



HILL VIEW SCHOOL

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY 2024/25

Early Years Foundation Stage refers to children who are in our FSN (Nursery) and FSR (Reception) classes. At Hill View School children can start in Little Acorns at the start of the term after their third birthday and they start Reception within the year that they turn five.

AIM

‘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.’ (p5, Statutory Framework for EYFS, March 2017)

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

This document should be read in conjunction with the Statutory Framework for the EYFS and other school policies, in particular the: Admissions Policy; Health and Safety Policy; Intimate Care Policy; Equality Policy; SEN Policy; Behaviour and Relationships Policy; and the Anti-Bullying Policy. All policies are available on the policies and forms page of the school website.

We adhere to the Statutory Framework of the EYFS 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:

- ensure the highest standards of safeguarding;
- provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven areas of learning, using play as the vehicle for learning. The topics used to develop the key skills of the EYFS curriculum are developed each year in line with the interests of the current cohort;

- promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support;
- work in partnership with all parents but especially those where there is any vulnerability (perhaps due to deprivation, parenting needs, ill-health etc);
- plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment;
- provide opportunities for children, led by their interests, to engage in activities that are adult-initiated, child-initiated or adult supported;
- have a key person approach to develop close relationships with individual children;
- provide a secure and safe learning environment both indoors and out

THE CURRICULUM

We plan an exciting and challenging child-led 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. The seven areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

The three prime areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive:

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

The four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied, are:

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

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

Planning develops throughout the year, in line with the cohort's particular interests. Coverage of the EYFS curriculum is tracked and the topics are used as vehicles to develop children's skills in the seven areas detailed above. The development of the youngest children (in FSN) is done through 'in the moment planning' and focusses strongly on the three prime areas - 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 shifts towards a more equal focus on all seven areas of learning as the children move in FSR or when they are developmentally ready. EYFS children have whole class, key group, small group and individual time within their days. In FSR there is a slightly more structured timetable which includes a daily phonics session using 'Read Write Inc', a maths 'lessons', literacy 'lessons' and time for shared and individual reading across the week.

'Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult - led and child initiated activities' (p9, Statutory Framework for EYFS, March 2017)

EYFS teachers plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are planned by the adults. During children's play, staff in both FSN and FSR interact to stretch and challenge children further.

In planning and guiding children's activities, teachers reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in the opportunities available. They strive to create a stimulating environment which encourages children, when possible, to free-flow between inside and out.

OBSERVATION & ASSESSMENT

Children are assessed against Development Matters and, in line with Oxfordshire, each development banding is split into c (emerging), b (working within) and a (secure).

As part of daily practice staff observe and assess children's development and learning to inform future planning. Observations are recorded in a variety of ways – photos, samples of work, short and detailed notes. All staff contribute to observation and assessment and discussions between key workers take place. Observations of children's achievements are collated in their own personal learning journey, which is regularly shared with parents.

At the end of FSR, by the 30th June at the latest, the EYFS profile is completed for each child. The profile provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, including characteristics of effective learning, next steps and their readiness for Year 1. The profile reflects the following: ongoing observation; all relevant records held by the setting; discussions with parents and carers; and information from any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution. Each child's development is assessed as either: meeting the expected levels of development (expected), exceeding the expected levels of development (exceeding) or not yet reaching expected levels (emerging) against each of the Early Learning Goals.

Parents are invited to attend parents' evenings three times across the year and detailed reports are written at the end of the year. Parents of children in FSR also receive an interim report in January each year. The final detailed FSR report is based on a child's development against each of the Early Learning Goals and the characteristics of their learning. The final detailed FSN report provides an assessment for each strand within each area of learning as well as children's development in the characteristics of effective learning. SAFEGUARDING 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 are safeguarded to the highest standard.

We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including through their PE lessons, circle time, the provision of nutritious food choices, following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident.

Please see our separate policies and procedures on Safeguarding, Health and Safety, Food and Drink; Administration of First Aid; and Medical Needs, all of which can be found on the policies and forms section of our website.

INCLUSION

Every child is valued as an individual at Hill View School, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meet the needs of the individual child and supports them at their own pace so that they can accelerate their development.

Early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling the support that is needed however children are monitored carefully before they are formally registered with SEN to ensure that other factors have not impacted. The guidance "Special Educational Needs Support in Oxfordshire schools and settings" is used to inform decision making around SEN. Teachers work closely with parents and, where relevant, outside agencies to try to remove barriers to learning. See our separate Equality and SEN policies.

SUPPORTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR CHOICES IN THE EARLY YEARS

At Hill View school there are established systems and procedures in place to support positive behaviour. Little

Acorns and the reception classes follow these principles but have adapted them slightly to meet the age needs of the children in their care. All processes and systems are based on the school's values – Ambition, Creativity, Determination, Respect, Enthusiasm, Confidence. There is a whole school Stars and Clouds system which recognises positive choices and allows for warnings to be given where required. There are a number of positive reward systems in place across the school which recognise children who make good choices. Further information can be found in our Anti-Bullying and Behaviour and Relationships policies.

PARENTS AS PARTNERS & THE WIDER CONTEXT

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. The school operates an open door policy at the start and end of each day which allows parents and teachers to discuss the children as and when required.

In FSR there are drop in sessions planned across the year which allow for parents to see and experience ideas and activities, related to an area of learning, that they can take into their home to support their children's development.

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.

Children who will be joining Little Acorns have a planned transition which includes a home visit and some settling in sessions both with and without their parent. In some cases there will be more transition planned if needs dictate.

For children joining FSR, transition starts in June when parents attend an initial information evening at the school. In July there are transition visits planned however there may be more sessions depending on the setting the children are coming from. In September FSR staff visit children and parents at home and then children start school in the third week of term.

If the children already attend Little Acorns, they almost begin transition as soon as they are comfortable there as they have their PE sessions in the main school hall! Formal transition for Little Acorns children starts after the May half term when they start weekly visits to the main school.

For any child with identified, high level needs, an individual transition plan will be developed with parents and staff from their previous setting.

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