



Hatherley
INFANT SCHOOL

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Agreed: September 2019
Next review: September 2021

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)

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. At Hatherley Nursery and Infant School we are committed to underpinning our provision with the four themes of the Early Years Foundation Stage in our nursery and two Reception Classes.

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

A Unique Child

At Hatherley Nursery and Infant School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates and this is reflected in our provision. The characteristics of effective learning support the child to become a motivated and effective learner. Children will **play and explore** and ‘have a go’ at using all available resources; developing their experiences. Children will develop resilience and enjoy achievements through **active learning** and will make links, explore their ideas and strategies for problem solving through **creating and thinking critically**. Practitioners support the children in developing all these characteristics by playing alongside children and, where necessary, scaffolding and supporting their thoughts.

Children are treated fairly regardless of race, religion, gender or abilities. We believe strongly in inclusion and ensure that all children participate and feel valued. It is important to us that all children at Hatherley Nursery and Infant School are ‘safe’ and we adhere to a clear Safeguarding policy. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they need to exist. We provide children with choices to help them to develop these important life skills. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards, both within school and in the wider environment. We encourage a healthy lifestyle including taking exercise and eating healthy food. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. Children with special educational needs are given the support they need to benefit from the curriculum. This includes gifted and talented children as well as those who find learning more challenging. EYFS staff work closely with the school’s SENCO and other support staff to provide appropriate and effective provision for all children.

Positive Relationships

We aim to promote positive relationships between staff, parents and children. Children are taught how to deal with difficult situations and relationships through the PINK Curriculum, Circle Times and becoming part of the class and school community through the Class Contract and school Golden Rules as well as through their daily interactions with adults and other children. We recognise that parents are the child's first educators and their importance for their child's welfare and education is paramount. All children are greeted as they come into the classroom and have a familiar routine, supported by staff as required. Staff will work with individuals, small groups and where appropriate in larger groups or as a whole class. They are able to build up confidence, rapport and respect with each child so that the children feel safe, happy and enjoy their time at Hatherley Nursery and Infant School.

Enabling Environments

In the EYFS at Hatherley Nursery and Infant School we recognise the importance of a rich learning environment both inside and outside. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The environment is set up in learning areas that provide continuous provision, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

There is an outdoor 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 opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We offer a range of opportunities and areas of learning in our environments and the children move between the classroom and outdoors at regular times during the day. We observe the children during CIA (Child initiated activities) and offer additional resources and support to enrich their learning.

To ensure that we meet the individual needs of all of our children we make regular observations of the children's interactions, interests, skills, and development of concepts. These observations are used to inform our planning for groups of children, for individuals and our provision of appropriate resources.

The Curriculum

There are seven areas of Learning and Development which are interconnected.

The three Prime areas are crucial to develop lifelong learning and to help children form relationships

- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development** – We aim to foster and develop relationships between home, school, pre-school settings and places of worship in order to make links stronger for the good of the community as a whole. Children are encouraged to learn to work, share, take turns and co-operate with others. They are encouraged to be independent and make choices for themselves. They are also

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encouraged to be sensitive to the needs of others and to respect other cultures and beliefs. Children are enabled to become confident and develop a positive self-image.

- **Communication and Language** – This covers all aspects of language development and provides the foundation for literacy skills. Children’s developing competence in speaking and listening is a key focus and we aim to extend and enrich the children’s vocabulary through story time, rhymes, role-play and group discussions. Children are encouraged to share their own experiences through speaking and acting out events in imaginative play and talking about their own ideas. They are encouraged to take part in class activities such as working with puppets, participating in music sessions and saying rhymes and singing songs together. They also take part in Talk for Writing activities where they tell the story with actions. This increases their confidence to speak, their breadth of vocabulary and their understanding of story structure.
- **Physical Development** – Children are given opportunities to move to music, use outdoor equipment to develop their gross motor skills and practice their fine motor skills with pens, pencils and paintbrushes. They develop an increasing understanding of how their body works and what is needed to be healthy. This is done in both indoors and outdoors and by working with a wide range of resources. We follow a scheme of work for Games, Gymnastics and Dance.

The four Specific areas focus on the following aspects of learning:

- **Literacy** – We have a variety of resources for the children to use to help them develop early literacy skills. Children are encouraged to use the mark-making areas indoors and outdoors independently but they also take part in teacher-led activities. These activities include Read, Write, Inc differentiated phonics sessions, Talk for Writing sessions and small group literacy activities. The pre-writing work encourages firm pencil control, left/right orientation and correct letter formation. Children have the opportunity to develop their writing skills in accordance with their age, ability and competence. We encourage children to treat books and other resources with respect and they are given many opportunities to listen to stories and to look at and read a range of books themselves. We encourage children to take home a library book to share with their families which will promote a love of reading. Children are introduced to the Oxford Reading Tree reading scheme and take these books home to read to their parents. We encourage parents to listen to their child read each evening and we organise workshops to ensure parents support their child’s phonic development effectively.
- **Mathematics** – We aim for children to achieve mathematical understanding, develop skills to help them solve practical problems and use age appropriate mathematical language. Children begin to learn numbers through singing nursery rhymes and by taking part in number activities. This is then enhanced to children having the ability

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to use and apply number in a variety of contexts. Children are given opportunities to learn about number, addition, subtraction, shape, space, position, pattern and measures through self-initiated activities, guided practise with the teacher and whole class activities.

- **Understanding of the World** – All children are given opportunities to solve problems, investigate, make decisions and experiment. They will learn about living things, the world around them and the people who are important in their lives. Children are also given opportunities to develop computing skills and to work with and use modern technology.
- **Expressive Arts and Design** – We provide opportunities for all children to explore and share their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of art, design, technology, music, drama, movement, dance and imaginative play activities. Children are given opportunities to make paintings, drawings, collages, models and use basic musical instruments. Children also learn new songs and rhymes and enjoy singing them with each other. Throughout the year children are also given the opportunity to participate in school productions and school assemblies.

Planning

The curriculum is planned through a series of themes that reflect and respond to the children's interests, offering experiences in all areas of the curriculum and which carry equal importance to provide a broad and balanced curriculum with opportunities for play and child- initiated activities. The long-term plan is the Foundation Stage curriculum. This is an overarching framework that informs all other stages of planning. It shows the range of experiences and learning opportunities that are available while children are in the early years. Medium term planning takes the form of a theme based upon the children's interests such as favourite stories, super heroes, holidays etc. Short term plans select activities and learning objectives from medium term theme plan as deemed appropriate to meet the needs and interests of the children and are therefore very fluid. Plans are extended and differentiated accordingly. Planning should provide a clear balance between challenging the most able children in some cases to exceed Early Learning Goals whilst recognising that an attempt to implement the more formal work before a child is ready could damage a child's disposition to learn. By the end of the Reception year, the Numeracy and Literacy lessons will be in place in preparation for children entering Year 1.

Child-initiated learning is an important part of our daily routine at Hatherley Nursery and Infant School and whenever possible adult-directed activities are play based, active and related to the children's interests. Learning experiences are planned for the indoor and outdoor environments. We strongly believe that many children learn better in the open air and using the outdoor area provides many opportunities to apply what they have been learning in a meaningful way. We aim to support children's learning by observing, getting involved in their play, stimulating their thinking by asking open questions and encouraging them to ask questions and overcome problems. We encourage independence and make resources available for children to select themselves. We focus on process rather than end product and celebrate children's successful learning in a variety of ways which promotes self-confidence and a high self-esteem.

Assessment is integral to our work and informs the next steps in children's learning. Teachers constantly modify their plans to meet the needs of individuals and offer support or extension according to children's responses to the activities undertaken. On-going recording of learning takes place through photographs, notes on post its and observations. Each child has a 'Learning Journey' which contains photos and examples of what they can do in each area of learning, as well as photographs, notes and recorded work in their English and Maths books. Progress towards the Early Learning Goals is recorded periodically throughout the year and an end of year report is produced for each child.

Induction

All children have an opportunity to visit us during the summer term as part of the preparation for starting school. Teachers also visit as many children as possible in their pre-school settings. Following a home visit the children begin school on a part time basis. Initially they attend mornings only to allow time for home visits each afternoon. After a short period of time they are able to stay all day. We admit the youngest children first to enable them to settle in to a smaller group before becoming part of a full class of thirty. They are all full time by the end of September. This phased entry allows staff to develop relationships with individuals and assess their current abilities using an agreed Baseline assessment tool as well as the Teacher's professional judgement.

Organisation and Staffing

The Foundation Stage staff work as part of a team and we work as a unit. Children from the two classes have opportunities to work together during free flow times, accessing shared continuous provision both inside and in our outdoor learning space. Teachers plan together to ensure continuity and progression, providing age and stage related activities to suit all our children. Children are also taught within their own class groups. They are taught in a variety of ways; in whole class groups, small group work, pairs and individually.

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Currently there are two Teachers supported by two Teaching assistants. Additional support is provided for individuals with special needs. Staff have a wide range of experience and expertise in working with and educating children. The Staff are committed to their own professional development and have an excellent knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and child development. All of the staff are trained first aiders and all staff have attended child protection training.

Parental Involvement

We value the involvement of parents in school on a regular basis. Parental involvement with school begins with an invitation to an Induction meeting where they can meet their child's teacher and find out how they can prepare their child for starting school. This is followed by a home visit in September and an on-going open door policy throughout the year. Literacy and Maths workshops are organised and parents are encouraged to support their child's learning at home. Parent consultation meetings are held in the Autumn and Spring Term to discuss progress and how they can best support their child's learning. Parents are invited into the classroom for a short session each term to share their child's work with their child. A report is sent out at the end of the Summer term and parents are invited into school to discuss this report if they wish. Parents are kept informed of all happenings in the school by regular newsletters and they are invited to various assemblies and other events throughout the year.

Community Links

We believe that the community has an important part to play in the education of our children and we foster links by welcoming volunteers, liaising with external agencies, organising visits and visitors and by attending church services.

Transition to KS1

EYFS and Year 1 teachers work together to make the transition from Reception to Year 1 as smooth and as seamless as possible. EYFS children have opportunities to meet their new teacher and spend time in a Year 1 classroom during the Summer Term. The teachers meet before the Autumn term begins to discuss individual needs and levels of ability.

Additional information

The EYFS at Hatherley Nursery and Infant school adheres to all other school policies. Please see our web site for a full list of policy documents and also for further information about our school. Please also see Safeguarding (Child Protection Policy)

This policy was produced and reviewed by Mrs P Randall. EYFS leader. September 2019