on: 0300 123 1231

The address is:

Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD

Or call 0207 600 0100 or email [concerns@isi.net](mailto:concerns@isi.net) to contact ISI about school concerns, concerns for the safety or welfare of a child and queries relating to safeguarding.

The address is:

Independent Schools Inspectorate, CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, London EC1A 9HA

We believe that most complaints are made constructively and can be sorted out at an early stage. We also believe that it is in the best interests of Bowdon Prep School and parents that complaints should be taken seriously and dealt with fairly and in a way that respects confidentiality.

### **Policy Dissemination, Monitoring and Evaluation**

All staff and Governors will receive a copy of the Early Years Policy. Copies may be reviewed by parents. This policy will be reviewed, evaluated and updated as required and formally on an annual basis to assess its relevance and effectiveness. This Policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body (Teaching and Learning subcommittee).

### **Policy Review and Dissemination**

All members of staff and governors will receive a copy of this policy (via TEAMS link).

The policy will be available for Parents on our website. A paper copy can be requested via the School Office [office@bowdonprep.org.uk](mailto:office@bowdonprep.org.uk)

<b>SLT member responsible</b>	G Oakley
<b>Governor / Board Responsible</b>	Education Committee
<b>Date of review</b>	September 2025
<b>Date of next review</b>	Autumn 2026

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Non collection of children procedure**

In the event that a child is not collected by an authorised adult at the end of a school day, the Early Years staff put into practice agreed procedures.

In the event that a child is not collected by an authorised adult, we will ensure that the child receives a high standard of care in order to cause as little distress as possible. We inform parents/carers of our procedures so that, if they are unavoidably delayed, they will be reassured that their children will be properly cared for.

### **Procedures**

1. Parents of children starting at Bowdon Prep Early Years are asked to provide specific information which is recorded on our Registration Form and emergency contact form including:

- home address and telephone number(s) of the people who have parental responsibility
- mobile telephone number(s) for parents/carers
- place of work, address and telephone number (if applicable);
- names, addresses, telephone numbers and signatures of adults who are authorised by the parents to collect their child from school, for example a childminder or grandparent;
- information about any person who does not have legal access to the child
- a password used to collect the child from school
- hours attended within the setting

2. On occasions when parents are aware that they will not be at home or in their usual place of work, they must record how they can be contacted on documentation stored in their child's file. This information is fed through to all of the staff to reduce the risk of delay in contacting the parent in case of emergency.

3. On occasions when the parents or carers normally authorised to collect the child are not able to collect the child, they record the name and telephone number of the person who will be collecting their child on our Alternative Collection Form in the child's file. We agree with parents how the identification of the person who is to collect their child will be verified.

4. Parents are informed that if they are not able to collect the child as planned, they must inform us so that we can begin our back-up procedures. We provide parents with our contact telephone numbers. We also inform parents that in the event that their child is not collected from school by an authorised adult and the staff can no longer supervise the child in our premises, we apply our child protection procedures, as set out in our child protection policy.

5. If a child is not collected at the end of the session, we follow the following procedures

- The Child's File/Alternative Collection File is checked for any information about changes to the normal collection routines;
- If no information is available, parents/carers are contacted at home or at work;
- If this is unsuccessful, the adults who are authorised by the parents to collect their child from school and whose telephone numbers are recorded on the Emergency Contacts Form are contacted;
- the child stays at school in the care of a member of staff until the child is safely collected;
- the child does not leave the premises with anyone other than those named on the Emergency Contacts Form and in the Child's File / Alternative collection slip;

*Under no circumstances should staff leave the premises to look for the parent or take the child home with them.*

6. If no-one collects the child after one hour and there is no one who can be contacted to collect the child, we apply the procedures set out in our Child Protection Policy. We contact:

- MARAT a Multi-Agency Referral and Assessment Team that acts as the 'front door' for Trafford's children and young people's service. The general helpline is open 8.30am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday. Outside of these hours the Emergency Duty Team can be contacted for urgent enquiries.

The General Helpline 0161 912 5125 8.30am to 4.30pm

Emergency Duty Team 0161 912 2020 - Out of Hours

marat@trafford.gov.uk

MARAT accept referrals for children and young people that are deemed to be in need of a certain level of support and undertake child protection enquiries where appropriate. Once a referral has been accepted an Initial Assessment will be completed with a view to identifying appropriate services.

It will be the decision of the duty social worker to take charge of the situation and decide what happens next, and whether the police need to be involved in helping to trace the Parent/Guardian of the child.

7. A full written report of the incident is recorded in the child's file; and we will also contact:

- Ofsted 0300 123 1231
- Early Years and Child Care Service

8. Depending on the circumstances, we reserve the right to charge parents for the additional hours worked by our staff.

9. If the parent/carer or designated adult is going to be late in picking up their child, they must call to inform school at the earliest opportunity. If the school is not informed, then the non-collected Child Procedure will be activated. If parent/carer is repeatedly (3 times) late to pick up, "Late pick-up fees" will apply. Every late pick-up is logged into the late pick-up file and must be signed by parent/carer.

## **APPENDIX 2**

Please see Care and Supervision Policy

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **Physical Contact**

All staff engaged in the care and education of children and young people need to exercise caution in the use of physical contact. The expectation is that staff will work in 'limited touch' cultures and that when physical contact is made with pupils this will be in response to the pupil's needs at the time, will be of limited duration and will be appropriate given their age, stage of development and background.

Staff should be aware that even well-intentioned physical contact might be misconstrued directly by the child, an observer or by anyone the action is described to. Staff must therefore always be prepared to justify actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny. Physical contact which is repeated with an individual child or young person is likely to raise questions unless the justification for this is formally agreed by the child, the organisation and those with parental responsibility.

Children with special needs may require more physical contact to assist their everyday learning. The general culture of 'limited touch' will be adapted where appropriate to the individual requirements of each child. The arrangements must be understood and agreed by all concerned, justified in terms of the child's needs, consistently applied and open to scrutiny. Wherever possible, consultation with colleagues should take place where any deviation from the arrangements is anticipated. Any deviation and the justification for it should be documented and reported.

Extra caution may be required where a child has suffered previous abuse or neglect. In the child's view, physical contact might be associated with such experiences and lead to staff being vulnerable to allegations of abuse. Additionally, many such children are extremely needy and seek out inappropriate physical contact. In such circumstances staff should deter the child without causing them a negative experience. Ensuring that a witness is present will help to protect staff from such allegations.

### **Physical Restraint (Positive Handling)**

Please see Care and Supervision Policy