



EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

Contents

- Early Years Foundation Stage
- Aims
- Learning and Development
- Planning
- Staffing and Organisation
- Assessment, Recording and Monitoring
- Learning through Play
- The Learning Environment
- Liaison with Pre-school Settings and Induction
- Reception to Year 1 Transition
- Home/School Links
- Equal Opportunities
- Inclusion

Early Years Foundation Stage

We endeavour to ensure that children "learn and develop well and kept healthy and safe." We aim to support children in their learning through "teaching and experiences that gives children the broad range of skills that provide the right foundation for good progress through school and in life."
(Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2012)

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives.

At Haslam Park we greatly value the important role that the Early Years

Foundation Stage (EYFS) plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development, however we also believe early childhood is valid in itself, as part of life. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

The EYFS is for children from birth to five years of age. The final year of the EYFS is referred to as the reception year. All children begin school with a variety of experiences and learning. It is the privilege of the practitioners working in reception to take on the task of building upon that prior learning and experience. This is done through a holistic approach to learning, ensuring that Parents/carers, support staff and the reception teachers work effectively together to support children's learning and development.

Aims

It is every child's right to grow up safe, healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and with economic well-being. At Haslam Park the overarching aim of the EYFS is to help young children achieve these five "Every Child Matters" outcomes.

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 teaching and learning is based on the understanding that children develop at different rates.

We aim to:

- provide a safe, challenging, stimulating, caring and sharing environment which is sensitive to the needs of the child, including children with additional needs
- provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for future learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond
- provide opportunities for children to learn through planned, purposeful play in all areas of learning and development
- use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress
- enable choice and decision-making, fostering independence and self confidence
- work in partnership with Parents/carers and value their contributions

- ensure that all children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability, have the opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development

Learning and Development

The early learning goals (the knowledge, skills and understanding which young children should have acquired by the end of the reception year) and the educational programmes (the matters, skills and processes which are required to be taught to young children) are set out in the "Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2012 and also the non-statutory "Development Matters Birth to Five Document", Early Education 2012

There are seven areas of learning and development of which three are "prime areas," and four "specific areas." The prime areas are

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development.

The specific areas are

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the world and
- Expressive arts and design

At Haslam Park we believe these seven areas are equally important and depend on each other to support a rounded approach to child development. We aim to deliver all the areas through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities.

Due to the language needs of the children in our school we place an increased emphasis on the development of speech and language skills; we achieve this through partnership with the external Speech and Language team and focussed sessions delivered in class by trained members of staff as well as rich and varied continuous provision where language and new vocabulary are consistently modelled and extended.

Planning

Good planning is the key to making children's learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive. Effective learning builds on and extends what children know and can do. Our planning shows how the principles of the EYFS will be put into practice and is always informed by observations we have made of the children, in order to understand and consider their current interests, development and learning. All practitioners who work in reception at Haslam Park are involved in this process. There are three stages of planning the curriculum:

Long Term Planning

We have created a framework, which gives structure and coherence to the curriculum. Topics are planned for each of the six terms and the early learning goals and educational programmes are distributed over the terms, to determine broad and balanced coverage. Some early learning goals provide a focus for certain terms, particularly those relating to Knowledge and Understanding of the World.

Term Topic

Autumn 1: 'All About Me'

Autumn 2: 'Let's Celebrate – Festivals and Celebrations'

Spring 1: 'Witches and Wizards'

Spring 2: 'People Who Help Us'

Summer 1: 'Growth and Change'

Summer 2: 'Holidays'

Outdoor Learning

To support our children's development in the EYFS, at Haslam Park we also plan weekly outdoor learning sessions which incorporate aspects of each of the seven areas of learning and promote children's confidence and risk awareness.

The outdoor environment is a rich, dynamic and natural space for learning and development in children of all ages. Its value as an essential learning resource has been recognised by many pieces of research and more recently within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), particularly within the principle of 'Enabling Environments' (A Toolkit for Developing Outdoor Provision)

The EYFS states:

'Being outdoors has a positive impact on children's sense of well-being and helps all aspects of children's development.

- Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors.
- It gives children first-hand contact with weather, seasons and the natural world.
- Outdoor environments offer children freedom to explore, use their senses, and be physically active and exuberant.'

Medium Term Planning

We address particular aspects of the curriculum in more detail for each term.

We include links between areas of learning and development and opportunities for ICT. Learning objectives, assessment opportunities, and activities and experiences for each area of learning and development are identified. Topic webs are completed with children at the beginning of each term. They are used to assess prior knowledge and understanding and to enable the children to have an input into the direction of the topic. They are updated throughout the term to show the learning and development that has occurred.

Short Term Planning

We identify specific learning objectives, activities, differentiation, deployment of adults and resources, to meet the learning needs of the children on a weekly and day-to-day basis. It allows for flexibility in response to individual children's needs and interests and for revision and modification, informed by on-going observational assessment.

At Haslam Park we refer to the development matters, ages and stages document and the early learning goals to help inform us of the children's next steps.

Staffing and Organisation

There are two reception classes at Haslam Park, with a maximum intake of forty five children. We maintain an adult/pupil ratio of 1:15 within the reception year; there are two teachers and a teaching assistant in the class throughout the school day. The children have daily opportunities for structured and free-flow play both in the classroom and in the custom built EYFS outdoor area. This time is supported by an adult, who acts as a facilitator to the child's learning. The teachers liaise with the teaching assistant, regularly involving them in planning, preparation and assessment. We are always aiming to improve our teaching skills, knowledge and understanding and so all practitioners are encouraged to participate in local authority courses, in-service and local cluster group training. Practitioners also conduct and attend in-house training and disseminate new initiatives, ideas and teaching methods to colleagues. They also liaise with the local pre-school nurseries on a regular basis.

Assessment, recording and monitoring

At Haslam Park we undertake assessment for learning. We analyse and review what we know about each child's development and learning, and then make informed decisions about the child's progress. This enables us to plan the next steps to meet their development and learning needs. All practitioners who interact with the child contribute to the assessment process.

Formative assessment

This type of assessment informs everyday planning and is based on on-going observational assessment of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles. Formative assessment may take the form of anecdotal observations, focused observations, baseline assessment, and other focused assessments e.g. phonic/number, annotated examples of work, photographs, and information from parents. Each child has an individual 'Learning Journal' in which this evidence is stored. We plan for observational assessment when undertaking our medium and short term planning.

Summative assessment

The EYFS Profile summarises all of the formative assessment undertaken and makes statements about the child's achievements against thirteen scales. It summarises children's progress towards the early learning goals. It is completed at the end of each term by the class teacher. The teachers also undertake in-house and local cluster group moderation. For further information see the Assessment Policy.

Learning through play

"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

At Haslam Park we do not make a distinction between work and play. We support children's learning through planned play activities, and decide when child-initiated or adult-led play activities would provide the most effective learning opportunities. We believe that it is important for adults to support children's learning through play, by getting involved in the play themselves.

The Learning Environment

"A rich and varied environment supports children's learning and development.

It gives them the confidence to explore and learn in secure and safe, yet challenging, indoor and outdoor spaces."

"Early Years Foundation Stage",
Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2007

We aim to create an attractive, welcoming and stimulating learning environment which will encourage children to explore, investigate and learn through first-hand experience. We also aim to make it a place where children feel secure and confident, and are challenged to develop their independence.

Activities are planned for both the inside and outside; children have the freedom to move between the indoor and outdoor classroom throughout the school day. The learning environment is divided into a variety of different areas: role play, book corner, writing area, Numeracy area, computer, creative, malleable, sand, water, outside, construction, small world and puzzles. These areas are carefully arranged to encourage quiet areas and more active areas within the learning environment.

Children are encouraged to become independent learners and to take some responsibility for initiating their own lines of enquiry and investigation. Each day children select focussed play activities.

Liaison with pre-school settings and induction

At Haslam Park we have links with the local pre-school providers. The reception and pre-school teachers meet to discuss assessment and induction issues. We are continually looking at ways to integrate the activities of the pre-school and reception classes. During Summer Term 2, pre-school children who will be starting school in September make visits to the reception class.

Parents/carers have the opportunity to meet the class teachers and to visit the reception classroom. Parents/carers are given a reception brochure which outlines the curriculum and school routines, along with a document pack to be completed and returned to school. Uniform and reading folder orders are available for collection at this meeting.

During Summer Term 2, the EYFS leader undertakes visits to the feeder nurseries and play groups, to meet prospective children and to talk about starting school. All prospective children have the opportunity to visit their classroom for morning or afternoon in Summer Term 2. Transfer records from preschool settings inform reception practitioners about the new intake. In both July and September a meeting is held by the EYFS leader to introduce Parents/carers to the school, reception procedures and curriculum.

During the induction period in September, children are split into two groups. For the first 2 weeks half of the new intake attend the school in the morning and the other half of the children attend in the afternoon; in week 3 both groups attend mornings and lunch and in week 4 the children start full time.

This allows:

- children to feel secure in their new environment and gradually build up to full-time attendance
- the practitioners to get to know the children individually and establish good relationships
- the reception teachers to carry out a baseline assessment

Admission is on a full-time basis is introduced at the beginning of week 4. A child reaches statutory school age at the beginning of the term following his/her fifth birthday.

Reception to Year 1 Transition

Reception and the Year 1 teachers have worked together to make the transition from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 as smooth as possible. Please note that in Key Stage 1 the children are placed into one of three mixed age, mixed ability classes. They are in these classes for registration and topic work. For Literacy and Numeracy the children are streamed into ability groups and taught at a level appropriate for their needs. An induction evening is held in the summer term of reception to explain to parents / carers how Key Stage 1 operates.

At Haslam Park:

- children are encouraged to develop independence when dressing and undressing and when organising their personal belongings throughout the reception year
- reception practitioners plan for more structured activities to be undertaken during the summer terms, encouraging less dependence on adult support
- reception children meet year 1 teachers during assembly, playtime and other whole school activities during the reception year
- individual EYFS 'Learning Journals' are passed on to the year 1 teachers
- an EYFS Profile end of year class summary is passed on to year 1 teachers
- reception and year 1 teachers meet to discuss individual needs of children in July
- reception children visit their new year 1 class and teacher for a morning session in July
- the 'Letters and Sounds' national approach to phonics and spelling is continued throughout year 1 and 2
- there is a similar structure to the school day during the Autumn Term when the children move into year 1
- we have planned learning walks each term for the teachers and support staff to visit both classrooms and gain a greater understanding of where the children are coming from and going to
- there is an overlap in approach and routines, e.g. Fruit time, behaviour systems, etc.
- where possible, the year 1 children continue to enjoy practical learning experiences which gradually becomes more formalised towards the end of the academic year

Home/School Links

We recognise that Parents/carers are the child's first and most enduring educators. When Parents/carers and practitioners work together in early years settings, the results have a positive impact on the child's development. A successful partnership needs to be a two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise.

We aim to develop this by:

- outlining the reception curriculum to Parents/carers during the new parents meeting in July, to enable them to understand the value of supporting their child's learning at home
- topic webs and curriculum letters are sent home each half term to keep parents informed of their child's current curriculum and learning needs, with an outline of activities which could be undertaken at home to support this
- encouraging Parents/carers to complete the home/school admissions booklet
- organising a starting school meeting in early September

- operating an "open door" policy, whereby Parents/carers can come and discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner
- sharing progress at school through annotated photographs and encouraging parents to comment on and look at their child's 'Learning Journals' which are readily available to parent.
- encouraging parents to share their child's 'Magic Moments' which are used to record special moments or achievements at home.
- inviting Parents/carers to help in the reception class or other classes in the school and to accompany children on school visits
- encouraging Parents/carers to listen to their child read each night, to make use of the word lists and to comment on reading progress in a home/school reading diary
- encouraging relevant learning activities to be continued at home e.g. maths games and library books, and ensuring that experiences at home are used to develop learning in school
- discussing individual targets with Parents/carers at parents' evening in November and March (informed by the EYFS Profile and Development Matters Ages and Stages of Development)
- providing an annual written report to Parents/carers in July summarising the child's progress against the early learning goals and EYFS assessment scales
- holding child/parent open days and workshops to enable parents to work alongside their children
 - Weekly 'Stay and Play' sessions which allow parents to spend time with their children in the classroom environment completing tasks and activities relevant to the Early Learning Goals

Equal Opportunities

At Haslam Park we aim to provide all pupils, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability, equal access to all aspects of school life and work to ensure that every child is valued fully as an individual. Practitioners, as role models, are aware of the influence of adults in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical ideas.

Inclusion

Children with special educational needs will be given support as appropriate to enable them to benefit from the curriculum. This includes children that are more able, and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities. Individual Education Plans identify targets in specific areas of learning for those children who require additional support, in line with the school's Special Educational Needs Policy. Teachers would discuss these targets with the child and his/her Parents/carers as appropriate. Progress is monitored and reviewed every term. The school's SEN co-ordinator is responsible for providing additional information and advice to practitioners and parents, and for arranging external intervention and support where necessary. For further information see Special Educational Needs Policy.

Safeguarding

Children in the Early Years are supervised at all times, with a sufficient number of staff for the amount of children (Ratio of 1:15 in class, and 1:5 for out of school activities and educational visits)

All indoor and outdoor equipment is regularly checked to ensure it is safe and suitable for the children to use. The outdoor area is checked by a member of staff for damage or safety risk each morning before it is set up for the day.

School has an up to date whole school safeguarding policy which all staff in Early Years are familiar with and trained to use.

Please refer also to 'Safeguarding' policy.

Intimate Care

Please see 'EYFS Intimate Care Policy'

Health and Safety

Please refer to 'Health and Safety' Policy with specific reference being made to Risk Assessment and Medical needs (First Aid Training). Additional reference should also be made to the EYFS Risk Assessment which is update annually.

Monitoring and Review

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored and evaluated by the Headteacher and EYFS leader, and will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Headteacher:

Date:

Signature:

EYFS Co-ordinator: Mrs M Carter

Signed:

Dated: