



Humshaugh First School

EYFS Policy

Date Agreed	May 2023
Date to be reviewed	September 2025
Signed	<i>J.L.Long</i>

Introduction

At Humshaugh Church of England First School the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) includes children of 2 to 5 years of age. Entry to Reception is at the beginning of the school year in which they turn five.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is important in its own right, and in preparing children for later schooling. The Early Learning Goals set out what is expected of most children by the end of the Foundation Stage and these goals form the basis of our curriculum.

Every child deserves the best possible start in life, with appropriate support to fulfil their potential. A secure, safe and happy childhood provides the foundation for children to make the most of their individual interests and talents as they grow up and we acknowledge that that the children joining our school have already learned a great deal in their first four years of life. It is our role to provide opportunities and challenges to further enhance their learning.

Aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage

The early years education we offer our children is based on principles which are grouped into 4 themes:

- A Unique Child – Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self assured.
- Positive Relationships – Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- Enabling Environments – Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and carers.
- Learning and Development – Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. All areas of learning and development are equally important and inter-connected.

These four guiding themes work together to underpin effective practice in the delivery of the EYFS so that: -

- It builds on what our children already know and can do.
- It ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged.
- It offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children and activity that provides opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors.
- It provides a rich and stimulating environment.

We aim to achieve these outcomes through:

- The provision of a happy, caring, safe and secure environment for learning, which meets the individual needs and interests of the children.
- The development of warm and secure relationships between children and adults.
- The provision of a high quality curriculum in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage documents and Every Child Matters which encourages active learning through first hand experiences both in indoor and outdoor play, and through both verbal and non-verbal communication.

- Laying a secure foundation for future learning through planning around their individual needs and interests and informed by the use of ongoing assessments.
- Providing equality of opportunity, ensuring that every child is included and not disadvantaged because of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties or disabilities, gender or ability.
- Creating a working partnership between parents, careers and professionals of all the setting attended by our children.

The features of good practice in Teaching and Learning in our EYFS include:

- The positive partnerships between parents and staff which help our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement.
- The understanding that all staff have of how individual children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching.
- The range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication.
- The carefully planned curriculum that helps children to progress through the age-appropriate Development Bands and to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage.
- The provision for children to take part in activities which build on and extend their individual interests and allow them to develop intellectually, physically, socially and emotionally.
- The encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management.
- The support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment.
- The identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are regularly shared with parents.
- The good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school.

- The clear objectives for our work, and the regular monitoring to evaluate and improve what we do.
- The regular identification of training needs of all adults working within the Foundation Stage.

Play in the Foundation Stage

Play underpins the delivery of all of the EYFS. Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they create, investigate, take risks, solve problems and use trial and error to find things out. They build up ideas, concepts and skills and they are able to express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations supported by adults they know and trust.

Inclusion in the Foundation Stage

Every child is a unique individual and we give our children every opportunity to achieve their full potential. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning. In the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage. Some children progress beyond this point. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, 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.

We meet the needs of all our children through: -

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and individual Interests which help to 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, challenge 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. This involves speech therapy for some of our children and partnership working with outside agencies for children with Special Educational Needs.

The Foundation Stage Curriculum

The Foundation Stage Curriculum is organised into seven areas of learning with three Prime Areas and four Specific Areas. There continues to be a balance of child initiated and adult led activities.

The Prime Areas are: -

- **Personal Social and Emotional Development.** This area focuses on the developing child and his/her ability to work and play alongside others. It is critical for very young children in all aspects of their lives and gives them the best opportunity for success in all other areas of learning.
- **Physical Development.** This area focuses on the child's developing physical control, mobility, awareness of space and manipulative control. In addition children will learn about health and self care.
- **Communication and Language.** This area encourages developing competence in a child's listening and attention, understanding, and speaking.

The four Specific Areas are;

- **Literacy.** This area encompasses reading and writing.
- **Mathematics.** This area focuses on learning through practical activities in both number and shape, and on using and understanding mathematical language.
- **Understanding of the World.** This area focuses on the child's developing knowledge and understanding of their own environment, other people and features

of the natural and manmade world. It forms the foundation for later work in Science, Design and Technology, History, Geography and ICT.

- **Expressive Arts and Design.** This area focuses on the development of the child's imagination and their ability to communicate and express ideas and feeling in creative ways. It incorporates art, design, music, dance and role play. Creativity is fundamental to successful learning.

All seven areas are incorporated into the outdoor curriculum.

Assessment

We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to plan next steps to meet their learning development needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of observations, photos, videos and displays. This involves both the class teacher and teaching assistants.

On-going formative assessment is at the heart of effective early years practice. We observe the children, look, listen and take notes. We analyse our observations and decide what they are telling us about the children. We then plan what to do next and think about how we can provide experiences and opportunities, including how to organise the learning environment.

Evidence of each child's learning is kept in a file called a Learning Journey. Learning Journals contain a wide range of evidence such as dated observations, annotated photos or photocopies of mark making etc. We encourage parents and carers to contribute to the file through the completion of 'wow moment' notes to document each child's unique learning journey both in and out of school.

Reporting to parents

The EYFS requires early year's practitioners to review children's progress and share a summary with parents at two points. These are in the Prime Areas between the ages of 24 and 36 months (The Two Year Check), and then at the end of the EYFS (The EYFS Profile).

The EYFS profile summarises and describes children's attainment at the end of the EYFS. It is based on ongoing observation and assessment in the 3 prime and 4 specific areas of learning, and the 3 learning characteristics.

A completed profile consists of 20 items of information: the attainment of each child assessed in relation to the 17 early learning goal (ELG) descriptors, together with a short narrative describing the child's three learning characteristics.

The profile informs the child's next teacher in year one who can use this information to make plans for the year ahead. This information is shared with parents through a written report with the option of a parental consultation meeting in July.

Parents of Nursery children receive a report informing them of their child's progress in each area of learning. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs and gives details of the child's general progress. We complete these in the summer term and send them to parents in July.

The Role of Parents

We believe that all parents have an important role to play in the education of their child. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating their children. We do this through: -

- Holding a 'Getting to Know You' meeting with parents and child before starting Nursery/Reception.
- Inviting parents to bring their child for a visit during a session before they start Nursery.
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts Reception.
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress throughout their time in the EYFS.
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns and emphasising that there is no need to wait for a 'formal' meeting to do this.
- Having flexible admission arrangements to both Nursery and Reception, allowing time to accommodate each child's circumstances and to welcome them individually.
- Encouraging parents to stay and play with their child to aid transition.
- Organising a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school, parents and community.
- Offering a range of activities that support the involvement of parents. Parents are encouraged to contribute to their child's Learning Journey through 'wow moment' notes and e-mail. We invite parents to curriculum meetings to discuss the kind of

activities that the children undertake in the Early Years, for example Maths and Story Sacks, Phonics and Mathematics.

Resources

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning.

This policy will be reviewed in September 2025, or earlier if necessary.

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