



Hartsbourne Primary School
Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

RATIONALE

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to five years old, when they reach the end of their reception year. Key Stage 1 begins when children move into Year 1. At Hartsbourne we greatly value the important role that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. However, we also believe that the EYFS is important in its own right, and plays an integral role in preparing children for life and not simply the next stage in their education.

In the EYFS, children learn best through carefully planned, developmentally appropriate, play-based activities. Through play, children explore and make sense of their world. They practice new skills, build and construct their understanding, and have the opportunity to think creatively. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems, discuss and negotiate plans, and learn about the how to manage their behaviour. They become independent learners and thinkers.

At Hartsbourne, we aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which will enable each child to fulfil their potential. All children begin school with a wide range of skills, and having experienced many different learning opportunities. It is the privilege of practitioners working in reception to support children as they build upon their prior knowledge. It is essential that parents/carers, support staff and the reception teacher work effectively together to scaffold children's learning and development.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Early Years Foundation Stage document (DSCF 2007) and all other school policy documents.

AIMS

- To provide a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment, which meets individual needs and interests of the children, and in which creativity is valued.
- To develop warm and secure relationships between children and adults.
- To provide a high quality curriculum in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage document, and Every Child Matters.
- To encourage all children to become self-motivate and independent learners with a positive attitude to learning and self-discipline.
- For children to become aware of moral and social values, and for children to value the cultural diversity within our school and community.
- To foster strong home-school links and share a common sense of purpose with parents.

CURRICULUM

Effective practice in the EYFS is built on the following four guided themes:

- A unique child.
- Positive relationships.
- Enabling environments.
- Learning and development.

The content of the curriculum is set out by the Early Years Foundation Stage document. Guidance is given on effective learning across the six areas. These are:

- Personal, social and emotional development (PSED).
- Communication, language and literacy (CLL).
- Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy (PSRN).
- Knowledge and understanding of the world (KUW).
- Physical development (PD).
- Creative development (CD).

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are all of equal importance and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult-led and child-initiated play activities. Within each of these areas are stepping stones which show the knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes that children need to learn during the EYFS in order to achieve the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) by the end of their reception year.

In addition to the daily physical activities on offer in the planned environment, children in reception also have a planned PE lesson once each week, as well as 10 minute 'Wake and Shake' session everyday.

THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

"A rich and varied environment supports children's learning and development. It gives them the confidence to explore and learn in secure and safe, yet challenging, indoor and outdoor spaces." (DCSF 2007)

At Hartsbourne we aim to create an attractive, welcoming and stimulating learning environment which will encourage children to explore, investigate and learn through play. We aim to make it a place where children feel secure and confident, and are challenged to develop their independence and be in charge of their own learning. In reception, equal opportunities for learning are planned across the inside and outside environments. The reception classroom opens onto a fenced outdoor area comprising of both concrete and grass surfaces with large trees providing shade. There is also a canopy covering approximately a third of the outside space, ensuring that children can access outside opportunities in the majority of weather conditions.

Inside, the classroom is divided into a range of different areas, for example role play, book corner, writing area, malleable materials, and construction. Outside, the space is used more fluidly, however opportunities for sand, water, role play, creative activities, and physical activities are always available.

Children are encouraged to be independent learners, and during child-initiated play, plan their play using a choosing board. Each child has a name card on a planning board with photographs of each area of the environment. They move their name to the area in which they intend to play. When moving between activities, they also move their name on the planning board. This encourages children to spend longer periods of time engaged in activities of their own choosing, as well as helping them to develop skills of sharing, waiting and taking turns.

Play

At Hartsbourne, we do not make a distinction between work and play. Research shows that children who are taught formally too soon, while showing initial progress, are later disadvantaged. We ensure that we plan an exciting environment inside and outdoors and allow children time to explore in a way that most interests them.

Parents as Partners

“Parents are children’s first and most enduring educators. When parents and practitioners work together in early years settings the results have a positive impact on the child’s development and learning. Therefore, each setting should seek to develop an effective partnership with parents.” (DFEE 2000)

Parents have a central role in supporting the child’s learning at school. A successful partnership needs a two-way flow of information, knowledge and skills. We aim to achieve positive and useful relationships with the parents of the children in our care by:

- Inviting parents to attend a welcome meeting before their child starts school.
- Collecting information from parents about children’s previous learning experiences, and other relevant information.
- Keeping parents informed about the coming terms work by sending home copies of timetables and topic webs.
- Keeping parents informed about school and class events through letters in book bags and notices in the classroom window.
- Inviting parents to engage in a range of school activities, for example listening to children read in class, joining us on class trips, helping with specific activities in class, Friends of Hartsbourne etc.
- Encouraging parents to contribute to children’s Learning Journey books by writing down ‘Wow’ moments their child has had at home to be displayed in class.

In the autumn and spring terms parents are strongly encouraged to attend parent consultations with their child’s teacher. At the end of the school year, parents receive a written report outlining their child’s progress throughout the reception year.

For further information on parental involvement in school please see Hartsbourne’s Volunteer Helper policy.

OBSERVATION, ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING

Observation is the most valuable assessment tool available to practitioners in the EYFS. Practitioners make daily observations of children engaged in child-initiated play; these might be on stickers or through taking photographs. They then use these observations to make links between what they see to both the Hertfordshire EYFS progress sheets and EYFS Profile. Assessments are also used to ensure that future planning reflects the individual interests and needs of the children in the class.

All of the observations collected during the reception year are filed into individual children’s Learning Journey books. These books are made available to parents at various points throughout the school year. During each term practitioner discuss the progress of each child and highlight an EYFS Profile overview sheet. Children’s progress between one term and the next is monitored and measured to ensure that each child is reaching their full potential.

DATE OF POLICY: May 2010

DATE OF REVIEW: May 2012