



Monken Hadley CE Primary School

Seek what is good, treasure what is true, do what is right.

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS) POLICY

Ratified by	Governing Body
Date	17 th March 2016
Date for Review	Spring Term 2018

Aims

- To give each child a happy, positive and fun start to their school life in which they can establish solid foundations on which to expand and foster a deep love of learning;
- To offer each child a wide range of new and exciting experiences and give them the opportunity to consolidate, explore and test them out along with their own, individual experiences;
- To enable each child, through encouragement and high expectations, to develop, to the full, socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally.
- To offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited opportunity for development;
- To encourage children to develop independence within a loving, secure and friendly atmosphere;
- To support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing;
- To help each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and developing the confidence to work towards personal goals.

The Curriculum

Reception children follow the curriculum as outlined in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (March 2014), which is available from the school office or to download at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335504/EYFS_framework_from_1_September_2014_with_clarification_note.pdf This document defines what we teach and this policy details the specifics of our setting.

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are seen as important and interconnected but three areas are seen as particularly important for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, for building their capacity to learn and form relationships and thrive (DfE 2014: 1.3). They support children's learning in all other areas and are known as the prime areas.

The **Prime Areas** are:

- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**
 - Self-Confidence and Self-Awareness
 - Managing Feelings and Behaviour
 - Making Relationships
- **Communication and Language**
 - Listening and attention
 - Understanding
 - Speaking
- **Physical Development**
 - Moving and Handling
 - Health and Self-Care

The **Specific Areas** of learning develop essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society. The specific areas are:

- **Literacy**
 - Reading
 - Writing

- **Mathematics**
 - Numbers
 - Shape, Space and Measures
- **Understanding the World**
 - People and communities
 - The World
 - Technology
- **Expressive Arts and Design**
 - Exploring and Using Media and Materials
 - Being
 - Imaginative

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning based on *Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Non-statutory Guidance*. This guidance highlights the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them and Reception teachers plan activities with this guidance in mind. The three characteristics are:

- **Playing and Exploring**
 - Finding out and exploring
 - Playing with what they know
 - Being willing to 'have a go'
- **Active Learning**
 - Being involved and concentrating
 - Keeping on trying
 - Enjoying achieving what they set out to do
- **Creating and Thinking Critically**
 - Having their own ideas
 - Making links
 - Choosing ways to do things

Transition into Reception

The school recognises the importance of ensuring a smooth transition into the school from home and other settings. A flexible approach to admissions recognises the importance of recognising each child as an individual.

This approach includes:

- Parental consultations
- Pre-school visits
- New children visiting Reception in the summer term
- Flexibility of routines which flow with the needs of the children

This ensures that children gain confidence and security to adapt to the new and challenging situation.

Teaching strategies

We ensure there is a balance of adult led and child initiated activities across the day. Although much of the time is spent with children self-selecting tasks, the interaction between the adult and child is essential as the adult's response to children builds understanding and therefore guides new learning. The adult's role is to continually model, demonstrate and question what the child is doing. In some cases the adult will ask a child to come and complete a task or game with them; at other times they will participate in a child's game, extending it where possible.

By the summer term the children will experience many more adult directed tasks as they prepare for their transition to Year 1.

Play

Learning through play is an important part of our Early Years setting. We believe children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them. Using children's interests as a starting point, we provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning to help them make sense of the world. They have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own. They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experience at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests and inspire those around them. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. We believe it is important that adults take an active role in child initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating and extending their play. Getting the balance right between child initiated play, which is controlled, and adult led activities is very important to us.

Teaching

We include direct, carefully planned, adult led experiences for children in the form of structured adult led teaching and adult led group activities. These are particularly important in helping children to learn specific skills and knowledge and it is often through children's play that we see how much of this learning children have understood and taken on.

Each day we follow a timetable with set routines in place. We set aside times each day when the children come together to be taught in the more traditional sense, gathered together on the carpet as a class. In these slots we focus on our topic work, maths, literacy, phonics, and stories. These sessions help to develop vital habits of learning: learning as a group, listening to the teacher, taking turns to answer, sitting still etc.

Reading and story time play an important part of the day. We want to make sure our children have a love of books and will leave the EYFS with a bank of stories they know well, both traditional and modern classics. We make sure there is always time for whole class story time during the end of a session and there are many opportunities to enjoy books at other times. Every child is given their own book bag and has a designated day when they will have one-to-one time sharing books with an adult.

Planning

We believe topic work is a great way to fire the imagination and therefore we follow the stimulating Cornerstones Curriculum schemes of work for Reception. The topics are flexible enough to ensure that we can also incorporate the children's interests, school themes and local or national events e.g. the Olympics.

Staff plan in more detail on a weekly basis using daily notes, observations and interactions with children to inform where the learning journey should move to. Half termly overview plans are available for parents/carers via the school website. Class teachers are responsible for writing plans and for sharing these with the support staff as well as seeking their input and modifying plans as necessary.

Visits and Visitors

Visits and visitors are booked to enhance the children's learning around a specific topic. We actively seek parental support on trips, aiming for a ratio of 1:5 adult:children. For safety reasons we say no to younger siblings coming along on school trips.

Visitors also really enhance a topic and we like to have 'experts' coming in to talk to the children e.g. a dentist. We often ask parents/carers if they are able to share knowledge or a skill e.g. cooking or looking after a baby.

Classroom organisation

All Reception children and approximately 10 Year 1 children share the Willow classroom. There are defined areas with clearly labelled resources to ensure children can access them easily. The classroom is set up in a way to provide children with experiences and activities in all of the seven areas of learning. They have a writing area, maths area, creative area, book corner, role play area, construction/small world area, outdoor area and a carpeted teaching area. A variety of activities are planned for and set up in the different areas each day. The adults move to whichever area their focus for the session/day is.

The outdoor area is an important part of the setting with many children choosing to learn outside for much of the day. We try to ensure that the range of activities outside reflects the different curriculum areas, for example setting up quiet spaces for a maths game, reading and for construction. A purposeful play area provides opportunities for climbing, running, cycling and other active games.

Each child has their own labelled peg and we encourage children to take responsibility for keeping their clothes, book bag and work safely in one place!

Assessment, observations and portfolios

Assessment is an essential part of the learning and development of children in the EYFS. It involves practitioners observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations.

To ensure we have evidence of a child's progress in the EYFS we use a range of strategies all of which come together in their individual e-portfolio (Tapestry). These portfolios are collections of children's work, photos and observations which create a detailed picture of the child. Where appropriate, we include individual next steps for children's learning. These next steps are discussed by the EYFS team in informal meetings and inform planning for the next day and week ahead. Staff have use of an iPad which is used to capture and note observations and next steps for learning.

Parents/carers have access to their child's portfolio using their own login. They are encouraged to contribute to this portfolio with their own WOW moments. WOW moments are where significant events that happen at home are recorded.

On entry to Reception we carry out baseline assessments for each child. In-line with the rest of the school, throughout the Early Years, the class teacher reports on progress of each child to the Headteacher and Deputy Head through termly progress meetings. During these meetings each child's development across the seven areas of learning is discussed. At the end of Reception the class teacher assesses each child against the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG) and comments on whether their development within each ELG is either 'emerging', 'expected' or 'exceeding'. This information is also communicated to parents/carers in the Reception child's end of year report and can be discussed in the final Parents' Evening in Reception.

Role of staff and key worker

The class teacher is the named key worker for each child in the setting. Their role is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs and to help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with their parents/carers. All adults within the Early Years setting actively seek to form positive respectful relationships with the children in their care. The formation of healthy relationships between adults and children is essential in enabling children's well-being now and their future successes.

Partnership with parents/carers

We believe that parents/carers are a child's first educator and therefore we work very closely to ensure they are involved in what we do with their child at school. We want parents/carers to feel they can speak to us about their child at any time and feel comfortable in our setting. As well as the Reception visit day, we offer a Meet the Teacher session at the beginning of the school year and offer information sessions for parents/carers, such as our Helping with Phonics at Home.

When a child gains a place at Monken Hadley we ask them to attend a session at the school alongside all other children who will be starting and with their parents/carers. We give each family an 'All About Me' booklet to complete with their child over the summer and this document is retained in the child's folder. Over the first few days at the school we encourage parents/carers to stay for as long as they wish in the classroom to ensure the transition to the school goes smoothly. We have a staggered entry into Reception with children initially staying for part of the day. Early in the first term parents/carers are also invited to a parents' meeting so the settling in can be reviewed.

We are aware that most parents will be part of the school for the next seven years and want them to get to know their child's peers and their families, so late in September the Friends of Monken Hadley arranges a Welcome Party for all parents/carers.

Parents/carers are invited to attend a parents' meeting in the autumn and spring terms and teachers are available most mornings and evenings to talk and to discuss more urgent matters.

Health & safety and safeguarding

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance (2014) https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335504/EYFS_framework_from_1_September_2014_with_clarification_note.pdf.

It is important to note that members of staff do not use their mobile phones or personal handset devices in the classroom and are prohibited from taking photographs with their personal handsets. Members of staff do, however, use school iPads to take photographs as evidence to support the regular observation assessment cycle in the EYFS. These photographs are used in children's portfolios, in class displays and on the school website. All parents/carers are asked to state if they give permission for their child's image to be used on the school website through the paperwork in their initial admission packs.

We are a healthy school and our children receive free fruit and milk from the Government scheme. All children in Reception are given the choice of a free school lunch or a packed lunch from home, however, the vast majority continue to eat a school lunch. We have a no-nut policy at school.

We take all accidents seriously and during break times there is a member of staff on medical duty. A medical form is completed for serious accidents in the 'First Aid Log Book' (see First Aid policy) and a copy is sent home to the child's parent/carer. Minor accidents are logged in the 'Medical Book'.

All large climbing equipment is checked by our site officer and fire evacuation drills are held regularly in line with whole school policy. There is an annual external check of equipment.

We follow whole school procedures for child protection (see separate policy). Caroline Froud, Headteacher and Julie Eyres, Deputy Head are the named Child Protection Officers and all concerns are discussed with either/both of them.

Transition to Year 1

Transition is carefully planned for and time given to ensure continuity of learning. In the final term in Reception, the Year 1 teacher will meet with the Early Years staff to 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. For those children remaining in Willow class, the class teacher spends time with the EYFS team to reflect on next steps of learning.

Staff Development

The EYFS teacher works with the Headteacher and Deputy Head to monitor and develop effective EYFS teaching and learning with the staff within his/her team. Members of the EYFS staff are encouraged to highlight their professional developmental needs during their Performance Management meetings. Staff will have the opportunity to attend EYFS courses run by the borough related to their developmental needs. Staff will also take personal responsibility for their professional development in EYFS.