



# Holgate Primary and Nursery School & Sutton Road Primary and Nursery School

## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

### 2023

Within our collaboration of schools, we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the school, irrespective of race, gender, disability, faith or religion or socio-economic background. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life.

Frequency of Review: Yearly

Reviewed and Approved by: The Governing Body

Date: Summer 2023

Date of Next Review: Summer 2024

Reviewer: Sarah Bacon (Executive Early Years Leader)

Signed:  (Chair of Governing Body)

Date: 11.12.2023

## **Introduction**

This policy outlines the provision Sutton Road Primary School and Nursery and Holgate Primary & Nursery School offers to all its pupils aged three to five years. Children within this age range are taught in The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), This policy is based on requirements of the statutory Framework of 2021.

Early childhood education is valuable and crucial to children's learning and development and should not be seen merely as a preparation for the next stage in learning.

## **Our aims**

Our school is a place where everyone is treated equally, encouraged and respected. We believe that all children should be able to achieve their full potential academically, socially and emotionally. We are committed to our school being a safe and inclusive place where learning is nurtured and encouraged in a happy, caring and fun environment. We all work for our school to be a happy place where good behaviour is expected, and all children enjoy their educational journey. At Sutton Road Primary School & Nursery and Holgate Primary School & Nursery we believe in nothing but the best!

We aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to his/her full potential. Each child is valued as an individual and learning and teaching is based on the understanding that children develop at different rates.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. The EYFS is based upon four key principles:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

## **Effective Early Years Education**

Effective Early Years education requires both a relevant curriculum and practitioners who understand and are able to implement the curriculum requirements.

Within our collaboration we believe that children develop rapidly during the early years – physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially. Therefore, practitioners ensure that all children feel included, secure and valued with their individual needs being met. Early years' experience and learning builds on what the children already know, are interested in and can do. No child is ever disadvantaged, and individual needs are always included in planning and provision. Parents and practitioners work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect and parents are welcomed into the setting on a regular basis to share information and celebrate the children's achievements.

## Play and Exploration

“Children’s play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children’s development.” (“Early Years Foundation Stage” Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2007).

To be effective, the Early Years Curriculum is carefully structured (recognising different starting points; relevant to levels of need). In our collaboration opportunities are created for children to engage in activities planned by adults (teacher led) and those that they plan or initiate for themselves (child-initiated activities) in order to progress and develop. Practitioners provide quality interactions and observations, to identify levels of achievement, interest and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning and next steps. (See Appendix 2)

As children grow older and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult led focused learning, to help the children prepare for the more formal learning styles within Key Stage 1.

Well planned, purposeful activities and appropriate interventions by staff, ensure children within the setting are engaged in the learning process. A mixture of real objects, ICT and photographs are used to stimulate children’s understanding and all learning styles are catered for. To ensure children have rich and stimulating experiences, the learning environment is well planned and well organised and is reviewed regularly to suit the children’s interests and ever-changing needs and development. Enhanced provision challenge cards are placed within the environment to support and challenge children’s “play” during child-initiated time and to ensure a depth and purpose to their activities.

*“The new Statutory Framework clearly states that each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and a mixture of adult led and child-initiated activities. Furthermore, it is stated that play is essential for children’s development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems and relate to others”*

In our collaboration we strongly believe that effective learning and development for young children requires high quality care and education by committed and caring staff.

## Assessment and Record Keeping.

Within our collaboration, ongoing assessment is an integral part of learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

When a child is aged **between 3 and 4**, staff review their progress and provide parents and/or carers with a written summary of the child’s development in the 3 prime areas. This ‘progress check’ highlights the areas in which a child is progressing well and the areas in which additional support is needed.

In addition to this the children also have their own online learning journey, which captures learning opportunities. This enables staff to assess and plan for the next steps for individual children. But also provides the parents with a well-rounded picture of their child’s knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts reception, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 Early Learning Goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development (expected)
- Not yet reaching expected levels (emerging)

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters guidance) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

### **The Role of the Adult**

Across the collaboration we recognise the importance in providing children with opportunities to develop secure relationships in which they can learn to be strong and independent. We aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with children and their families and recognise that parents/carers are partners in a child's education. When parents/carers and practitioners work together in early years' settings, the results have a positive impact on the child's development.

We feel a successful partnership needs to be a two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise and we therefore aim to provide a variety of opportunities to support this. (See Appendix 1)

All adults model and play sensitively with the children, fitting in with their plans and ideas. Children are encouraged to try new activities and judge risks for themselves through talk and practice and adult support this. All practitioners who interact with the children contribute to the assessment process by competing observations, recorded in the children's online learning journey.

### **The Seven Areas of Learning**

The Foundation Stage Curriculum is broken down into seven areas of learning, all closely woven together. We use a combination of adult led learning and child-initiated activities to facilitate all areas of learning. There are 3 prime areas which are recognised for being crucial components for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning and for building the capacity for children to learn, form relationships and thrive, they are:

#### **Prime Areas**

Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)

Communication and Language (C and L)

Physical Development (PD)

#### **Specific areas**

Mathematics (M)

Literacy (L)

Understanding the World (UW)

Expressive Arts and Design (EAD)

## **Characteristics of Effective Learning**

The Characteristics of Effective Learning describe factors which play a central role in a child's learning and in becoming an effective learner. The characteristics of learning run through and underpin all seven areas of learning and development, representing processes rather than outcomes. Information describing the child's characteristics of effective learning will provide Year 1 teachers with vital background and context when considering the child's next stage of development and future learning needs.

The characteristics of effective learning are described under the following three headings:

### **Playing and exploring – engagement**

- Finding out and exploring
- Playing with what they know
- Being willing to 'have a go'

### **Active learning – motivation**

- Being involved and concentrating
- Keep trying
- Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

### **Creating and thinking critically – thinking**

- Having their own ideas
- Making links
- Choosing ways to do things

## **Planning**

Our EYFS planning is shared into half-termly planning in curriculum vehicles. These ensure a focus on the development of the prime areas with a specific focus on developing communication and language skills combined with the seven areas of learning with skills and experiences essential for the development of the holistic child. Opportunities to retrieve past learning as well as new experiences, enable flexibility for individualised provision and the nurturing of a child's development to work towards a final outcome. The use of visitors, trips and other enrichment adds an additional layer to this learning across the collaboration, supporting links to real life experiences such as occupations, the local area and 'awe and wonder' around them.

Detailed weekly plans are created to support the teaching of Phonics, Reading and Maths, using schemes to create a systematic and thorough coverage of these subjects.

Children in F1 (Nursery) are taught using Monster Phonics, (Pre-phase 2 phonics), covering all 7 aspects over 3 terms. Children in F2 follow the Monster Phonics scheme which focuses on grapheme recognition, blending and segmenting skills and introduced High Frequency words which together allows children to read and write sentences by the end of the Foundation stage.

Our Long Term planning is created over a 2-year cycle. This planning ensures a broad and balanced approach to the EYFS curriculum, along with ensuring the foundations are laid for the next step into Key Stage 1. Overviews of Vehicle planning, Maths, Reading and phonics are used to ensure coverage and a consistent progressive approach across the collaboration.

## **Teaching and Learning**

Effective teaching and learning is supported through:

- the partnership between staff and parents that helps our children to feel secure at school, and to develop a sense of wellbeing and achievement;
- the knowledge staff have of how children develop and learn, and how this must be reflected in their teaching provision;
- the range of approaches provided to give first-hand experiences, clear explanations, make appropriate interventions, and extend and develop the children's play through talk or other means of communication;
- a carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage;
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their own interests, and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- encouraging children to communicate and talk about their learning, the development of children's independence and self-management;
- the support for learning provided, with appropriate and accessible space, facilities and equipment, both indoors and outdoors, including the effective use of technology;
- the identification, through observations, of children's progress and future learning needs, which are regularly shared with parents, through daily conversations, written reports and parents' meetings.

## **Celebrating and Rewarding.**

Across the collaboration we use 'Class Dojo' to reward good behaviour and achievement both in school and at home. Children attend a weekly celebration 'mentions' assembly highlighting children who have impressed in specific areas.

## **Inclusion**

We value the diversity of individuals within our school. All children within the collaboration are treated fairly and all children and their families are valued and celebrated within our school. We believe that all our children matter and we give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs and styles;
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

### **Special Educational Needs**

Continual informal and formal assessments undertaken by staff provide opportunities to identify any special educational needs a child may have. Children identified with special educational needs are monitored and initial concerns are discussed with parents, SENCO, and advice may be sought from other agencies e.g. Speech and Language Therapy Service. In the Foundation Stage we give all children the opportunity to achieve their best by taking account of their range of life experiences, and abilities when planning for their learning.

### **Equal Opportunities**

In our school we believe that all our children matter. We give every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by considering our children's wide range of life experiences when planning for their learning. All areas of provision will be made accessible to all children. We value the diversity of individuals and families within the collaboration.

### **Safeguarding**

The school takes its child protection responsibilities very seriously. Any concerns, which the school has, will be noted and, if deemed necessary, will be reported to the relevant agency. The safety of the child is always of paramount importance. The full Safeguarding Policy is available for parents to read if they wish.

## Role of Parents/Carers

**The Foundation Stage team strongly believe that developing an effective working partnership with parents/carers has a positive impact on children's development and learning.**

We value parents/carers by:

- showing respect and understanding for the role of parents/carers as children's first educators.
- encouraging parents/carers to share observations of their child's development and any concerns they may have and to provide support for them in partnership where appropriate. Eg wow stars, conversations, photographs, cheeky challenges, reading challenges
- providing a welcoming environment by being approachable and friendly.
- establishing an atmosphere of trust and confidence.
- inviting parents/carers to regular meetings to share information about their children and about our school.
- sharing information about their child's progress, development and the curriculum through regular meetings, reports and newsletters/leaflets home
- providing opportunities for parents/carers to attend social events with children eg Easter egg hunts, Mother's Day afternoon tea etc
- inviting parents/carers into the classroom to share expertise/interests.
- Encouraging parents to be involved in their child's learning through creative homework, weekend books etc
- encouraging home school links through support with the home school reading programme.
- inviting them to assemblies and other whole school events
- being available at the beginning and end of the day to talk to parents/carers on an informal basis. If further time is needed to discuss particular issues appointments are usually arranged for meeting at another time that is mutually convenient to allow more privacy.



# Play

Well planned play, both indoors and outdoors is one of the key ways in which children learn. It is the process through which children can explore, investigate, recreate and come to understand their world. It is not just imaginative play and role play but includes spontaneous, self-initiated lines of inquiry and exploration. Play is a vital component of children's lives. It is an important way skills are developed and practised. Play is essential for physical, intellectual, linguistic, emotional, behavioural and social development.

## Principles of High Quality Play

- Play is an intrinsic part of children's learning and development.
- Play has many possible but no prescriptive outcomes.
- Play challenges children and offers them the chance to learn in breadth and depth.
- Play draws on what children already know and can do and enables them to experiment, practice and master what is new.
- Play enables children to apply existing knowledge and to practise their skills
- Play encourages children to communicate with others as they investigate or solve problems.
- Play offers children opportunities to explore feelings and relationships, ideas, and materials, connections and consequences.
- Play empowers children to make choices, to solve problems and to be independent in their learning.
- Play enables children to express fears or relive anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.
- Play encourages children to struggle, to take risks and to become resilient as learners.
- Play can be supported and extended but not interfered with by adults.
- Play should present no barriers to children because of their language, culture, ability, physicality or gender.

## Role of the adult

- To observe child-initiated play to understand and provide for their interests and needs.
- To plan and resource a challenging indoor and outdoor environment.
- To support children's learning through planned play activity.
- To extend and support children's spontaneous/self-initiated play.
- To extend and develop children's language and communication in their play.