

Hillside Primary School

EYFS Policy



HILLSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL EYFS POLICY

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Hillside Primary School, children join the Nursery class from the term before they turn three and the Reception class in the September following their fourth birthday.

Our Aims

- To give each child a happy, positive and fun 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, including cultural 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 opportunity 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.

The Curriculum

The Nursery and Reception follow the curriculum as outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework, which is available for download at [2021 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#). This clearly defines what we teach.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- **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 needs of the child by developing a strong partnership between practitioners, parents/carers and the child.
- **Learning and developing** – An acknowledgement that children learn in different ways and at different rates.

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
- Personal, social and emotional development
- Physical development

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

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

Educational programmes must involve activities and experiences for children, as set out under each of the areas of learning:

Communication and Language

The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, story-telling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Children's personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Strong, warm and supportive relationships with adults enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. Children should be supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary. Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently. Through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceably. These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.

Physical Development

Physical activity is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives. Gross and fine motor experiences develop incrementally throughout early childhood, starting with sensory explorations and the development of a child's strength, co-ordination and positional awareness. By creating games and providing opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors, adults can support children to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being. Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination, which is later linked to early literacy. Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practice of using small tools, with feedback and support from adults, allow children to develop proficiency, control and confidence.

Literacy

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).

Mathematics

Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. Children should be able to count confidently, develop a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers. By providing frequent and varied opportunities to build and apply this understanding - such as using manipulatives, including small pebbles and tens frames for organising counting - children will develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary from which mastery of mathematics is built. In addition, it is important that the curriculum includes rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures. It is important that children develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, 'have a go', talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.

Understanding the World

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them – from visiting parks, libraries and museums to meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses and firefighters. In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains. Enriching and widening children's vocabulary will support later reading comprehension.

Expressive Arts and Design

The development of children's artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. The quality and variety of what children see, hear and participate in is crucial for developing their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate through the arts. The frequency, repetition and depth of their experiences are fundamental to their progress in interpreting and appreciating what they hear, respond to and observe

Planning

Nursery and Reception staff plan and work closely together, to ensure for both continuity and progression between the classes.

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning. The Nursery and Reception teachers plan activities within the Nursery and Reception classrooms with these 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** – 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.

Planning will also incorporate a good balance between adult-directed and child-initiated (free-flow) activities, both inside and outside.

Staff take into account the individual needs, interests, background and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience, whilst also exploring and upholding their Cultural Capital.

In planning and guiding children's activities, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff will make the necessary adjustments/adaptations to the learning environment, while also considering whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

All planning is well-displayed both inside and outside and in addition to daily/weekly 'editable' planning and timetables, developmental learning objectives are also displayed in all areas of continuous provision (e.g. Sand Tray, Water Tray, Home Corner, Construction Area, Writing Areas etc.).

Teaching

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 children builds understanding and therefore guides new learning. The adult's role is to continually model, demonstrate and question what the child is doing and all staff are presented with general and activity-specific guidance to support this process. 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.

Assessment

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. Practitioners also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers. Relevant and significant observations are recorded on 'Tapestry', the children's online Learning Journey. All practitioners are expected to show an understanding of what the pupils know and can do and what their next steps in learning are. They are regularly expected to discuss this with leaders to ensure we meet the needs of all pupils within the setting and we adapt timetables, the environment and planning to ensure we continue to be ambitious for all pupils.

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 or,
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers. The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters guidance and our own in school curriculum documents) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

Working with Parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers. Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development, through Tapestry, weekly news blogs, reports, meetings etc. The progress check and EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities. Each child is assigned a key person who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home and will often be responsible for writing comments on Tapestry (along with the Lead/Teacher). The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

Equal Opportunities

All members of the school are treated as individuals. We aim to meet the needs of all, taking account of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, special educational needs, disability, and social circumstances. All staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect cultural diversity and the need to prepare pupils for life in a diverse and multi-faith society

The Learning Environment

The EYFS classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active or take things more quietly. The classroom covers all learning areas, where children are able to find and use equipment and resources independently. We aim to incorporate an '80% familiar and 20% new' balance of resources, to enable the children to build upon existing knowledge and skills, provide new experiences and to stimulate curiosity and motivation. In addition to the EYFS having its own large enclosed outdoor area, the children are also able to access (with supervision) the large school grounds, which includes wooded areas, a garden, a large climbing frame and a pond/wildlife area. 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 ability to explore, use their senses and be physically active, be exuberant and engage with nature. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all areas of learning.

Visits and Visitors

We actively seek parental support on trips, aiming for a ratio of one adult for two children in Nursery and a minimum of 1:5 in Reception. For safety reasons we say no to younger siblings coming along on school trips.

Visitors also really enhance a topic and we like to have 'experts' coming in to talk to the children, a Doctor for example. We ask parents if they are able (and brave enough!) to share knowledge or a skill, be it cooking, how to bath a baby, painting mehndi patterns on hands or playing guitar.

Transition into Nursery

Prior to their child starting, parents are provided with an information pack, including the Nursery Charging & Admissions Policy and photos of staff to share with their children.

Taster sessions: children are invited into the setting during our Play and Stay settling in week during the first week of the autumn term. During these sessions children and parents benefit from spending time in the setting in small groups, getting the opportunity to find out about how the nursery runs on a daily basis (e.g. routines etc) and meeting all of the staff.

If children should start mid-term, then a taster session will be arranged during the nursery day and parents can attend this too.

Staff work closely with parents during the children's settling in phase and we understand that some

children require more tailored sessions to support them and arrangements for this are discussed with parents to ensure their needs are met.

Transition into Reception Year

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

- In the summer term the children visit the Reception classroom once with their pre-school practitioners or parents and once without their support (Children who are transitioning from Hillside Nursery already share the outside area, becoming familiar with the Reception staff, and may have used the Reception Classroom also.)
- Parents are invited to a meeting to ensure they know about school procedures and discuss any concerns they may have. At this point they are provided with an 'All about me' pack to complete about their child.
- Members of staff from Hillside Primary School make links to feeder settings. The number of meetings/visits will depend on the child's needs and how much information gathering is required in order to support the child's transition.
- Before the children start school, parents are invited into school individually to have the opportunity to talk freely about their child and to clarify procedures or discuss any concerns they may have.

Transition from Reception to Key Stage 1

During the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile 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.

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.

Welfare and Safeguarding

We understand that: '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 2021)

At Hillside Primary School there are clear procedures for assessing risk which includes procedures for keeping children safe during outings and for any aspects of the environment or provision that may require a further risk assessment.

In line with the EYFS statutory framework 2021, at Hillside Primary School we undertake;

- A whole school Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy ensuring that there are systems in place to ensure that medicines and the systems for obtaining information about a child's needs for medication are kept up to date. Training is provided for staff where the

administration of medicine requires medical or technical knowledge. We will administer prescription medicines only where written permission for that particular medicine has been obtained from the child's parent and/or carer. At Hillside Primary School a written record is kept each time a medicine is administered to a child and informs the child's parents and/or carers on the same day. Non-prescription medicines can only be administered by a parent/carer.

- Fresh drinking water is available at all times.
- Children's' dietary needs are recorded and acted upon when required.
- Fruit is provided during the morning in Reception class. Milk and fruit is provided at snack time in Nursery.
- A paediatric first aider is accessible at all times and a record of accidents and injuries is kept.
- A fire and emergency evacuation procedure and policy
- A whole school Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Staff Code of Conduct Policy stating how mobile phones and cameras are to be used and stored securely whilst children are in the setting. Cameras that are used in school must not be used for staff own personal use.

It is important to note that members of staff and visiting parents, do not use their mobile phones or personal handset devices in the classroom and are prohibited from taking photographs with their personal handsets. Members of staff do, however, use school iPads to take photographs as evidence of children's progress in the EYFS. 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 or Facebook page etc. through the paperwork in their initial starter packs.

Designated Governor Committee: Curriculum + Governors

Name/Signature of Headteacher Teacher: Simon Minter

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