

Horsford Church of England VA Primary School

EYFS Policy

‘Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child’s experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.’

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile - Department for Children, Schools and Families 2012

Introduction

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. We greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development.

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At the Nebula Primary Schools children are admitted to Reception in the September following their fourth birthday, for their Reception year they are all subject to the EYFS principles and curriculum.

Aims & Objectives

In the Nebula Primary Schools we aim to support all children to become independent and collaborative learners. We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop to their full potential.

We aim to give each child a positive and meaningful start to their school life, in which they can establish solid foundations on which to develop into independent lifelong learners.

We will encourage children to develop independence within a secure and friendly atmosphere; to support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing; to help each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and by developing the confidence to work towards personal goals.

We will offer learning that has a range of starting points through a wide range of new and exciting first-hand experiences that will give children the opportunity to consolidate, explore and test their skills, knowledge and understanding alongside existing experiences.

We will ensure that children are kept healthy and safe and that they achieve the knowledge and skills they need to start school.

The Curriculum

Our Early Years teachers follow the curriculum as outlined in the 2021 Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) document, which is available to download at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>. This clearly defines the final goals for the children at the end of their Reception year.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A Unique Child - every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

- Positive Relationships - children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**.
- Enabling Environments - children learn and develop well in **enabling environments with teaching and support from adults**, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- Learning and Development – Children’s **learning and development** occurs at different rates. (See “the characteristics of effective teaching and learning”) The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Learning and Developing

Our curriculum for the Foundation Stage reflects the areas of learning identified in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. None of the areas of learning can be delivered in isolation from the others. Our children’s learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skill across a number of learning areas. They require a balance of adult led and child initiated activities in order for most children to reach the levels required at the end of EYFS.

Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children’s curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The three Prime areas are:

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

Staff will also develop children’s learning in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

Specific Areas:

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

Children’s development levels are assessed and as the year progresses, the balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning, as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas. However, if a child’s progress in any of the prime areas gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child’s parents/carers and agree how to support the child.

Reception pupils also participate in a daily phonics sessions, following the Nebula Systematic Synthetic Phonics Programme.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

As outlined in the Statutory Guidance we ensure that our environments and the delivery of the curriculum incorporate the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

- **playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’
- **active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Planning

The Early Learning Goals provide the basis for planning throughout the Foundation Stage. The planning is theme based with discrete phonics, maths, reading and writing adult directed teaching. All areas of the curriculum are delivered through a well-planned play based approach with a balance of adult directed, adult led and child initiated activities. Throughout the Foundation Stage our Curriculum Maps and Long Term Plans ensure coverage so that all children have the opportunity to work towards and achieve the Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

All children in the EYFS have a daily taught phonics and maths session followed by a challenge for the children to complete to apply the learning. They also work alongside an adult once a week to complete a piece of writing, read their phonics-based reading book and complete a maths activity.

Play

Learning through play underpins our approach to teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage. We embrace the fact that young children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them to learn. In doing so we can provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning and to help them make sense of the world. Children have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own. They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experiences at their own level and pace.

Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests, inspire those around them and consolidate their understanding and skills. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. Our adults take an active role in child initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating, teaching and extending play, skills and language.

Observations

The EYFS teachers use observations as the basis for planning. Staff are skilled at observing children to identify their achievements, interests and next steps for learning. These observations then lead the direction of the planning. Relevant and significant observations are recorded on Tapestry.

Assessment

At the end of the year the EYFS profile provides a summary of every child’s development and learning achievements including whether they have reached a ‘Good Level of Development’ (GLD). Children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals (ELG) by the class teacher - who uses the exemplification documents, and their knowledge of the children to make a ‘best fit’ judgement. The children are assessed as achieving a 1 or 2 against each area of the EYFS curriculum:

- 2 = Expected ELG – meeting the expected level
- 1 = Emerging ELG – not yet meeting the expected level

This profile data is the statutory data that is sent to the Local Authority and used to help school benchmark and identify improvements. Parents/carers will be given information of their child's achievements in a written report at the end of the Summer term.

During the first term in Reception , the teacher assesses the ability of each child using the Statutory Baseline Assessment and through their own observations of the children during activities and play and this data will be used to plan next steps for each child.

At the end of each term teachers use their knowledge and experience of progress in Early Years, to assess whether the children are 'on track' to achieve the Early Learning Goals at the end of the year. This data is discussed at Pupil Progress meetings and children who are not currently working at the expected level are offered additional interventions to support their progress and development.

At the end of the year teachers complete EYFS profile for each child, this provides a summary of every child's development and learning achievements including whether they have reached a 'Good Level of Development' (GLD). Children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals (ELG) by the class teacher - who uses the exemplification documents, and their knowledge of the children to make a 'best fit' judgement.

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During term time EYFS staff make regular assessments of children's learning, and use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal observations, photographic evidence and through planned activities. We use Tapestry to record evidence of objectives met against the curriculum, alongside this the teachers keep progress records and learning journals and record examples of each child's work. These learning journeys contain a wide range of evidence that we share with parents at each parental consultation meeting.

The Learning Environment

Our EYFS classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are specific areas where the children can be active, be quiet, creative etc. Children have access to both the inside and outside areas across the day; this has a positive effect on the children's development. The Foundation Stage has its own outdoor classroom area. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and in different scales than when indoors. The children can explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. All areas of the curriculum can be explored outside.

Transition

Starting school can be a difficult time for young children; we therefore plan this time carefully to support children with the transition into school to ensure it is as smooth as possible. The transition process starts in the second part of the Summer Term to allow children the opportunity to see their classroom, meet their teacher and spend time with their new classmates.

Parent – Parents of all children starting in the next academic year will be invited into school to meet with the class teacher and other staff members. Parents will be given a tour of the school and their child's new classroom. During the first transition session, parents will be provided with the following information and given the opportunity to ask any questions they may have.

- School handbook
- Information about uniform, PE kit and school dinners/ free school meals

- Information about holidays and absences
- Procedures for buying uniform
- Signposts on the school website

Introductions- The children are visited at their pre-school by their new class teacher. The class teacher will spend time with the children and get to know them with the help of pre-school staff. This will ensure that they are familiar with their new teacher and have a friendly face to look out for when visiting school.

Getting to know you session(s)- The children are given the opportunity to come in to school to meet their new class teacher and other children in their class. During these visits they will spend time in their new classrooms and see other important areas of the school e.g. toilets. This means that before they join their new class the Reception environment is already a familiar place to them.

Pre-School setting visits – Where possible the children are visited at their pre-school by their new class teacher. The class teacher will spend time with the children and get to know them with the help of pre-school staff.

September Home Visits – At Horsford Primary School, all children will be visited by their class teacher and another of school staff. During this visit teachers will spend time with the child and also provide parents the opportunity to ask any questions.

September Intake – Parents are informed of their child’s start date early in the transition process. Once the children start school in September they attend full time and are subject to the school attendance policy.

Continuing the journey to Year 1 - Throughout the Reception year the children will be given many opportunities to engage in whole school life, many of the teaching and support staff will already be familiar people to them. Towards the end of the year the children will take part in the school transition day and spend time in their new class.

Monitoring of the EYFS

We are committed to providing the best possible experiences for our children. The Executive Deputy for EYFS is responsible for monitoring provision, teaching and learning and children’s progress. Information is shared with the Governors, Executive Headteacher, Heads of School and EYFS staff as appropriate, and any necessary actions are taken.

All adults working within the EYFS at our schools have a key role in children’s learning and development. Therefore, they are required to be knowledgeable and skilled in the EYFS curriculum. Any training needs for existing or new members of staff are identified and addressed as part of performance management targets

Safeguarding & Welfare

‘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.’

(Statutory Framework for EYFS 2023, pg22)

At the Nebula Primary Schools, we understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2023.

- To provide a setting that is welcoming, safe and stimulating where children can grow in confidence;
- Promote good health;

- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs
- To ensure that all adults who look after the children, or who have unsupervised access to them, are suitable to do so;
 - Ensure that the setting, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for the purpose it was intended for;
 - Maintain records, policies and procedures required for the safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

Intimate Care - Intimate care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. However, depending on a child's age and stage of development, they may need some support, for example dressing, bottom wiping after using the toilet and changing underwear following an accident. In most cases, intimate care is to do with personal hygiene and it is good practise for the school to inform the school nurse of all children requiring intimate care. Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child. No intimate care is to be given without the express verbal or written permission of the parent or guardian of that child.

This policy will be reviewed in September 2026