

Early Years Policy



HOLLINGTON
PRIMARY
ACADEMY

Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Hollington Primary Academy we are proud to offer an Early Years Village which is a campus approach to education where children are fully supported through their journey. This begins with children from 2 years within our nursery then children may choose to move to our Reception classes in the academic year after they have turned 4 (currently compulsory schooling begins the term after they have become 5).

Aims of the EYFS

We believe The Foundation Stage is a unique phase in a child's life and is crucial to successful future learning. Through this policy we aim to ensure a consistent approach where parents, carers, teachers and practitioners work together to give children the best possible start.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is the statutory framework which sets 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 are ready for school; and stimulates the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the foundation for good future progress through school and life. All children within Hollington Primary Academy Nursery and Reception classes work within this framework.

It details four key principles which shape our practice;

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

A Unique Child:-

We recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We understand that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates and join us on their own learning path. All children are included and valued equally.

Settling in and Transition

In our nursery we offer "Settling in Sessions" where children get to know their Key Person, explore the new environment and meet other children. Parents share important information around needs, health and medical information, interests and routines. This is achieved both through discussion and completing "All about Me" forms.

In a similar way transitions between age phases are carefully planned, supported with social and photograph stories and enhanced to meet individual needs. An additional transition programme is provided for children who enter our reception classes from other settings. This consists of a parent information session, a 'Meet the teacher' session, and nursery and/or home visits.

Inclusion in the Foundation Stage/Special Educational Needs and Disability

All children and their families are valued at Hollington Primary Academy. 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 child's observed needs through the 'next steps' of all individuals 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/carers at an early stage and further support can be accessed through the Nursery SENCO and Academy Inclusion Team which includes a Speech and Language Therapist.

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 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. In order to accommodate the individual's particular learning style provision will be planned wherever possible in a multi-sensory way so that the various experiences can be accessed by all in the spirit of inclusion.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- 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 the areas where progress is slower. Progress is rigorously monitored and tracked.

See also SEND Local Offer

Positive Relationships

At Hollington Primary Academy we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families. Families are given clear guidance on the staff they will meet and their role in the setting.

Key Person

To enable children to make secure attachments to practitioners and to develop positive relationships, we operate a Key Person system in the nursery, in Reception classes, the Class Teachers take on this role. This enables all practitioners to implement an effective Key Person system which ensures strong relationships with high quality communication and support through the range of attendance patterns. Where possible, children are allocated into family groupings. All contracted staff are expected to wear a nursery t-shirt as their uniform. This identifies them to the children (especially the younger children) and also other adults in the wider school.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is of utmost importance in early years, and all staff are made aware that under no circumstances are they to discuss individual children outside of school. Personal information about the children and/or families is shared with teachers and practitioners on a 'need to know' basis and only if it is felt by management to be beneficial to the child. A 'breach of confidentiality' by a member of staff is dealt with in accordance to the HAT confidentiality policy.

Students and volunteers are also governed by the HAT confidentiality policy and are made aware of this before any placement begins. They are also not made privy to any personal information about individual children and/or families.

Medication and sickness policy

If a child is sick in school/nursery, parents/carers will be contacted to collect them and take them home to avoid the spread of any illness. We expect children to then remain off for 48 hours before returning to nursery/school.

Prescription medicine can be administered in school with signed parental permission. If parents wish to come in and administer other medicines that are not prescribed (such as Calpol) they can arrange to do this as staff are unable to administer this. Inhalers/epipens should be left in school so they are available at all times. We have a number of nominated First Aiders in school, holding both First Aid at Work as well as Paediatric First Aid. If your child has a significant medical need (such as the requirement of 'invasive medication'), you will need to speak to the EYFS leader, Nursery supervisor or SENCO to discuss how we can best support your child. This might include drawing up an Individual care plan.

Accidents and Emergencies

If a child is involved in an accident whilst in nursery/school this will be recorded on an accident form, detailing any first aid administered. If staff are concerned about the accident, a phone call home will be made, detailing the accident and offering the parent/carer the opportunity to visit the child and see if further medical assistance is required.

If a child comes in with an existing injury, this may also be recorded in accordance with the HAT child protection policy.

Students and Volunteers

Hollington primary academy works in partnership with local colleges that offer childcare courses, and aims to support students looking to work in the childcare profession. Students and other volunteers can offer additional support and are a welcome addition to the early years, and will undergo the schools own 'Student and Volunteers induction programme'. However, students and volunteers are never left to work unsupervised with children and are not allowed to attend to a child's personal care. Students and volunteers will be expected to wear a nursery tabard (to identify them to the children and other members of staff around the school) as well as a visitors pass.

Food Preparation and supervision

Food in the reception classes is prepared and eaten in the main hall. Food in the nursery is brought in from home in the form of a packed lunch. No food is able to be heated. Children are fully supervised throughout lunchtime. (See lunch time protocol for further details).

Health and Safety

The health and safety of both children and adults is of utmost importance. Risk assessments of each area and activity are undertaken to ensure the wellbeing of everyone involved. See Hat health and safety policy.

Parents as Partners

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

- Comprehensive settling in and transition programs including drop in sessions at transition points
- Arranging a selection of activities such as Celebration Afternoons and Open Mornings (Pop in and play!) sessions throughout the year that encourage collaboration.
- Formal meetings for parents/carers three times a year at which the Class Teacher/Key Person and the parent/carer discuss the child's progress. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress in the final year of Nursery and the end of Reception.
- Inviting all parents/carers to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school;
- Providing drop in sessions where the teacher, parents/carers and child can meet before they start school
- Having flexible admission arrangements that enable children and parents/carers to become settled and allowing time to discuss each child's circumstances;

- Arranging for children to have a staggered start to school, over the first two weeks so that the teacher can welcome each child individually to our academy;
- Providing parents/carers an opportunity to celebrate their child's learning and development by completing "Wow's" which inform planning and provision and Topic Starters to establish previous learning;
- By providing a quiet and confidential area where parents/carers are able to discuss any concerns between children, the academy and parents/carers;
- Encouraging parents/carers to attend workshops around the curriculum and supporting at home.
- Sharing curriculum plans on our website that covers aspects that we will teach during that term, offering a range of activities that support the involvement of parents/carers.
- Regular updates through social media

Enabling Environments

We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up to provide development within all areas of learning. Our ethos is to develop opportunities for the children to experience a variety of activities. We have specifically designed our nursery in natural materials and colours to avoid 'over-stimulation', but also to enhance the effects of the children's own work.

Free Flow

We operate a free flow approach which includes indoor and outdoor spaces and when possible across the age phases. In this way children can access a range of self-directed challenges alongside structured adult led learning experiences.

Learning spaces are clearly defined and resources are easily accessible so that children can develop as independent learners by following their own schemas and fascinations.

We recognise the importance of open ended experiences to promote purposeful and challenging play. Practitioners observe and extend this play as appropriate, use inspiring language to promote Sustained Shared Thinking. They further use these observations to enhance provision and extend individual learning.

Learning and Development

We recognise that children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. Hollington Primary Academy we understand that young children achieve well when learning is engaging and well matched to their interests and previous learning. Learning is often play based with increasing challenge and expectations as a child develops.

Curriculum

There are seven areas of learning and development of which three are "prime areas," and four "specific areas."

The Prime areas are:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, social and emotional development

The specific areas are:

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

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 the 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.

Curriculum Mapping is in place to promote a wide ranging curriculum where children are challenged with new experiences. It is made up of a range of broad themes called Learning Journeys. These are often linked to seasonal changes whilst being flexible to respond to observed needs and current interests. Long term, medium term and weekly plans are prepared carefully to ensure a thorough coverage of skills to be taught. Daily planning, through the implementation of next steps, ensures that the needs of all the children are highlighted and supported.

Assessment

"Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs and to plan activities and support"

Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation
Stage 2014

The Development Matters Bands and Early Learning Goals provide the basis for assessment throughout the Foundation Stage. Children are quickly assessed at their entry point to the Foundation Stage to establish a baseline. Progress is monitored and tracked consistently through shared Learning Stories and an electronic tracking system.

Practitioners, teachers and teaching assistants make regular assessments of children's learning and these high quality observations are key to the assessment and planning cycle. Next Steps are planned in response to these, shared with

parents, then presented on a display so all practitioners have an awareness of ways forward.

There are several summative assessment points throughout the Foundation Stage.

- Two Year Old Progress Checks in conjunction with Health Visitor and parents
- Children entering Reception from September 2015 will undertake a formal Baseline Assessment during the first term.
- A Good Level of Development measure is made at the end of the Reception Year

See HAT Assessment Policy
Guidelines

Letter and Sounds

Listening and attention skills are developed right from the beginning of the Foundation Stage. Later 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

See Hollington Primary Academy Phonics Policy

Home Learning

At Hollington Primary Academy we understand the impact of high quality liaison between home and school and strive to ensure that our pupils are keen to learn at every opportunity. For this reason, we believe that the extension of learning out of the classroom, including the provision of home learning, is a vital addition to a child's learning.

For our younger children, Key Persons may suggest ways to support at home in particular areas of learning. Ideas for learning experiences at home are offered monthly on our Caterpillar's Newsletters, alongside an outline of what the children have been learning that at the academy or nursery. Individual 'Next Steps' for each child are shared with parents and carers on a half termly basis with suggestions of what parents can do at home to support this.

In addition to this, in the Reception Classes, differentiated Letters and Sounds activities are sent home. Daily reading is encouraged at home and this should be recorded in a Reading Journal. Later in the year spelling activities are offered as well as tasks on The Learning Platform.

See Academy Home Learning Policy

British values

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 through modelling behaviour, challenging stereotypes and ensuring that our children receive a rich and varied curriculum.

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.

Nursery Charging Policy

Before a child starts in nursery, the parent/carer will have signed a contract stating the current fees. If fees are outstanding for one week, parents/carers will be contacted and advised of the amount outstanding. If after two weeks these outstanding fees are still not paid, then the child's place at nursery will be withdrawn until all outstanding fees are paid.

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years by the Senior Learning and Achievement Leader EYFS.

Mrs T Banks, EYFS Lead Practitioner, Hollington Primary Academy

This policy was implemented on 8th October 2015

Signed (chair of governors)

Reviewed

Hollington Primary Academy

Implemented September 2015