

Forty Hill C.E. School

Early Years and Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy



At Forty Hill CE School, we value the importance of giving children the best opportunities to develop their learning as soon as they begin their education in Nursery. Our aim is to teach children how to become excellent learners from the beginning through a vibrant, exciting and motivating Early Years provision. 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 to reach their full potential.

Aims and Objectives

- For all pupils to be happy and to attend school, to feel confident and be emotionally and socially secure
- For all pupils to access all seven areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum, using play as a vehicle for learning, via both the inside and outside classrooms
- For the interests and needs of all pupils to be identified and provided for
- For all pupils to be assessed and tracked against the Foundation Stage Profile (Early Years Outcomes and Characteristics of Effective Learning) through a range of observations, activities, child initiated play and practitioners' knowledge
- For all pupils' parents to be informed of their child's progress and encouraged to support and participate in their child's education

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

- Every pupil is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- Children learn to be strong, independent and understand British values 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

Teaching and Learning

At Forty Hill we plan and teach according to Early Years Outcomes (previously Development Matters) and the Early Learning Goals. These are the knowledge, skills and understanding which young children should have acquired by the time they reach the age of five and have completed their year in Reception.

There are three prime areas of learning:

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

In addition, there are four specific areas of learning:

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

The curriculum is taught through a combination of adult led and structured learning and child initiated learning. We provide the children with opportunities to choose activities and to learn through play in both the inside and the outside environment, planning activities that develop the children's learning and skills daily.

Our main objective is to provide children with a high quality early years education which gives children a secure and confident start to their school life and nurtures a lifelong love of learning. We do this through:

- A mixture of adult led activities and child led activities
- High quality indoor and outdoor provision
- Planning that is influenced by the children's interests and their development
- Daily maths and phonics
- Regular writing opportunities
- Opportunities for children to choose and learn through play

We encourage the children to play an active role in shaping their learning experiences. Adults plan daily using observations that have been made to identify the children's next steps and what resources/environment changes are needed to achieve this. Activities are modelled by adults, both inside and outside to enable children to progress their learning through independent play.

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. The children are supported to develop problem-solving skills through open-ended tasks and opportunities to share their thinking with others. The children take part in a mixture of adult led activities which cover all 17 Early Learning Goals: Listening and Attention; Understanding; Speaking; Moving and Handling; Health and Self-Care; Self-Confidence and Self-Awareness; Managing Feelings; Making Relationships; Reading; Writing; Numbers; Shapes, Space and Measures; People and Communities; The World; Technology; Exploring and Using Media and Materials; Being Imaginative.

As practitioners, we plan using the Early Years Outcomes based on a series of topics each of which offers experiences in all seven areas. These plans then inform our short-term weekly planning, alongside our observations, which remains flexible for unplanned circumstances or children's responses.

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 capacities all children need to develop and learn effectively, and become ready for school. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as the children move through the Early Years at Forty Hill and grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

Children have whole group and small group times which increase as they progress through the EYFS with times for a daily phonics session, teaching aspects of Mathematics and Literacy, including shared reading and writing, which are introduced during the Reception year.

Observations and Assessments

At Forty Hill, we use a range of strategies to gather information about the children's learning and development; we use this information to ensure that our planning meets the needs of all learners. We gather and store our observations on Tapestry (an online platform learning journal) as well as in the children's own individual learning journals, writing and maths books. The evidence we gather is a mixture of photographs, videos and written observations of what the children have learnt or achieved in the EYFS, as well as their own work produced through play or targeted focused teaching.

All adults have a shared responsibility to gather evidence of the children's learning and achievements. We have an ongoing approach to observations and these are made weekly of all of the children. The class teacher assigns a key worker to each of the children in his or her class, who is responsible for ensuring that spontaneous observations have been gathered for those children each week.

Key children in Nursery

- Each adult is the key worker for up to 8 children (*this may differ if there are children with specific needs or additional adults deployed in the Nursery*)
- Each week every child will have an observation for adult led activities and spontaneous observations

Key Children in Reception

- The class teacher and NNEB are the key workers for 15 children each (*this may differ if there are children with specific needs or additional adults deployed in Reception*)
- Each week every child will have an observation for adult led activities and spontaneous observations

The observations form the basis of both the children's assessments and the planning of the class teacher. All members of staff discuss daily what has been observed and what the children's next steps are so that the children's interest can support the children's learning across the whole EYFS curriculum.

Baseline

For the first 6 weeks of the Autumn Term, the teachers gather evidence and assess the children's existing skills within the Early Years Outcomes and Characteristics of Effective Learning to identify a baseline. This is inputted onto our Management Information System (MIS), ScholarPack. The children's initial levels of development are utilised by the class teachers to support their planning for the remainder of the term. This allows learning opportunities to be pitched appropriately according to the children's attainment and targeted teaching groups to be planned for. This information is closely monitored to ensure that all children are making good progress.

Ongoing Assessment

Children are assessed every 6 weeks as part of the whole school monitoring cycle. Assessments ensure that the children are making progress across all of the EYFS 7 areas of learning and are discussed with the headteacher and SENDCo at a termly Pupil Progress Meeting. The class teachers utilise their ongoing assessments and observations to identify if the children are working below age related expectation, at age related expectations or above age related expectations. They assess to identify which band of Early Years Outcomes they are working with and then consider the 17 Early Learning Goals on the EYFS Profile.

Reporting

The results of the assessments and the EYFS Profile are shared with parents and carers at parent consultations and in the end of year report. This information is also shared with the Year 1 class teacher to ensure a smooth transition into Year 1 and to assist with the planning of Year 1 activities. The EYFS profile results are reported to the local authority who monitor and moderate the judgements made.

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 procedures 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 following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident.

Please see our separate policies and procedures on Health and Safety and Child Protection.

Inclusion

We value all our children as individuals at Forty Hill, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meets the needs of the individual child and supports them at their own pace so that most of our children achieve and in some cases 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.

Parents as Partners and the Wider Community

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, e.g. helping with the curriculum and providing relevant resources, sharing their culture, job or just reading with the children.

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. This is especially important with regard to the affirmation of our Christian beliefs and the teachings of Jesus which we share with the children.

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 Year 1 practitioners.

Children attend introductory sessions to Nursery and new entrants do so in Reception to develop familiarity with the setting and practitioners. For children who are currently in the Nursery or Reception we undertake a detailed and fun transitional programme during the Summer term and this provides the Year 1 staff with time to meet and get to know the children before September.

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.

Accepted by the Governing Body: October 2017

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