

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Hunts Cross Primary School



Committee: Governors
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1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) that applies from September 2021](#).

3. Structure of the EYFS

Children of reception age are in the Foundation Stage and work towards Early Learning Goals (ELGs) in readiness for the Y1 curriculum.

The four principles of EYFS

- A unique child – developing resilient, capable, confident and self-assured individuals.
 - Positive relationships – supporting the children in becoming strong and independent.
 - Enabling environments – where opportunities and experiences respond to the individual interests and needs of the child by developing a strong partnership between practitioners, parents/carers and the child.
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- Learning and developing – An acknowledgement that children learn in different ways and at different rates.

A Unique Child

At Hunts Cross Primary School we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Development

In our school we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning. In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children who are more able, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children with special educational needs, children with disabilities, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds. It is our firm belief that all children should be given the opportunity and support to thrive and learn.

Inclusion

Each individual child's needs and qualities are recognised and valued, specific needs are met appropriately, showing an awareness of the individual's stage of development.

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children at Hunts Cross Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and families are valued within our school.

Assessments take into account contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential special educational needs is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Staff may be aware of children with additional needs by their own observations, parental information or the involvement from outside agencies. We work with parents and preschool settings prior to entry, which helps us initially to get to know each child and the provision we need to put in place. Children with additional needs may require careful monitoring and extra help. An Early Years Support Plan may need to be put in place. Parents will meet with staff to discuss how this will look and will always be part of this process. A child may need to access additional learning programmes, carry out some specific activities, or meet with one of our specialist outside agency staff. At all times we will work with the parents and children to ensure good progress is being made. We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that show progression and build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;

- planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.
- planning lessons, wherever possible, in a multi-sensory way so that the various activities will cater for all pupils in the spirit of inclusion.

Positive Relationships

At Hunts Cross Primary School, we recognise that children learn to be strong independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families, through creating a partnership with parents; supporting learning and the role of the key person.

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make and their future role, in educating the children. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- an effective and comprehensive transition period to support children and their families;
- ensuring all parents know that their child's teacher and teaching assistant are their key workers;
- parent workshops to help parents understand how they can support their child's learning;
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: home learning activities, school events, productions/assemblies, school visits;
- the use of 2 Simple as an online journal to share children's learning and achievements with parents;
- Providing parents an opportunity to celebrate their child's learning and development by completing "wow" moments and adding them to their learning journey.
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents twice a year at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress together. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year;
- Providing each child with a reading log that goes home with them every day and parents are encouraged to make positive comments on their child's reading at home. We also send Learning Logs home weekly with a mission to be completed linked to children's learning that week so parents can be involved in understanding what their child is learning.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. After the induction period in school, each child will be allocated a key person, which will either be the Classroom Teacher or Teaching Assistant. The 'Key Person' is for the personal and emotional needs for each child, particularly during the settling in period. Both the Classroom teacher and Teaching Assistant are equally aware of the child's learning, development and care. At Hunts

Cross Primary School, the whole school ethos of building on positive relationships is developed, not only between the child, parents and staff, but also between the pupils themselves. This is promoted through

- PSE activities and dedicated circle time sessions.
- Collaborative working on class activities.
- Parent meetings before the children start school.
- Parental workshops, involving both the parents, staff and children.

Enabling Environments

At Hunts Cross Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development and learning. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning, through structured play based activities. The 'Enabling Environment' focuses on looking at the learning environment.

We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision. The children become confident working within the different areas. Effective learning builds and extends upon prior learning and follows children's interest. Effective planning is informed by the EYFS team's judgements and knowledge of the children, as well as observations of the children to ensure we follow their current interests and experiences.

Play based learning is paramount and children direct their own learning, within the environment, from carefully planned opportunities provided by staff. Staff will enhance play and extend as needed to further individual learning.

The Learning Environment

The EYFS classroom is organised to allow the children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active or be quiet and rest. The classroom is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The Foundation stage class has its own enclosed outdoor area, which is currently under a redevelopment to enhance it further. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children the chance to explore, use their senses and be more active. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop **all areas of learning**. In addition, we have a designated 'Forest School' area on our back field where children can engage with outdoor learning on a bigger scale, enabling them to take risk and engage with a wider range of outdoor experiences.

At Hunts Cross Primary School we recognize that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of Learning and Development equally and understand that they are inter-connected. Our long term plan is to provide opportunities for all children to achieve all of the ELGs.

- Our EYFS provision seeks to provide a full and varied curriculum that:

- is of a high quality and consistency, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- has a secure foundation through planning for the learning and development of each individual child, and through assessing and reviewing what they have learned regularly
- values partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- supports equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported

4. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2021.

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

Our children's interests are used as a vehicle for learning. Different cohorts will undoubtedly provide different issues and areas of interest. The children will take part in the circle of knowledge prior to starting a topic. Children will talk about what they know and what they would like to find out.

- Staff's knowledge of the curriculum, the objectives, children's interests, challenges and activities will be fed onto the activities and the short term planning. Planning is differentiated and annotated to include how the children are learning and their next steps.
- The children will be involved in assessing their own learning too. Observations, photographs, videos, what the children produce and professional dialogue with our staff, EYFS in other schools and LA cluster meetings ensure the moderation of children's learning and development is consistent and accurate.

Reading is the key that opens the door for our children to succeed in all areas of the curriculum and it is with this in mind we prioritize the teaching of phonics through a systematic Letters and Sounds Programme. All children are heard to read individually and participate in Shared Reading and Guided Reading groups too. Children take books home from our reading scheme and can access Bug Club for phase appropriate reading opportunities.

Early Learning Goals

Through careful assessments and observations children's development levels are assessed at baseline on entry to school and throughout the year against the seven areas of learning, the children are then reassessed when the seven areas of learning are further categorised into 17 ELG's at the end of the academic year.

The ELG's are not to be used as a curriculum but should be used to support the teacher to make holistic, best-fit judgements about a child's development and their readiness for Year 1.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

Teaching and Learning Style

Teaching and learning in EYFS embodies the characteristics of learning. Planning and guided children's activities will reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. At Hunts Cross we support children in using the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning. These are;

- playing and exploring - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go';
- active learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements; and
- Creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Playing and Exploring

By learning through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practice and build ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Active learning

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence, they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Creativity and Critical Thinking

Children should be given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them round the classroom to extend their learning.

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1.

5. Assessment

At Hunts Cross, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

At the **end of the EYFS**, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters [guidance](#)) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

6. Safeguarding and Welfare Procedures

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by talking to children about:

The effects of eating too many sweet things

The importance of brushing your teeth

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why these exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

We understand that we are required to:

- Promote the welfare and safeguarding of children.
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- Manage behavior effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose

Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious fruit snacks, access to water throughout the day, through curriculum coverage of keeping healthy, allocating significant time for physical development and following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident.

Staff and visitors are prohibited from using their mobile phones in our classrooms, only the class iPads are used to photograph children (for Tapestry observations and assessment purposes) and children must be appropriately dressed in photographs.

Hunts Cross Primary School has robust systems in place to ensure that all practitioners who have regular contact with children are suitable for their role.

The EYFS staff hold the Pediatric First aid qualification, a statutory requirement of the EYFS.

The Child Protection Policy is in place to ensure the safety of all stakeholders at Hunts Cross Primary School. This policy is further supported by a dedicated safeguarding team which includes a system to log any concerns regarding any aspects of safeguarding and behavior. All staff are vigilant in reporting concerns.

Our class procedures comply with LA and School Health and Safety guidelines. Daily risk assessments are completed for the EYFS area and provision, as well as additional risk assessments for specific events or outings.

All children and adults are encouraged to develop their own observational skills in order to prevent accidents by carrying out on going risk assessments for resources and places. Anything that needs to be reported is brought to the attention of the EYFS Lead who will then escalate it to the appropriate person with responsibility for Health and Safety.

7. Transition

From Pre-school /Feeder Settings

During the summer term prior to a child's entry into the Reception year, the following procedures are normally put into place to ensure successful transition:

- Parents are invited to an evening meeting in the Summer Term where we share information and provide starting packs for each child. This is an opportunity to chat to our new parents and for them to tell us about their child to ensure they know about school procedures and are provided with an opportunity to discuss with school staff any concerns they may have.
- During the summer term parents are encouraged to complete the "All about Me" document. It is used during the autumn term to support transition and to inform planning.
- The children are invited to visit their reception class for the afternoon. This allows children to explore the setting for a short period and have an enjoyable time meeting the staff and their future peers.

From Reception Class to Key Stage 1

- During the final term in Reception, each child is assessed against the ELGs. This provides parents and carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels and their readiness for Year 1.
- A written report is sent to the parents, stating their progress and achievement.

Each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals. This indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or are not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This informs the dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1 to ensure the needs of all children are met during this transition point.

8. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the head teacher every 2 years.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy
Administering medicines policy	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See health and safety policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy