

Horton Park Primary School



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We Learn to Succeed

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Early Years Leader: Lucy Azzopardi

Last Reviewed: November 2017

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Adopted: Lucy Azzopardi **Reviewed:** November 2017
To Be Reviewed: Annually in July

Mission Statement: We learn to succeed

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.'

(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, 2017)

The purpose of the Early Years Foundation Stage in our school is to: provide each child a positive and meaningful start to their school life, in which they can establish solid foundations on which to develop into successful learners.

We will encourage children to develop independence within a 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 by developing the confidence to work towards personal goals.

Our high expectations will enable each child to develop socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally and to achieve their full potential.

We offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited availability for development through a wide range of new and exciting first-hand experiences that will give children the opportunity to consolidate, explore and test their skills, knowledge and understanding alongside existing experiences.

We will ensure that children are kept healthy and safe and that they achieve the knowledge and skills they need to start school.

THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE CURRICULUM

The Reception classes at Horton Park Primary School follow the early year's curriculum as outlined in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2017). This clearly defines what we teach.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of **three prime** and **four specific areas** of learning:

The **three prime areas** are:

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

The **four specific areas** of learning are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning and the reception teachers plan activities with these at the forefront of their minds. The characteristics highlight the importance of a child's attitude towards learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them. The three characteristics are;

Playing and Exploring – children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'

Active Learning – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements

Creating and Thinking Critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

BREADTH OF STUDY

Through careful planning and preparation we aim to ensure that children are given opportunities to work towards and achieve the Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

TEACHERS PLANNING AND ORGANISATION

Reception class teachers are responsible for the planning and delivery of the Early Years curriculum in consultation with the Early Years Leader.

The planning objectives within the Foundation Stage are taken from the Development Matters document. All areas are delivered through a well-planned play based approach, with a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. Planning, is based upon topics that have been identified as vehicles of interest to enable us to deliver the children's next steps in learning. Planning is adapted systematically to reflect children's snapshots and half-termly assessments.

Discrete literacy, maths, phonics and guided reading, and other directed teaching including P.E., PSHCE (circle time) and music also take place.

Our long term planning ensures coverage of key ages and stages and aspects across the Reception year. Our medium and short-term plans ensure that each child has the opportunity to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in every area at their appropriate developmental level.

Learning through Play

Learning through play underpins our approach to teaching and learning in the foundation stage. We embrace the fact that young children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them to learn. In doing so we can provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning and to help them make sense of the world. Children 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 experiences at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests, inspire those around them and consolidate their understanding and skills. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. Our adults take an active role in child initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating, teaching and extending play, skills and language.

INCLUSION INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS - Statement for G&T

Our Early Years Foundation stage embraces inclusion. We recognise and respect the abilities and strengths of our children at all levels of development and the wealth of knowledge and experience that they bring from their differing backgrounds and cultures.

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 and we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of individual children, so that children are able to reach their full potential.

We achieve this by plan systematically in order to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups, those from diverse linguistic backgrounds and our disadvantaged pupils.

We will monitor children's progress and take action to provide support as necessary. Where a specific need is suspected we will liaise with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator and seek advice from outside agencies, such as the speech and language service, the educational psychologist and the bi-lingual support services amongst others. We adhere to the Equal Opportunity and Inclusion policies of the school.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES – refer to Equal Opportunities Act 2010

We seek to take advantage of multi-cultural aspects of learning, we encourage our pupils to learn about and be respectful of other pupils' religious beliefs and cultures. We ensure that all children are able to fulfil their potential regardless of race, religion, disability, gender or disadvantage.

PUPILS' RECORDS OF WORK

Children are provided with different opportunities for recording their ideas such as written, speaking activities, and artwork. Children are encouraged to work mixed ability within a group setting as well as working independently. All children are encouraged to work tidily and neatly when recording their work, adhering to the Presentation and Handwriting Policy (see English policy appendix).

MARKING

Marking of children's work is essential to ensure they make further progress. Work is marked once completed before a child starts the next piece of work. Evidence trackers and pupil targets are updated at the time of marking to ensure that these remain up-to-date.

All work is marked against learning objectives derived from the Development Matters document and related success criteria, in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) marking policy, created in-line with the school marking policy, and includes 'Now' steps. Children are encouraged to self-evaluate their work and are given time to respond to the 'Now' or 'Then' steps relevant to their achievements in a given piece of work.

Photographs are used consistently to record pupils' use of physical resources in their learning.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Marking Policy describes the above in greater detail.

ASSESSMENT AND RECORD KEEPING

Assessment in Reception begins in September when staff complete initial observations of pupils over a two to four week period in order to complete initial baseline assessments of each pupil. Baseline assessments take account of data provided by nursery settings, practitioner judgements during transition activities and home visits. These judgements against the 17 aspects of learning are then moderated between the EYFS teachers, and by an external EYFS consultant to ensure their accuracy.

Following this, aspirational targets are set for each pupil, progress towards which is monitored on a half-termly basis.

Throughout Reception, children's knowledge, understanding, skills and achievements are assessed and tracked using the developmental stages set out in the document 'Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)'.

Half-termly assessments are based on evidence gathered by pupils' teachers and key person in the form of observations, including parent contributions, independent work, Literacy and Mathematics books (adult focus activities) and homework. Pupil snapshots are completed on a half-termly basis which support practitioners to gather evidence, targeted at pupils' next steps.

Pupil observations and records of their independent learning are recorded using Primary Essence; this evidence includes written observations, photographs, videos and ‘label images’ of independent written work and forms an electronic Learning Journey for each pupil.

Half-termly assessment data is analysed and reported and is used to inform targeted planning for the following half term.

At the end of the academic year, observational evidence and samples of children’s work throughout the school year will be used to assess children as ‘emerging’, ‘expected’ or ‘exceeding’ based on their understanding and achievement of the Early Learning Goals set out in the EYFS curriculum this data is then submitted to the local authority.

Transition

At Horton Park Primary School, we recognise that starting school has the potential to be a stressful time for both children and parents. To this end, we have established a strong procedure for transition in to school to ensure that our children and parents are as confident and secure as they can be when starting school.

Beginning in the Autumn Term, potential applicants are offered the opportunity to visit the school. Children are invited to partake in activities in the school library and parents are offered a tour of the school.

During the Spring term, members of the Early Years team begin visiting groups of children at Canterbury Nursery School and they and their parents/carers along with nursery staff visit the reception classrooms. This process is supported by the strong links with our ‘feeder nursery’, Canterbury Nursery School.

Children who attend alternative Nursery settings are also visited in their setting by their new class teacher. All other transition arrangements (parent meeting, admissions meetings and home visit) are the same for these pupils.

The school then holds a new parent’s meeting in the summer term before the children start school to provide parents with key information, school expectations, knowledge on our curriculum and assessment and advice on how they can help their child. In addition, parents then attend school to complete an admissions meeting with a member of school SLT.

All parents are also offered a home visit prior to their child starting school. This gives children the security of meeting with their teachers in a safe, familiar environment and gives parents time to ask questions and share knowledge or any concerns they have about their child.

In the summer term reception children have further opportunities to meet with their teachers in their classroom on two occasions, once with their parents and once on their own to help them prepare for their new experiences.

At the beginning of the school year children are given staggered entry times to ensure that they have the time to feel welcomed and to support them in exploring their new environment. In reception there is a two week settling in period to ensure that children have the time to become secure and familiar with the new routines before starting school full time. For the first week children attend school in the mornings only and for the second week children attend for mornings and then stay for lunch, before building up to full days.

During children's time in Reception a range of shared activities are planned for all classes to help develop children's confidence and to ensure continuity in experiences throughout the foundation stage. Reception pupils make use of the whole school facilities, such as the hall, library MUGA, and large playground for appropriate activities to ensure that children are confident and well prepared for moving around the school and for mixing with older children when they start school. Throughout the reception year, when children are ready they are gradually introduced to whole school activities such as assemblies.

At the end of the Reception year, children have the opportunity to meet with their new teachers in their classrooms on three occasions prior to starting Year One. At the end of the school year teachers have the opportunity to share their knowledge of each child's knowledge, understanding and achievements, including end of year assessment data, with their next class teacher to ensure that all teachers have a well-rounded picture of the children prior to the new school year.

Safeguarding our Pupils

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. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance (2017)

Staff in the EYFS follow all safeguarding procedures in line with the school safeguarding and other appropriate policies e.g. the Intimate Care Policy.

Weekly safeguarding meetings take place with the EYFS team; any additional concerns are reported throughout the week to the Early Years leader and these are dealt with immediately.

Parental Involvement

We believe that parents and carers are a child's first educator and therefore work very closely to ensure they are involved in what their child does at school. We want parents to feel they can speak to us about their child and to feel comfortable in our setting.

Parents are invited to attend parent consultations on two occasions each year. In addition, the annual report to parents includes information re: progress and attainment and future targets in all areas of the curriculum.

Parents are always welcomed to discuss their children informally at the end of the school day, alternatively, if they feel an informal chat is not sufficient to meet their

child's needs at that time, they are able to arrange a short meeting with their child's class teacher at a convenient time.

Throughout the year, we offer parents a variety of learning workshops to provide advice and information on how they can support their child's learning. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to share information about their child, to ask questions and to discuss their child's learning with the teachers.

Parents and carers are also invited to regular celebration events within school.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring will be carried out by the Early Years Leader as follows:

1. **Auditing Planning:** Access to all planning, relating planning to the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum and evaluating appropriateness. Also through formal and informal classroom observations when prioritised on the School Improvement plan.
2. **Monitoring of work:** Analysis of pupil's work in work scrutiny and discussions with pupils and class teachers.
3. **Monitoring of observations:** Analysis of practitioner observations of pupils to ensure that they are in line with Early Years observation protocol.
4. **Monitor the Quality of teaching:** Analysis of planning and observations of teaching. Monitor the effectiveness of planning in practice.
5. **Auditing Resources (The Enabling Environment):** Annual risk assessment and ongoing evaluation of resources. Monitor use of resources.

The subject leader will:

- Lead by example showing a thorough understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Offer support to teachers in assessment, planning, teaching and delivery.
- Work alongside the Headteacher to monitor and evaluate teaching and progress.
- Identify training and development needs, plan and deliver training.
- Manage the resources for the Early Years Foundation Stage, prioritising spending in consultation with staff and in accordance with the Early Years Foundation Stage action plan and SIP.

Children will be encouraged to:

- Attend school every day.
- Engage fully in the learning activities provided.
- Keep trying when they face difficulties in their learning.
- Think critically about their learning.
- Be confident to talk about their learning and achievements.
- Make relationships and work sensibly and cooperatively alongside their peers.

Parents will:

- Be encouraged to develop positive attitudes to the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.

- Actively support their children when talk homework is given.
- Be well informed of their children's progress through access to their online learning journal through Primary Essence, annual reports and parents meetings.
- Be encouraged to add to their child's learning journey at home.
- Endeavour to attend parents meetings and learning workshops which will take place half-termly.

Review Process

Headteacher reports outcomes of monitoring and evaluations to the Governing body half termly. Headteacher, Deputy Head / Early Years Foundation Stage Leader monitor delivery in practice and related planning; feeding back outcomes and development points to staff as appropriate.