

HART AND ST. PETER'S ELWICK PRIMARY SCHOOL



‘Together we are stronger ‘

‘Always our best ‘

EARLY YEARS POLICY

Prepared by L. Ridgeway (Early Years Leader)

Approved:9.10.17

Signed; Chair of Governing Body:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'L. Ridgeway', is written over a faint rectangular box.



EYFS POLICY

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Values Statement

At St. Peter's Elwick CE Primary school and Hart Primary we are proud of our ethos and values. At St. Peter's Elwick we are proud of our Christian values that form the basis of our ethos. Our pupils are proud to be responsible, thoughtful and motivated people who strive to do their best. St. Peter's Elwick Church of England Primary School is a community with a strong Christian foundation and all values are based on Christian principles and teachings.

In both schools, we respect and care for all members of the community, nurturing talents and creating opportunities for all in a supportive environment. We enable all members of the school community to experience success, grow in confidence, and develop skills, attitudes and talents in personal, spiritual, social and academic fields.

In St. Peter's Elwick and Hart primary school we share a common set of values that underpin all that we do in our work. These values are:

Friendship and Trust
Always our Best (Service)
Thankfulness
Compassion

We aim to:

Provide a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment;
Motivate, inspire and enthuse all members of the school community;
Ensure all members of our learning community always try their best;
Teach children how to learn independently, to ensure they are ready for the next stage of their education;
Achieve the best possible academic attainments;
Have an excellent ethos and positive relationships;
Promote a healthy lifestyle;
Develop and nurture talent;
Help pupils be confident, happy and have high expectations of themselves;
Set a high value on spiritual, moral, social and cultural education;
Develop international connections;
Be a school that parents, pupils, staff and the wider community are proud of;
Constantly seek ways to improve teaching and learning through the process of School Self Evaluation and Review.

RATIONALE

Our Early Years foundation units provide a learning environment where every child can develop and learn in a safe and secure environment. Each pupil is considered individually and is provided with personalised learning in order for children to reach their full potential. Learning is challenging and stimulating across the curriculum and aims to provide a positive start to all children's school life.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

In line with the School philosophy we place children at the heart of everything we do. Everyone in Early Years works closely together to make it a special place to learn and to create a warm, friendly and family atmosphere in which children can thrive in a safe, secure environment.

In Early Years we provide the children with the very best educational opportunities. Getting to know our children as individuals is a priority, through this we can provide learning opportunities that challenge and stretch the children's knowledge, skills and abilities. Throughout our Early Years play is an essential tool that brings the imaginary world into the real world for the children. Play experiences underpin all our children's learning.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Our overarching aim is to help children in our Early Years setting achieve the following characteristics of effective learning taken from the Development Matters document (2012) and the Statutory Framework for Early Years (2012)

Playing and exploring- engagement

Active learning- motivation

Creating and thinking -creatively- thinking

We aim to achieve the following:

- Provide a happy, caring, safe and secure environment for learning
- Develop warm and strong relationships between staff, children and parents
- Provide a high quality curriculum in line with the Early Years documents
- Encourage active learning through first hand experiences
- Ensure the whole learning environment is safe and suitable on all occasions
- Effectively manage children's behaviour and consider their needs as individuals
- Value the culture diversity within the school and community
- Ensure planning and assessment systems are organised to ensure all children enjoys their learning and is challenged in their learning.
- Ensure that policies and procedures always focus on the process of learning
- Encourage all children to be excited and motivated to learn, to have high expectations and standards in their own learning.
- Develop and encourage independent learning through teaching and learning within the Early Years environment
- Encourage children to become even better learners through the principles of Growth Mindset and use the learning powers of: Concentrate, Don't Give up, Be Cooperative,

Be Curious, Have a Go, Use your imagination, Keep Improving and Enjoy learning.

We aim to provide a secure, happy environment where all children are valued equally and benefit from a broad balanced play based curriculum, which is tailored to meet the individual needs of the children. This lays the foundation for the development of basic skills and achieving the Prime and Specific areas of learning from the Development Matters document (2012) and the Statutory Framework for Early Years (2012).

THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE CURRICULUM (2012)

The content of our Curriculum in Early Years is set out in light of statutory guidelines in the Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage (2012). Guidance is given on effective teaching and learning beginning with the **Prime areas of learning**:

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Making relationships

Self-confidence and self- awareness

Managing Feelings and behaviour

Physical Development

Moving and handling

Health and Self-care

Communication and Language

Listening and Attention

Understanding

Speaking

Along with the Prime areas, teaching and learning covers the Specific areas of:

Literacy

Reading

Writing

Numeracy

Number

Shape, space and measure

Understanding of the World

People and Communities

The World

Technology

Expressive Arts and Design

Exploring media and materials

Being imaginative

Within each of the areas of learning development statements are used in order to plan for children to achieve and progress in their Early Learning Goals. Practitioners do not see these statements as sequential but consider them as a 'best fit'.

Assessment Procedures

Baseline Assessment on Entry to Nursery

In the first three to four weeks of children beginning Nursery they are assessed by the class teacher against the development matters statements. These assessments contribute to the setting of targets for individual children and their areas of development.

Baseline Assessment On Entry to Reception

In the first four weeks of children beginning their Reception year they are assessed against the development matters statements. These assessments will determine what level of attainment the children are at when they enter Reception.

Data is collated for Reception children and Nursery children by cross-referencing their Learning Journeys. At the end of Reception year children are assessed using the Early Years Profile using the following levels emerging, expected or exceeding in every area of learning.

All assessments are moderated using a range of different moderation strategies, including across our Federation, our cluster schools and Local Authority Moderation.

THE CORNERSTONES CURRICULUM

In Early Years we use the Cornerstones Curriculum as a basis to plan, teach, learn and assess. We use a broad and balanced curriculum following the interests of the children within these themes.

The Cornerstones Curriculum uses Enquiry based questions as a starting point for thematic based learning each half term. The Curriculum uses the following four part learning philosophy:

Engage

Develop

Innovate

Express

We use a two year rolling programme with the following themes:

YEAR 1

AUTUMN 1	AUTUMN 2	SPRING 1	SPRING 2	SUMMER 1	SUMMER 2
Why do you love me so much?	Why can't I have Chocolate for breakfast?	Did Dragons exist?	Are eggs alive?	Will you read me a story?	Why do lady-birds have spots?

YEAR 2

AUTUMN 1	AUTUMN 2	SPRING 1	SPRING 2	SUMMER 1	SUMMER 2
Do you want to be my friend?	What happens when I fall asleep at night?	Where does the snow go?	How does that building stay up?	Do cows drink milk?	Can we explore it?

The Curriculum focuses on the children's initial interests around the question and then learning opportunities are planned to enhance the children's learning in adult led and child initiated activities. The Curriculum also makes use of the outdoor environment whenever possible. Educational visits or visits to school to engage the children in the themes are planned every half term. The themes are celebrated with parents at the end of each half term to encourage engagement and develop relationships with parents in their children's learning within the classroom.

ORGANISATION

The Early Years Unit is made up of both and Nursery and Reception taught together with both indoor and outdoor provision. Our setting is organised so that the children are able to access a safe, enjoyable and organised environment at all times. All children have a designated Key Person, however the class teacher is the overall key person for the children in the class. Children are grouped to work in appropriate ability groups when adult led activities take place and address next steps in the children's learning.

The environment is regularly reviewed and enhanced or changed in light of the children's interests and requirements. Links to the wider world are fostered through imaginary play, encouraging our children to recognise differences in cultures and beliefs.

Every opportunity is given for children to make their own choices for learning to develop their independence. Children have opportunities to become rounded citizens and follow British Values as stated in the DFE guidance in 2014

- an understanding of how citizens can influence decision-making through the democratic process
- an understanding that the freedom to hold other faiths and beliefs is protected in law
- an acceptance that people having different faiths or beliefs to oneself (or having none) should be accepted and tolerated, and should not be the cause of prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour.
- an understanding of the importance of identifying and combatting discrimination

NEW STARTERS AND TRANSITION TO YEAR ONE

New Starters

In order for the children to feel settled and happy in their new environment members of staff make a home visit to children who are about to start school for the first time. This gives us the opportunity to develop a home school partnership and to find out about children's interests. A visit to Nursery before starting is encouraged, parents are then encouraged to take an active role in helping their child to settle. Personalised staggered starts are offered to children when they start in our setting to ensure that children are given time to feel safe and confident within the new environment at their own pace. Staff are encouraged to be patient, nurturing and supportive at all times, sometimes during transition times more support is needed for children and parents alike.

Transition to Year One

Transition into year one for Reception children begins in the Summer term. The children visit the class and spend some time with the teacher in the class so that they can become familiar with routines, learning and the environment. This is carefully managed with a professional dialogue between the Early Years Leader and the Key Stage One teacher to ensure a smooth transition for all children considering their individual needs. All assessments are

moderated with the Year One teacher to ensure that it is clear what aspects of the National curriculum have been reached and what areas need developing.

DOCUMENTATION

From entering the Early Years setting all children work towards the Early Learning Goals. When the children begin their Nursery year a baseline assessment is conducted in the first few weeks or when a pupil has settled into the Early Years setting. This is then used to help plan, teach and assess the children's individual needs.

Documentation either electronically or in paper form begins as soon as a child enters our setting. Individual Learning Journeys are created. We aim to capture the views of practitioners, parents and most of all the children. These documents a child's learning journey from where they were when they began their school life to what they achieve by the end of their Reception year. It focuses on the process of their learning rather than the product. It highlights the next steps for individual children and what they are achieving in terms of the development matters document and age bands.

Individual assessments of the children are shared with the parents. Parents have access to the learning journeys whenever requested and receive a printed copy of the learning journey at the end of Reception. The learning journeys are also shared at Parents consultations, which are held twice a year.

PARENTS/CARERS AS PARTNERS

At Hart and St. Peter's Elwick Primary School we recognise the importance of establishing positive relationships with parents. We understand that an effective partnership between school and home will have a positive impact on children's learning and development. Practitioners endeavour to encourage the regular sharing of information with parents. They are welcomed daily and encouraged to communicate with teachers. Parents and carers are asked to contribute to learning journals and keep staff informed of any information they need to know in regards to their child.

Parents are kept informed of what is happening in the setting through newsletters, notice board, text messages, reading records, home school books, the school website and informal chats at the beginning or end of the school day. Parents are encouraged to come on visits with their children to engage children and parents with our topics. We also invite parents to come into School regularly to celebrate the learning and achievements of the children. We also invite parents on special days such as Mother's day and special assemblies.

We have a friendly, open door ethos and all Early Years staff are available to talk to parents at the beginning and end of the day. If a longer time is required then appointments can be made through the school office.

PROVIDING EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

All practitioners at Hart and St. Peter's Elwick Primary School have a responsibility to maintain positive attitudes to diversity and difference, ensuring that inclusive practice is delivered in the Early Years setting.

All staff ensure every child feels included and not disadvantaged because of ethnicity, culture, religion, gender, ability, disability and special or medical needs. Consideration is always given to home language, family background and specific issues that may affect or hinder a child's learning or development.

(See Equal Opportunities Policy for more information)

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

(See Special Educational Needs Policy)

ROLE OF THE EARLY YEARS LEADER

It is the role of the Early Years Leader under the guidance of the Head teacher

- To organise the delivery of the Early Years Curriculum and to ensure progression and development
- To monitor planning and quality of delivery of the Curriculum

- To carry out INSET when required and keep abreast of developments in Early Years philosophy and practice.
- To monitor and update resources using a designated budget
- To liaise with outside agencies, neighbouring schools, LA representatives and parents
- To attend meetings and keep the school's senior management team fully informed of developments within Early Years.
- To contribute to the School Improvement plan

SAFEGUARDING

(To be read in conjunction with whole school safeguarding and child protection policy and acceptable use policy

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).

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. This is in line with the Federation Safeguarding Policy and Acceptable Use Policy. 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 are asked to state if they give permission for their child's image to be used on the school website and in other forums, including media and social media through relevant paperwork.