




Hunnyhill Primary School & PreSchool

Date of Review	June 2023
Next Review Due	June 2024
Staff Responsibility	EYFS Team
Notes / Source	
Signed by Chair of Governors	

Early Years & Foundation Stage Policy

Introduction

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up”. (Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, DfE 2021).

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children are ready for the demands of the National Curriculum and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

The EYFS seeks to provide:

- quality and consistency in all early year’s settings, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind;
- a secure foundation through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each individual child and are assessed and reviewed regularly;
- partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers;
- equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included supported.

(Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage, DfE 2021).

Principles

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- **A unique child.** At Hunnyhill we recognise that every child is a unique, competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by the feedback they receive from others and therefore we use praise and encouragement alongside celebration and rewards to encourage and develop an intrinsically positive attitude to learning.
- **Positive relationships.** We understand that children learn to be strong and independent as a result of forming secure relationships. Therefore, we work hard to develop a caring, respectful and professional relationship with each child and their family.
- **Enabling Environments.** We value the importance that the environment plays in nurturing, supporting and extending each child's development. Through our observations, our knowledge of each child and the information we receive from families we are able to generate a holistic view of each child's individual interests, stages of development and learning needs. We use this information to plan challenging, stimulating and interesting activities and experiences which extends the children's learning.
- **Learning and development.** Hunnyhill's Early Years Foundation Stage is organised in a way which allows each child to explore and learn in their own way, at their own rate and whilst feeling safe and supported.

At Hunnyhill we believe early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. Therefore, we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. However, we also strongly believe that early childhood is a valuable part of life and consequently view the EYFS as a preparation tool for life and not just the next stage of a child's education.

The EYFS begins at birth and continues until the child finishes Reception. At Hunnyhill we understand that each child begins school and PreSchool with a wide variety of previous experiences and learning. However, through adopting a holistic approach to learning and by ensuring children's previous settings, parents/guardians and the EYFS staff work effectively together, we can continue to build on these prior learning experiences to support the learning and development of each child as they progress through the EYFS and then onto Year 1.

Aims

It is every child's right to grow up safe, healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and with economic wellbeing. The overarching aim of the EYFS is to help young children achieve these five outcomes.

We provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, culturally, physical, creatively and intellectually. Each child is valued as an individual and teaching and learning is based on the understanding that children develop at different rates.

At Hunnyhill Primary and PreSchool we aim to:

- Provide a safe, challenging, stimulating, caring and sharing environment which is sensitive to the needs of all children including those with additional needs.
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development into Key Stage 1 and beyond.
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress holistically.
- Enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence.
- Work in partnership with parents and guardians and value their contributions, ensuring that all children irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties disabilities, gender or ability, are able to access the curriculum fully and benefit from close home-school links.
- Provide opportunities whereby children experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development.
- Provide inclusive experiences for all children, whatever their needs.

Learning and Development

The EYFS categorise learning and development into three prime areas of learning;

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

In addition to this, there are four specific areas of learning:

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

Achievement in both the prime and specific areas occurs as a result of the characteristics of effective learning.

- Playing and exploring.
- Active learning.
- Creating and thinking critically.

Observations, Assessment and Planning

Good planning is the key to making children's learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive. Effective learning builds on and extends what the children already know and can do. Our planning is always informed by observations that have been made of the children, in order to understand and consider their current interests, development and learning needs. All of the EYFS team are involved in this process. At Hunnyhill Primary and PreSchool we do not make a distinction between work and play. Children learn through planned, purposeful play activities both inside and outside.

At the start of the academic year the EYFS team create a long-term plan. This shows learning opportunities that are planned by the adult following the children's interests. The themes and topics from this plan are fed into our medium-term plan. This shows in detail how the topic will be delivered and taught throughout each area of the curriculum. Running alongside this adult-led planning is our child-initiated planning. This planning is led mainly, but not exclusively, by the children's interests and fascinations. These interests are identified by observations of the children's play alongside the practitioner's detailed knowledge of their key children. This planning is therefore continuously developing and updated as these interests occur. Each key person contributes to this responsive planning.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we always use this information to ensure that future planning reflects the identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS is captured, recorded and stored using Tapestry. Tapestry is an electronic learning journal that captures photos, videos and allows written observations to be made. These observations are made by the class teacher, the teaching assistant and any other adults as appropriate. As soon as these observations have been added to the child's learning journal they can be seen by the adults who have access to their journal. After receiving training on Tapestry, parents are asked to contribute any observations they make outside of school regarding their child's learning and development.

Parents and guardians are given the opportunity to meet with their child's teacher and teaching assistant (one of which will also be their key person) throughout the year to discuss their child's learning and development. Alongside the parents will receive an attainment report showing their child's current stage of development in each area of the curriculum.

At the end of the summer term in Reception, parents will be informed if their child has achieved the expected Early Learning Goals. The Early Learning Goals are statements set out by the Government to state what each child at the end of Reception year should have achieved. After receiving these the parents have an opportunity to discuss this information with their child's teacher.

Key Person

In order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) each child will be assigned a Key Person who will help them to become familiar with their surroundings and will develop a genuine bond with the child and immediate family. The EYFS framework states a Key Person's role is to 'help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs, to help the child to become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with parents.' (Statutory Framework for EYFS, 2021). At Hunnyhill your child's Key Person will be either the class teacher or the teaching assistant. However, the class teacher has overall responsibility for the holistic wellbeing and education of each child.

The Transition Process

We have good links with our feeder pre-schools and work together to ensure each child and their family experience a smooth transition into Hunnyhill Primary School's EYFS. We have a detailed and thorough transition procedure which offers children the opportunity to visit our EYFS with their parents and nursery key person as well as the EYFS staff to visit the children in their nursery and, if the parents accept, at home.

On the rare occasion that a parent feels their child is not ready to start school a meeting will be held with the Headteacher to discuss this matter further.

When children start our school in September, we ensure each child and their family are integrated well into their new surroundings and we continue to work closely with each child's family throughout the year.

Home and School Links

At Hunnyhill we recognise and understand that parents and carers are a child's first educators and we aim for the school and parents/carers to work closely together. We understand working in partnership with parents can have a very positive impact on a child's development but also acknowledge this relies on a two-way flow of information and knowledge. To develop this partnership, we spend time getting to know each child and their family before they start school. Whilst in our EYFS we offer parents/carers the opportunities to come into school to play and learn alongside their children, workshops both during the day and in the evenings and ensure a range of family members are offered the opportunity to access Tapestry. We also use Class Dojo to communicate with our parents.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunity

At Hunnyhill we believe that every child can achieve and we give all our children every opportunity to achieve their best. This includes children with special educational needs, disabilities and children who are more able. Every child will be supported as appropriate to their needs to enable them to access the curriculum fully. A Personalised Learning Plan will be completed to show the progress and support each SEN child has received.

The schools Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) is responsible for supporting teachers to give additional information and advice to parents regarding external interventions and other required support. Please see separate SEN policy.

In line with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy, we provide all children, regardless of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disability, gender, or ability with equal access to all aspects of school life and ensure every child is valued as an individual. All staff are role models and are aware of the influence they have in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical attitudes.

We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children in line with the School Safeguarding Policy. Therefore, the EYFS team work closely with the Inclusion team.

Welfare

"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" (Statutory Framework for EYFS, 2014).

At Hunnyhill Primary School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage Revised Framework from September 2021.

Cultural Capital

Cultural capital is at the centre of early years education. It is covered through daily interactions and activities with the children in the setting. Cultural Capital is closely linked to PSED / Values. Cultural Capital means knowing your children. The Unique child.

We plan and explore topics that the children are interested in, providing 'awe and wonder' activities the children have access to. We celebrate events, birthdays, special occasion and events children have discussed. We provide visits or outings and invite into school visitors, parents and relatives. Children are encouraged to explore the world around them using a variety of resources, materials and activities. We provide opportunities such as; trips, visit to/from the library, stretch and relax, nurse visits on personal hygiene e.g brush teeth and washing hands, we celebrate different culture festivals, we explore the world around us thorough : mud kitchen, growing our won plants , trying /tasting food, cooking, speaking and listening activities, group snack time and nurturing.

Continual Professional Development

Learning observations of teachers and teaching assistance practice are carried out frequently, in line with the teaching standards. These observations, looking at work samples and walks around the environment are used to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in the EYFS. In order to keep up to date with any changes, deepen our understanding of the best practice in the EYFS and learn new skills the Early Years staff have opportunities to undertake regular training.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teachers to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Head teacher and EYFS Team will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule and report to the Full Governing Body.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding and related policies.