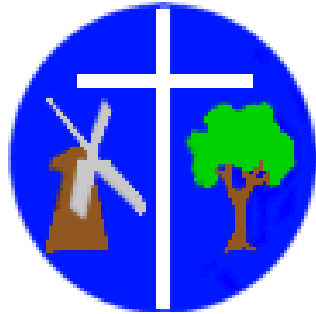


Hawridge and Cholesbury CE School



Early Years (EYFS) Policy

Our Vision is for every child within the Hawridge & Cholesbury family to grow, flourish 'have life and ... have it more abundantly' (John 10:10 KLV); to be fascinated, rounded, eager to make a difference, spiritual and have high aspirations through Jesus' teaching and our curriculum.

We live our vision through our natural setting and our school values:

Respect Teamwork Responsibility Understanding Peace Honesty

Review date: June 2023

Adopted by the governing body on 21 June 2023

Next review: June 2026

Within this document, the term 'Early Years' is used to describe children who are in our Reception class.

Aims

It is every child's right to grow up safe and healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and with economic wellbeing. The overarching aim of the EYFS is to help young children achieve these five outcomes.

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

As outlined in the EYFS Framework '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.'

At Hawridge and Cholesbury C of E School, we meet the needs of all our children through:

- Providing a rich and purposeful learning environment to enable children to extend their knowledge and experiences and build self-esteem and confidence.
- Ensuring children feel, safe and secure and develop positive relationships with adults in the setting as well as each other.
- Planning from the children's own interest and encouraging them to contribute to their learning environment and its development.
- Promoting the children's independence and encouraging them to develop a "have a go" attitude.
- Providing an inclusive learning experience, ensuring that children have opportunities to achieve their own best.
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

Welfare and Safety

Please see our separate policies and procedures on Health and Safety and Child Protection. 'A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right.' *Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage, 2021*

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's safety.

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

We adhere to the Welfare Requirements set out in the EYFS Framework.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

We value all our children as individuals at Hawridge & Cholesbury C of E School, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meets the needs of the individual child and supports them at their own pace so that most of our children achieve and even exceed the Early Learning Goals. We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and, in doing so, work closely with parents and outside agencies.

All staff are role models and are aware of the influence they have in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical attitudes.

See our separate policies on Equalities and SEND.

Parents as Partners and 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 and care in numerous ways including inviting them to a welcome meeting before they start school in September and then again after approximately a week of them starting school. Feedback is collected from parents through surveys and questionnaires. We also invite parents and other family members into the classroom to take part in a variety of activities alongside their children such as Friday Family Reading, phonics workshops, Kith and Kin events, bulb planting and 'mystery reader' story sessions.

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.

Principles

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

A unique child

Through praise, encouragement and recognising their unique achievements we celebrate the work of all the children at the school and encourage them to develop a have a go attitude and a lifelong love of learning.

Positive relationships

Through the development of strong relationships with children and their families, which promote, respect and care, our children can become independent and confident.

Enabling environments

The learning environment, both indoors and out, promotes children's learning, taking them on from their own individual starting points it challenges them to be inquisitive and motivated to learn.

Learning and development

The Early Years Setting is organised into learning areas. This enables children to be reflective of their child initiated learning, make choices based on their interests and locate and access resources independently. The setting is a place where children can learn securely and safely.

Early Years Curriculum

We plan an exciting and challenging 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. In addition, the staff and children at Hawridge and Cholesbury CE School have designed a unique approach to our whole school curriculum which enables children to be FRESH (Fascinated Rounded, Eager to make a difference, Spiritual and Have high aspirations) and means that opportunities to learn outside and from nature are central to our teaching and learning across all curriculum areas.

All the seven areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

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.

These three areas are the **prime** areas:

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

Children are also supported through the four **specific** areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The **specific** areas are:

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

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which children explore, think creatively and are active. We plan a good balance of child-initiated and adult-directed activities and children plan where they would like to play. Adults in the setting are able to monitor where children prefer to play and ensure that continuous provision promotes the skills that children are learning. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

As a team, we write long term and medium term plans using the EYFS Framework based on a series of topics, each of which offers experiences in all seven areas. These plans then form our short-term weekly planning, alongside our observations, which remains flexible for unplanned circumstances or children's responses.

Children have whole group and small group times which increase as they progress through the EYFS. There are set times for a daily phonics session using the 'Read Write Inc' approach, teaching aspects of Mathematics and Literacy, including shared reading and writing.

The curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the EYFS Framework. 'Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities.'

We 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, early years practitioners interact to stretch and challenge children further. In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice. The Characteristics of Effective learning are outlined in 'Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage' as:

- **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

We create a stimulating environment which provides children with the opportunities to explore these learning attributes and which encourages children to free-flow between inside and out.

Observation and Assessment

As part of our daily practice we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform our future plans. We record our observations in a variety of ways. Everyone is encouraged to contribute and discussions take place. Significant observations of children's achievements are collated using an online system 'Tapestry' which can also be accessed by parents. In September 2023, we will be trialling class floor books to document the children's learning during Playing and Learning Time rather than using Tapestry.

In the Autumn and Spring terms, parents are invited to attend a parents' evening.

Within the final term of Reception, we provide parents with a written report based on their child's development against each of the Early Learning Goals and the characteristics of their learning. Parents are then given the opportunity to discuss these judgements with the Reception teacher in preparation for Year 1.

Transitions and Induction

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. We aim to visit all children in their pre-school setting prior to them starting school. Children attend introductory sessions to Reception to develop familiarity with the setting and practitioners. They receive a small booklet containing photos. Parents and children meet their teacher and classmates during the visit day.

Parents are given information on settling in days prior to their child starting school.

In the final term in Reception, the Year 1 teacher will meet with the Early Years staff and discuss each child's development against the Early Learning Goals in order to support a smooth transition to Year 1. This discussion helps the Year 1 teacher to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children. The children have several opportunities to visit both when they start in Reception and as they prepare for Year 1.