



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy 2024-2025

Date reviewed	September 2024
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INTRODUCTION

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. Learning for children is a rewarding and enjoyable experience in which they explore, investigate, discover, create, practice, rehearse, repeat, revise and consolidate their developing knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes. During the Early Years Foundation Stage, many of these aspects of learning are brought together effectively through play and talk. As outlined in the 'Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage':

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'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.'

The EYFS aims:

- To provide the highest quality care and education for all our children
- To ensure a safe and motivating environment enabling children to learn
- To value the individual child and work alongside parents to help every child reach their full potential.
- To provide a strong foundation for future learning.

We adhere to the 'Statutory Framework of the EYFS' and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings:

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**;
- Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments with teaching and support from adults**, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- The importance of **learning and development**. Children develop and learn at different rates.

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven Areas of Learning, using play as the vehicle for learning;
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support;
- Work in partnership with parents and carers;
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment and by the children's own ideas and interests;
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-initiated, child initiated and adult supported;
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and outdoors

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE CURRICULUM

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based the Educational Programmes set out in the EYFS and our observations of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning. This enables children to develop the knowledge and skills to be prepared for KS1.

All seven areas of learning and development are important and interconnected.



The prime areas are fundamental to a broad and balanced base of learning for children and are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive, both in the EYFS and into Key Stage 1.

The areas are split into the 3 prime areas. These are:

- Communication and Language (Listening, Attention and Understanding, Speaking)
- Physical Development (Fine Motor, Gross Motor)
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development (Managing Self, Self Regulation and Building Relationships)

And 4 specific areas. These are:

- Literacy (Comprehension, Word Reading, Writing)
- Mathematics (Number, Numerical Patterns)
- Understanding the World (Past and Present, People, Cultures and Communities, The Natural World)
- Expressive Arts and Design (Creating with Materials, Being Imaginative and Expressive)

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. Our curriculum offer is based around the needs of our children (which can differ year upon year depending on the specific cohort) and coverage of the 7 areas of learning.

Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

1. **Playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.
2. **Active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties.
3. **Creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which they can explore, think creatively and be active, looking at the will, the thrill and the skill of learning. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

PLANNING IN THE EYFS

We believe that excellent teaching and learning is achieved through providing children with a mixture of child initiated play based activities, adult led activities, high quality modelling, high quality questioning and an environment which allows for meaningful exploration which embeds learning and provides first hand experiences. Weekly plans map out provision for continuous provision, maths, maths mastery, phonics, reading, literacy, knowledge and understanding and skills.

We always remain flexible to allow for unplanned circumstances and children's responses. Our planning is continually evaluated by all staff to ensure that children's individual 'Next Steps in Learning' and personalised learning needs are met.



Children will engage in whole group and small group activities alongside their independent learning. There are also allocated times for whole class daily carpet learning sessions.

We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those which are planned by adults. During children's play, the adults in class interact appropriately to stretch and challenge them further.

In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and build these into our practice. We create a stimulating learning environment to encourage children to free flow between inside and outdoors as far as possible.

Continuous Provision

Our children have access to high quality, play based learning throughout each day. Indoor and outdoor activities are planned to impact progression where there are gaps in children's learning, impact vocabulary and provide a focus on developing critical thinking. We work with a 'what and why' ethos, ensuring that all activities and all areas of the environment have a clear purpose and enhance a specific skill set or area of learning.

Long Term plans

We review our long terms plans based on the starting points of the cohort each year through our baseline assessments. From this we then ensure that the planning is progressive and covers all essential knowledge needed to build a solid foundation for future learning in Key Stage 1 and beyond. Delivery of the skills and knowledge change each year depending on the interests of the children in a specific cohort and the gaps in learning that need to be addressed.

(See The Curriculum Offer 2024/2025 on the school website)

Reading and phonics

At Hillbourne Primary School we understand the importance of embedding a love of reading at an early age. We immerse our children in good quality texts and books are central to all our learning.

We encourage the love of reading at home as well as in school through our 'Bedtime Books' provision for children to take home to share with their families.

We follow the systematic synthetic phonics programme 'Little Wandle' from the first full time week of term. Phase 1 activities, which are designed to build up skills in rhyming, rhythm and oral blending, are an integral part of continuous provision and Reception phonics sessions. When children can segment and blend CVC words, they will then take home a phonically decodable book which matches their sound knowledge. Until then children will receive wordless books along with phonetic activities based on phonemes taught that week. Parents are encouraged to read with their child each day and this book will be changed once a week. Teachers run workshops face to face to inform parents what their child has been learning and how to support reading at home. Children also receive a writing pack and sound cards to promote learning at home and the love of reading and writing.

Commented [MW1]: I think it is a bit later and they only take books when they can blend. You might refer to Phase 1 activities to Foundations in Phonics to support catch up.



OBSERVATIONS AND ASSESSMENT

As part of our daily practice, we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform our future plans. We record our observations in a variety of ways and all adults contribute. Our recorded observations focus on capturing significant moments of learning that children achieve so that quality interactions with children can remain our focus.

Observations of children's achievements are collated in our class Learning Journey as well as in individual Maths and English books. Parents/carers have the opportunity to look through children's books during parents' evenings which take place each term.

Parents/carers are encouraged to contribute to their child's learning journey. This begins shortly before the first week of school when we have home visits for each child and we ask parents about their child's development. This enables us to accurately plan next steps ready for full time education. We also plan opportunities for home learning each half term and share our in-school experiences on our Instagram page. Children's 'Next Steps in Learning' are shared during parents' evenings so that parents/carers know how to help their children with their learning at home.

These ongoing observations are used to inform the EYFS Profile and children's progress against the Development Matters statements and to determine if children are 'on track' or 'not on track'. Those children who are 'not on track' are quickly identified to ensure that catch up interventions can be put in place to prevent them from falling further behind.

RECEPTION BASELINE ASSESSMENT (RBA)

The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is a short assessment, taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts reception. It assesses children in early mathematics, literacy and communication and language. The purpose of the RBA is to form the starting point for cohort-level school progress measures. This data will be compared to key stage 2 outcomes 7 years later to form the overall progress measure for a school. The data collected and produced from the assessment is stored in the National Pupil Database (NPD), including numerical scores, it is not shared with external bodies, including schools, teachers, pupils or parents/carers.

Hillbourne Primary School also uses the Hamwic Education Trust baseline to ensure that we are accurate in what the children can and cannot do.

EYFS PROFILE

In the final term of the reception year (no later than 30th June), the EYFS profile is completed for each child. This provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded summary of every child's development and learning achievements and readiness for Year 1, it also includes whether they have reached a 'Good Level of Development' (GLD). Children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals (ELG) by the class teacher - who uses practitioners' knowledge and professional judgement of the children to make a 'best fit' judgement.

The children are assessed as achieving a 1 or 2 against each area of the EYFS curriculum:



- 1 = Emerging ELG – not yet meeting the expected levels
- 2 = Expected ELG – meeting the expected levels of development

Year 1 teachers must be given a copy of the Profile report, enabling a dialogue between Reception and Year 1 which will assist in the planning of learning in the next academic year.

This profile data is the statutory data that is sent to the Local Authority and used to help school benchmark and identify improvements. This data is also collected by HET.

SAFETY

Children's safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum that teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. We have stringent policies, procedures and documents in place to ensure children's safety. We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious food and the following of set procedures when children become ill or have an accident.

INCLUSION

We value all our children as individuals, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace so that most of our children achieve the Early Learning Goals.

We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need. In doing so, we work closely with parents and outside agencies.

SAFETY INCLUDING SAFEGUARDING AND WELFARE REQUIREMENTS

The safety and welfare of our children is paramount at Hillbourne Primary School. We have robust policies and procedures in place to ensure their safety.

In Reception we provide a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to take risks, follow rules and stay safe. We comply with the welfare requirements set out in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage and understand that we must:

- Promote the welfare of all children;
- Promote good health;
- Manage behaviour effectively and appropriately;
- Ensure all adults working with children are suitable to do so;
- Ensure that the environment is safe and all equipment and furniture is fit for purpose;
- Ensure all children have a challenging and enjoyable learning experience.



We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious fruit snacks, access to water throughout the day, allocating significant time for physical development and following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident.

Staff and visitors are prohibited from using their mobile phones in our classrooms, only the class iPads are used to photograph children (for observation and assessment purposes) and children must be appropriately dressed in photographs.

Hillbourne Primary School has robust systems in place to ensure that all practitioners who have regular contact with children are suitable for their role.

Members of our Reception and admin staff hold the Paediatric First aid qualification, which is a statutory requirement of the EYFS.

The Child Protection Policy is in place to ensure the safety of all stakeholders at Hillbourne Primary School. Backing up this policy is a dedicated safeguarding team.

At Hillbourne Primary this team consists of – Laura Bennett– Designated Safeguarding Lead and Richard Claxton and Emma Camilleri – Deputy Safeguarding Leads.

Staff have access to the My Concern to log any concerns regarding any aspects of safeguarding and behaviour. All staff are vigilant in reporting concerns.

RATIOS

The school will ensure that staff levels within the Early Years setting comply with statutory guidance and meet the needs of the children, providing suitable levels of supervision and keep them safe. Children will be always kept within sight and hearing. The EYFS Leader will oversee all EYFS Provision.

For Reception classes:

- Class sizes will be limited to 30 pupils.
- Classes will be led by a qualified teacher, supported by suitably qualified support staff.

THE ROLE OF PARENTS/CARERS

We recognise the central importance of parents/carers as children’s first educators. We believe they have a significant role to play in the lifelong education of their child. We strive to create and maintain partnerships with parents/carers as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child’s learning. We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child’s education and care in numerous ways.

- Holding information evenings before the children start school which are offered in person and as videos available on our website.
- Talking to them about their child’s interests and needs during our introductory sessions in school and at our home visits carried out prior to them starting school.
- Being welcoming and approachable for parents to voice concerns/ask questions;
- Inviting them to a parents’ evenings each term to discuss how their child has settled and share progress and next steps for learning;



- Valuing parents' contributions to learning journeys;
- Encouraging parents to read with their child at home and make comments in their reading record books;
- Providing curriculum planning overviews for each topic, each term and highlighting how they can support their child at home through termly home learning;
- Inviting parents into school for 'parent phonics' sessions to demonstrate how we teach phonics and help them support their child. These opportunities are also made available as video content through our website;
- Providing parents with an annual end of year summary report detailing achievements and their child's EYFS profile;
- We also draw on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on outings and inviting members of the community into our setting to talk about their lives, work and experiences.

TRANSITIONS

Transitions are carefully planned for and significant time is given to ensure continuity of learning and care. At times of transition, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child and other settings. In the spring term prior to children starting school, we speak at length with nurseries to develop an understanding of the needs of each child. In the summer, children attend a number of introductory sessions with their parents/carers, and we meet with their nurseries to develop familiarity with the settings and staff.

Parents/carers are encouraged to take up the offer of a home visit (by the reception class teacher and TA) or have the option to instead meet with Reception staff on the phone or in school. This is a valuable time to talk 1:1 with them and answer any concerns/queries they may have.

Year 1 teachers are continually involved in the assessment of children in Reception so already have a good understanding of needs and next steps prior to them starting KS1. In the summer term, our reception teachers meet with the Year 1 teachers to liaise with them and discuss the individual children and their specific needs. The children's assessment data and writing books are sent with them to Year 1 so that their new teachers can plan for their 'next steps in learning' from the moment they enter their new class. Children spend a number of sessions towards the end of the school year in the Year 1 classroom as well as with the Year 1 teacher in their own class. This ensures that they are familiar and comfortable with their new teacher and are ready for the next phase of their education.

MONITORING THE EYFS

We are committed to providing the best possible experiences for our children. The EYFS Leader is responsible for monitoring provision, teaching and learning and children's progress. Feedback is then shared with the relevant teams and any necessary actions are taken.

All adults in the Reception team have a key role in children's learning and development. Therefore, they are required to be knowledgeable and skilled in the EYFS curriculum. Any training needs for existing or new members of staff are identified and addressed as part of performance management targets.



MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The EYFS Leader is responsible for reviewing the effectiveness of this policy.

All Staff are responsible for implementing procedures outlined in this policy.

DISSEMINATION OF THE POLICY

The policy will be given to all members of staff and copies will be available for parents, including via the school website.

Please read this policy on conjunction with the below

- Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage: - [Early years foundation stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/362822/early-years-foundation-stage-2017.pdf)
- Development Matters - [Development Matters - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/362822/development-matters-2017.pdf)
- Early Years Foundation Stage Profile - [Early years foundation stage profile handbook - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/362822/early-years-foundation-stage-profile-handbook-2017.pdf)
- Safeguarding Policy - <https://primarysite-prod-sorted.s3.amazonaws.com/hillbourne-primary-school-redesign/UploadedDocument/07f597d4-7dda-4fd2-8770-a49671be42a7/safeguarding-and-child-protection-policy-sept-2023-24-1.pdf>