



Little Hadham Primary School

EYFS Policy

Reviewed by the governing body October 2024

Next review date October 2025

Early Years

Intent, Implementation, Impact Statement

Intent

Here, in the Early Years, at Little Hadham Primary School, we aim to provide the children with an exciting and fluid environment, which supports children's natural curiosity and confidence and enables each child to flourish regardless of their background, circumstances or need. Every child is valued and given the time and space to develop through their own interests and fascinations, in their own way and at their own speed. We aim to ignite a love of learning through a strong desire to know and understand the world around them and in which they are heavily involved. We encourage active learning, curiosity, exploration and critical thinking through meaningful and hands on experiences. The characteristics of effective learning are therefore at the heart of our provision, teaching and learning.

Implementation

In the Early Years at Little Hadham Primary School, you will see:

- Children learning through play.
- Adults scaffolding learning through considered and open-ended questioning.
- Teaching and learning based on the revised Early Years Foundation Stage
- Resources and an environment that supports the above process and reflect the diverse nature of the current cohort
- Daily phonics sessions following the ELS SSP to support early literacy development and engagement
- Adults responding to children's interests/requests/ideas, in the moment.
- Children engaged in planned, teacher-directed activities as well as child-initiated activities.
- Continuous and enhanced provision reflecting the breadth of learning needs, in both outside and inside learning environments.
- Considered observations being made, based on the next steps of each individual.
- Such observations being shared with families to further embed learning at home.
- Considered and discreet interventions in place should there be a need for additional learning support.
- An organised and busy environment where children are engaged and able to communicate about their learning and their current engagement.
- Evidence of children's thinking, recording, decision making, designing, and their ownership of their environment.

Impact

It is our aim that children leave our Early Years as secure and confident, competent and creative learners, and skilful communicators. They are curious about the world around them, enjoy coming to school to learn new skills and build on existing knowledge and are able to connect with others through language and play.

Introduction

“When we give every child the best start in their early years , we give them what they need today. We also set them up with every chance of success tomorrow.” *Development Matters July 2021*

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to the learning and development of all children from birth to the end of their Reception Year. At Little Hadham, the Early Years consists of 3-4 year olds, Saplings, and 4-5 year olds, Ash Class. The Saplings are able to attend the Early Years for their allocated 15-30 hours.

Learning for children must be 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 Foundation Stage, many of these aspects of learning are brought together effectively through playing and talking.

Aims/Objectives

At Little Hadham Primary School we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning. We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent learners. We value the individual child and work alongside parents and carers to help every child reach their full potential.

As outlined in the ‘Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage’:

‘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.’

Statutory Framework for the EYFS

We adhere to the ‘Statutory Framework for 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**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents/ carers;
- **Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.**

We are mindful of the **Seven Features of Effective Practice** as laid out in ‘Working with the revised EYFS: Principles into Practice’ Julian Grenier 2020

1. The best for every child
2. High-quality care
3. The curriculum: what we want the children to learn
4. Pedagogy: helping children to learn
5. Assessment: checking what children have learnt
6. Self-regulation and executive function
7. Partnership with parents

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE CURRICULUM

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve the Early Learning Goals.

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

Three areas 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. These three areas are the **prime** areas:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Children are also supported across four **specific** areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice.

The 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. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

Interwoven within our curriculum are Little Hadham's core drivers; Diversity, Sustainability and Mental Health. We create medium term plans using topics as a vehicle for teaching core concepts and skills. Each topic is chosen mindfully based on their offerings for experiences in all seven areas of learning, but it is important to note that the topics and provision is highly flexible, allowing for a cohort's specific fascinations and interests.

The children are encouraged to share their ideas/thoughts/interests/fascinations with us. These ideas are then used to inform our short-term weekly planning, supported by observations, which identify areas of necessary focus.

We remain flexible to allow for unplanned circumstances and children's responses. 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 child-initiated learning. We plan for a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities

and those that are planned by adults. As the children play, the adults interact with them and, seamlessly, enable/encourage the learning.

In planning, supporting and enabling the children's learning, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and build these into our practice. We create stimulating learning environments and encourage children to free-flow between inside and outdoors as much as possible.

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 classroom staff are able to contribute.

Observations of children's achievements are collated in their own personal, online 'Tapestry' Learning Journal. Parents/carers receive a notification when an observation has been added to their child's Learning Journal. They can then view the observation, add comments and upload their own observations to show us what their children are able to do at home.

Through these ongoing observations, assessment and continuous discussion, the EYFS team are able to continually review each child's progress. Throughout their time in the Early Years, parents/carers are welcomed in to share their children's learning; both informally and more formally during parent/teacher meetings.

At the beginning of the Reception year, children complete the Reception Baseline Assessment. At the end of the Reception year, the EYFS Profile is completed to provide a summary of every child's development and learning. Children are assessed against 17 Early Learning Goals (ELGs) by the Early Years team - using their broad knowledge of each child.

The children are assessed as

meeting the level of development expected in each of the Early Learning Goals

or

not yet meeting the expected level of development in each of the Early Learning Goals.

The EYFS profile data is used to:

- inform parents about their child's development against the ELGs and the characteristics of their learning
- support a smooth transition to KS1 by informing the professional dialogue between EYFS and KS1 teachers
- help year 1 teachers plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children

SAFETY INCLUDING SAFEGUARDING AND WELFARE REQUIREMENTS

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

In Reception, we provide a safe and secure environment and work within a curriculum which teaches children how to take responsible risks, follow our Golden 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 and cameras are used to photograph children (for Tapestry observations and assessment purposes)

Little Hadham Primary School has robust systems in place to ensure that all practitioners who have regular contact with children are suitable to do so.

The Paediatric First aid qualification is held by a core member of the EYFS team.

The Child Protection Policy is in place to ensure the safety of all stakeholders at Little Hadham Primary School. Backing up this policy is a dedicated safeguarding team, which includes three Designated Safeguarding Leads. All staff are vigilant in reporting concerns.

Inclusion

We value all our children as individuals, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability, sexuality 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 and in doing so, work closely with parents/carers and outside agencies.

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 meetings before and as the children start school;
- Talking to them about their child's interests and needs during our introductory 'stay and play' sessions in school
- Being welcoming and approachable and having an open-door approach for parents to voice concerns/ask questions;
- Inviting them to a parent consultation in the Autumn and Spring Terms 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 term
- Inviting parents into school for learning together mornings, to demonstrate how we help them to support their child;
- Welcoming parents as volunteers into our school;
- Providing parents with an end of year report detailing their child's learning and their EYFS profile information;

- 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. Children are invited to attend introductory sessions with their parents/carers into Saplings to develop familiarity with the settings and practitioners. Children going up to Ash class take part in the whole school move up morning and parents are invited to an additional transition meeting at this stage. Our EYFS team make contact with the local nurseries and preschools, to familiarise themselves with the children, and we complete and compile the Transition Level of Need Tool to ensure information is passed on between settings to ensure support for children can be in place at the earliest opportunity.

At the end of the EYFS, our Reception teacher meets with the Year 1 teacher to liaise with them and discuss each child and their specific needs. The children's assessment data and writing books are sent with them to Year 1 so that their new teachers are able to 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 with the Beech Class teacher and in the Year One classroom to ensure that they are familiar and comfortable with their new teacher and environment.

Monitoring of 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. Information is shared with the Headteacher and Early Years team as appropriate and any necessary actions are taken.

All adults in the Early Years 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.

Catherine Lawrence: October 2024

Appendices:

- Link to the 'Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage':
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/974907/EYFS_framework_-_March_2021.pdf
- Link to Development Matters:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1007446/6.7534_DfE_Development_Matters_Report_and_illustrations_web_2_.pdf
- Link to Early Years Foundation Stage Profile:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/942421/EYFSP_Handbook_2021.pdf