



Early Years Policy

This policy was approved at a meeting of the Full Governing Body on 19th March 2019

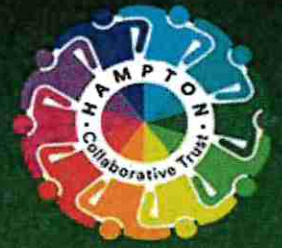
Chair of Governors: Mr L Shilling

Headteacher: Ms Y Nunn

Signed.......... Chair of Governors

Signed.......... Headteacher

Review date: March 2021



Early Years 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 2017)**

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's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life. All children in our Little Hedgehogs Nursery and Foundation Stage classes work within this framework.

It details four key principles which shape our practice

A Unique Child

Positive Relationships

Enabling Environments

Learning and Development

We recognise that every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

We support children in building positive relationships through which children learn to be strong and independent. We also aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families.

We provide enabling environments in which children learn and develop ensuring experiences provided respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and carers.

We understand that children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. Our environment is made up of a Nursery Class and outdoor environment and 3 Foundation Stage classes with a shared outdoor learning environment. All our learning environments are organised to allow children to explore and learn safely and securely. The seven areas of learning are defined so that children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

Areas of Learning

There are seven areas of learning and development that shape our Foundation Stage Curriculum. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These three areas, the prime areas, are:

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social and emotional development



We also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

- literacy
- mathematics
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design

As set out in the EYFS Statutory guidance, at Hampton we provide the following experiences for children in our Foundation Stage:

- **Communication and language** development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations
- **Physical development** involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food
- **Personal, social and emotional development** involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities
- **Literacy** development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest
- **Mathematics** involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measure
- **Understanding the world** involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment
- **Expressive arts and design** involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

The Prime Areas are essential for fostering early learning skills and are promoted heavily through our planning and provision. Successful mastery of these skills supports children to achieve well in Specific Areas of Learning.

Across all of these areas we promote Characteristics of Effective Learning where children develop their abilities to play and explore, take an active role in their learning and think creatively. We observe and monitor progress with these skills and report these to parents.

We operate a free flow approach which includes indoor and outdoor spaces. In this way children can access a range of self-directed challenges alongside structured adult led learning experiences. We recognise the importance of open ended experiences to promote purposeful and challenging play. Practitioners observe and extend this play as appropriate. They further use these observations to enhance provision and extend individual learning.



Letters and Sounds

Listening and attention skills are developed right from the beginning of the Foundation Stage in our nursery. Phase 1 of the Letters and Sounds Phonic Programme begins in the nursery. This is a daily programme of interactive experiences that promote phonological awareness and key skills for reading and spelling. Further phases continue throughout the Foundation Stage and into Key Stage 1. Letters and Sounds information workshops for parents and carers are held in the first term of the Foundation Stage year to share how children learn at school and provide ideas and strategies of how children can be further supported at home. Alongside the Letters and Sounds programme we use the Jolly Phonics multi-sensory approach that gets children reading and writing from an early age. This means that we teach letter sounds as opposed to the alphabet and there is an action and sound for each sound they learn.

Assessment

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

When children enter our nursery and Foundation Stage classes, our practitioners take the time to get to know them really well through a range of observations, conversations, play and adult led activities, and discussions with parents and carers. Written and photographic evidence are kept to provide us with a picture of children's interests, strengths and achievements and a baseline or starting point from which next steps in their learning are planned. Every child in our Early Years Foundation Stage (including nursery) has an online learning journal in which staff record observations of developmental achievements and keep samples of their work.

The online learning journal (Tapestry) is a record of each child's learning and shows snap shots of children's achievements and progress in relation to the EYFS. Not every activity they do will be recorded, however when a child demonstrates that they have learnt a new skill or developed their knowledge and understanding further, adults will record this to show their achievements. This will then form an overall picture of whether a child is on track to meet the Early Learning Goals at the end of their Foundation Stage, highlighting gaps in learning as well as strengths and areas for development. Parents and carers also have access to their child's online journal and are encouraged to contribute to this.

In Foundation Stage, the children also have Handwriting, Literacy and Maths books to document children's learning experiences and observations to show development in these areas.

The observational evidence and samples of work gathered throughout the year are used to assess children as 'emerging, expected or exceeding at the end of Foundation Stage based on their understanding and achievement of the Early Learning Goals set out in the EYFS curriculum. This information is then passed on to their next teacher in preparation for Year 1. **See Development Matters document ([link on our school website](#))**



Hampton Values and British Values



The curriculum at Hampton is every experience your child has in school and is underpinned by our Values. Our school values permeate everything we do at Hampton throughout the time the children are with us. These Values form the foundation of the curriculum and instill a lifelong passion for learning. These were agreed by the Staff, Trustees, Governors, Pupils and Parents.

Working together, we can achieve amazing things!

The fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs are embedded in the Early Years Foundation Stage. We actively seek to promote these values alongside our school values through modelling behaviour, challenging stereotypes and ensuring that our children receive a rich and varied curriculum. At Hampton we understand the importance of such values. They are integral to the curriculum experience, are core life skills and are embedded in our daily practice. These values are not unique to Britain and are the values of different countries and cultures represented by all our families at Hampton. When appropriate we demonstrate democracy in action, and support the decisions that children make and ensure they are given opportunities to develop enquiring minds in an atmosphere where questions are valued. We provide opportunities for children to develop their self-knowledge,



self-esteem and increase their confidence in their own abilities. We allow children to explore the language of feelings and responsibility, reflect on their differences and understand we are free to have different opinions.

Settling in and Transition

In our nursery we offer "Settling in Sessions" where children get to know the adults in the nursery, explore their new environment and meet other children. We also offer a home visit when the parents can share important information around needs, interests and routines. This is achieved both through discussion and completing "My Unique Story" booklets. In a similar way transitions between age phases are carefully planned, supported with social stories to meet individual needs. An additional transition programme is also provided for children who enter our Foundation Stage classes. This also consists of home visits along with two play sessions and a trial lunch which parents and carers are invited to attend with their child. The play sessions are an opportunity for children to spend time in their new class and become familiar with the adults who will be supporting them in their Foundation Stage year.

Most children starting school attend at least one pre-school setting. Whether it be our school nursery or a different setting, the Early Years teachers aim to visit each feeder setting in order to gain information about the children starting at Hampton Primary along with friendship groupings so that children have the best possible start. In the Summer term parents are invited into school to meet the Early Years staff. At this meeting, information regarding the induction process and what goes on in the school is shared. There is also time for informal chats and parents' questions. School information packs will be distributed to parents at this meeting, detailing school routines and expectations.

To enable children to make secure attachments to practitioners and to develop positive relationships, we operate a Key Person system in our nursery. This allows practitioners to work with children forging strong relationships and providing high quality communication and support; in Foundation Stage classes, the class teachers take on this role.

In preparation for transition to Year 1, we provide opportunities in the summer term for the children to meet their new teacher including the children spending a morning in their new class and visits from the Year 1 teachers to the Foundation Stage class they are currently in. The Year 1 and Early Years teachers also meet to discuss the children in detail and hand over assessment and class files. The first term in Year 1 is very much Foundation Stage based to ease transition before more structure is put in place in the following terms. Parent consultations are held early in the academic year to inform parents and carers how well they have settled.

Inclusion

All children and their families are valued at Hampton Primary. Children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all provisions available. All children are encouraged to achieve their full potential and planning is in response to the observed needs of all groups and abilities.

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.

Concerns are always discussed with parents and carers at an early stage and further support can be accessed through the School SENCO.



In the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children so that they make good progress from their starting points. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children in the following ways:

Planning opportunities that 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.

Pupil Premium

We ensure that we quickly identify children who are entitled to both Pupil Premium and Early Years Pupil Premium. Through baseline assessment we ascertain in which areas children are attaining and how we can further support through resources, expertise or intervention. Progress is rigorously monitored and tracked.

Safeguarding and 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 Early Years Foundation Stage 2017)

At Hampton Primary School all children have the right to feel and be safe. The safety and welfare of our children is paramount. We encourage the children to take risks in a safe learning environment by helping them to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. Within the Early Years we ensure that our current practice and provision complies with the welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2017.

Our team works collaboratively 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 behaviour 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 are safe and suitable for purpose.

Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.



Our nursery and Foundation Stage classrooms has access to their own toileting facilities and we teach the children the importance of hygiene and hand washing techniques.

Partnership with parents and carers

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

- * Using the online journal 'Tapestry' which enables parents and carers individual access to their child's learning across the FS curriculum. This system allows us to work with parents and carers to share information and record the children's play and learning in and outside of the classroom.
- * Arranging a range of activities such as Open Afternoons, Parent Read sessions and topic days throughout the year that encourage collaboration
- * Inviting all parents/carers to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school;
- * Providing home visits and settling in sessions where the teacher, parents & carers and child can meet before they start school
- * Arranging for children to have part time sessions over the first two weeks so that the teacher and LSA's can establish strong relationships.
- * Providing parents & carers an opportunity to celebrate their child's learning and development by completing "WOW Moments" which inform planning and provision and contribute to a child's Learning Journals
- * Encouraging parents/carers to attend workshops around the curriculum and supporting at home.
- * Termly Newsletters to share with parents the learning that will take place each term.
- * Regular updates through social media

Parents are invited to attend parents' evenings during the course of the academic year. The first of these takes place during the Autumn term to allow practitioners, parents & carers to discuss how children have settled in the nursery and school. Another parent's evening takes place during the Spring term where staff will feedback on children's learning and developmental progress. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress in the final year of nursery and the end of Foundation Stage. They are then invited into school to discuss this report if they wish.

Hampton Primary School has a friendly, open-door ethos and practitioners are available to talk to parents at the beginning and end of the day. Parents are always welcomed into school and encouraged to discuss any concerns they might have. We have an active Parent Teacher Association (PTA). New parents are encouraged to support their activities and meet representatives during our New Parents Evening.