



## EARLY YEARS POLICY

This Policy was electronically approved by the Governing Body on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2025

Chair of Governors:

Mr L Shilling

Headteacher:

Ms Y Nunn

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

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

Review Date: Summer 2027



- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

### **Communication and Language**

Children are immersed in a language-rich environment from the moment they enter our setting. Practitioners support development through high-quality interaction, storytelling, role-play, and active listening. New vocabulary is introduced and modelled in meaningful contexts.

### **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

We promote warm, respectful relationships to help children understand their emotions and develop self-regulation. Children build friendships, cooperate, and manage conflict with adult support. They gain confidence, independence, and develop a positive sense of self.

### **Physical Development**

Our curriculum supports physical growth through outdoor play, fine motor activities, and structured movement. Children develop coordination, strength and control using small tools and gross motor equipment. Healthy habits and body awareness are promoted across the setting.

### **Literacy**

We foster a life-long love of reading and writing. Children engage with stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems. Reading skills include comprehension and word recognition, while writing involves transcription and composition.

### **Literacy (Phonics)**

We use Twinkl Phonics, a validated systematic synthetic phonics scheme. Nursery children begin with Level 1 (phonological awareness) and Reception children progress through decoding, blending and segmenting. Phonics is taught using a multi-sensory approach, with parent workshops supporting home engagement.

### **Mathematics**

We provide a strong grounding in number, with opportunities for children to explore numbers to 10, relationships between them, and numerical patterns. Through games and manipulatives, children build a secure understanding of early number concepts. They also explore spatial reasoning, shapes, and measures in practical, meaningful contexts.

### **Understanding the World**

Children develop knowledge about their physical world and communities through direct experiences and meaningful discussion. They explore nature, technology, and diversity. Visits, visitors, and stories support their understanding of our culturally and ecologically rich world.

### **Expressive Arts and Design**

Creativity and self-expression are encouraged through music, movement, role-play, and art. Children explore materials, develop imagination, and build vocabulary through frequent and varied opportunities. These experiences support emotional expression and communication.

### **Characteristics of Effective Learning**

Across all areas, we promote the Characteristics of Effective Learning. These include playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically. Practitioners observe how children learn and use this information to guide planning and provision.

### **Planning**

Staff plan activities and experiences that enable children to develop and learn effectively. Practitioners focus strongly on the three prime areas, especially for younger children. Planning is informed by each child's individual needs, interests and stage of development. For children with SEND, planning includes liaison with external professionals where appropriate. Practitioners also reflect on how children learn and incorporate these characteristics into provision.

### **Teaching**

Each area of learning and development is delivered through a balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities. Teaching is play-based and purposeful, with practitioners responding to children's emerging needs and interests. As children develop, more structured adult-led activities are introduced to support readiness for Year 1. A free-flow approach enables access to both indoor and outdoor provision throughout the day.

### **Assessment**

Assessment is formative and ongoing, based on observations and professional judgement. The statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is completed in the first six weeks of Reception. We use Development Matters (2021) to guide next steps and track progress. Staff use Tapestry to record key learning, which is shared with parents and contributes to planning. At the end of Reception, children are assessed against the 17 Early Learning Goals as part of the EYFS Profile.

### **Transition**

We support smooth transitions through home visits, settling sessions, and social stories. Children meet their key adults and become familiar with the environment before starting. Feeder nursery visits inform planning, and Reception staff support transition to Year 1 through visits and a gradual curriculum shift.

### **Social Stories**

Each child receives a personalised social story before starting school. This helps familiarise them with the school environment, daily routines, and key adults they will encounter. Social stories are used as a tool to reduce anxiety and support a smooth, confident transition into Hampton Primary School.

**Inclusion**

All children are treated as individuals. We identify and support special educational needs early through observations, assessments and collaboration with the SENCO. Provision is adapted to meet individual needs and ensure access to learning. Staff work in partnership with external agencies and families to support inclusive practice.

**Pupil Premium**

We identify and monitor the progress of children eligible for Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) and Pupil Premium. Provision is enhanced through targeted support, resources, and interventions based on children's needs and baseline assessments. Progress meetings led by the SLT and SENCO ensure tracking and impact review throughout the year.

**Partnership with Parents**

Parents are their child's first educators and are central to our work in Early Years. We build strong relationships through daily interactions, Tapestry, regular meetings, workshops, and open events. Parents contribute to their child's learning journey, and we work together to support each child's development.

**Safeguarding**

Safeguarding is at the heart of all we do. Our provision complies with the EYFS 2024 welfare requirements. All EYFS staff have paediatric first aid training, and appropriate staff-to-child ratios are maintained at all times. Children are assigned a key person who supports emotional well-being. The environment is risk assessed and safe.

**Monitoring Arrangements**

This policy is reviewed annually by the Early Years Lead, in consultation with the Headteacher, SENCO, and SLT. It is approved by the Governing Body and updated earlier if national guidance changes or internal review recommends amendments.

