

HORTON ST. MICHAEL'S FIRST SCHOOL

POLICY FOR THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS)

Horton St. Michael's First School admits children from the age of three. Within this document, the term Early Years Foundation Stage is used to describe children who are in Nursery and Reception.

Aims

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

As outlined in the EYFS '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.'

We adhere to the Statutory Framework for the EYFS (2017) 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 and/or carers
- **Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates**

Principles into Practice

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 quality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support
- Work in partnership with parents and within the wider context
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-initiated and child-initiated, supported by the adult
- Have a key person approach to develop close relationships with individual children
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and out

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 and exceed the early learning goals.

All the seven areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

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.

These three areas, the **prime** areas are:

Communication and Language

Physical Development

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

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

The **specific** areas are:

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the World

Expressive Arts and Design

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which children explore, think creatively and are active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

Practitioners working with the youngest children in Nursery will focus strongly on the three prime areas, which are the basis for successful learning in the other four specific areas. The three prime areas reflect the key skills and capabilities all children need to develop and learn effectively, and become ready for school.

Children have whole group and small group times which increase as they progress through the EYFS with times for a daily phonics session using 'Letters and Sounds', teaching aspects of Mathematics and Literacy, including shared reading and writing.

The curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the EYFS.

'Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mixture of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are planned by adults. During children's play, early years practitioners interact to stretch and challenge children further.

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

We create a stimulating environment to encourage children to free-flow between inside and out.

Observation and Assessment

Baseline assessment, conducted in the Autumn Term, will enable the class teacher to know within weeks of children starting school how best to develop their individual pupils' potential. 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. Everyone is encouraged to contribute and discussions take place. Significant observations of children's achievements are collated in their own personal learning journey, which are shared with parents. In the Autumn and Spring term, parents are invited to attend a parents evening.

Within the final term of Reception, we provide the parent's with a report based on their child's development against each of the Early Learning Goals and the characteristics of their learning. The parents are then given the opportunity to discuss these judgements with the Reception teacher in preparation for Year 1.

Health and Safety

Children's safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which 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, following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident.

Please see our separate policies and procedures on Health and Safety, Child Protection, Intimate Care, Mobile Phone Policy, Supporting Children with Medical Needs, Asthma Policy.

All Forest School sessions are fully led by trained Forest School leaders and supported by other staff and parental volunteers.

Parents as Partners & the wider context

At Horton St. Michael's First School we strive to create and maintain partnership with parents and 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.

Working with other services and organisations is integral to our practice in order to meet the needs of our children. At times we may need to share information with other professionals to provide the best support possible.

We 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.

Transitions

Transitions are carefully planned for and time given to ensure continuity of learning. At any transition, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child and other settings, including nurseries and childminders. Home visits are offered and children are invited to attend introductory sessions to Nursery/Reception to

develop familiarity with the setting and practitioners. Pre-admission children are also invited to certain appropriate school functions, e.g. Sports Day, Summer Fair.

In the final term in Reception, the Year 1 teacher will meet with the Early Years staff and discuss each child's development against the Early Learning Goals in order to support a smooth transition to Year 1. This discussion helps the Year 1 teacher to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children.

Special Educational Needs

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 or exceed 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 and outside agencies.

Equal Opportunities

There is a commitment to provide equal opportunities for all pupils. Planning for the foundation stage will ensure equal interest and involvement for both boys and girls, children with special educational needs, more able children, children with disabilities, children from all social, cultural and religious backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups including Travellers, refugees and asylum seekers, and children from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

Inclusion

In order to achieve the above aims we recognise that children have their own experiences and knowledge of the world; the curriculum will take into account where the child already is, on entry to school. The children are given opportunities to explore their environment, set their own challenges and make discoveries.

Dyslexia Friendly

Horton St. Michael's is a dyslexia friendly school.

As a dyslexia friendly school, we will provide quality teaching, differentiated as needed. We will identify and respond to unexpected difficulties, actively working to include all pupils so they can achieve in all areas of learning.

We feel that more children are successful when taught using dyslexia friendly teaching methods. By teaching in this way, we aim to make our teaching and learning fully accessible to all children. We will try to discover how each child learns best and we will use a variety of multi-sensory activities including practical activities and ICT, using eyes, ears, speech, fingers, to stimulate learning.

We will use different methods of recording in all areas of the curriculum such as pictures, Dictaphones, photographs of activities and practical outcomes so that the children are not always using writing.

We aim to enable children to use their strengths for learning while developing the areas they find more difficult.