



THE COTTAGE NURSERY  
ST HUGH'S

# EYFS POLICY

## **Introduction**

It is so important to give children the best possible start to their school career. They have many years ahead of them in formal education and we want to begin this exciting, but challenging process in a sensitive and caring manner. We want them to view school from the beginning with eagerness, to enjoy their time in and out of the classroom, and to begin to develop a true love for learning.

## **Aims and Objectives**

We aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which will enable each child to develop emotionally, socially, physically, creatively, and intellectually to their full potential and at their own pace. Each child is unique and is valued as an individual.

Our objectives are:

- to make the transition for each child from home to pre-school, and from pre-school to full time education, as smooth and as enjoyable as possible.
- to provide a happy, caring, safe and secure environment for learning, which meets the individual needs and interests of the children and enables each child to develop his or her full potential.
- to develop warm and secure relationships between children and adults.
- to develop a strong working partnership between home and school by fostering positive home/school links and sharing a common sense of purpose with parents.
- to provide a high quality curriculum in line with the policies of the school, the Early Years Foundation Stage documents and 'Every Child Matters'.
- to encourage active learning through first hand experiences both in indoor and outdoor play, and through both verbal and non-verbal communication.
- to encourage the children in an awareness of moral and social values.
- to identify and support as early as possible, any child with special educational needs (SEN).
- to encourage children to become self-motivated and independent learners with a positive attitude to learning and self-discipline.
- to encourage the children to value and respect the cultural diversity within school, the local community and in the wider world.

## **Planning and Organisation**

Planning is carried out carefully and thoroughly to ensure a broad and balanced curriculum that fosters the intellectual, emotional, physical, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the children in EYFS. It also ensures that all children have access to the curriculum, make progress commensurate with their developing abilities and are given the skills, attitudes and understanding that will prepare them for their continuing education.

## **Early years' curriculum**

The curriculum for the early years is integrated into the scheme of work followed throughout the school and incorporates the Early Learning Goals and Foundation Stage for children's learning on entering compulsory education.

The content of the curriculum includes:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development (which includes positive attitudes and dispositions towards their learning, attention skills and persistence).
- Communication Language and Literacy
- Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy
- Knowledge and Understanding of the World (which includes Science, History, Geography, Design Technology, Religious Studies, ICT and French).
- Physical Development
- Creative Development (which includes Art, Craft, Music and Drama).

In the Nursery each term a broad theme is adopted to include the six areas of learning. Planning is carried out on a half-termly basis to take into account the children's interests and experiences, and weekly 'continuous provision' ensures a stimulating nursery environment is provided.

In the Reception classes a whole-term thematic approach is also used, alongside the planning of key literacy and numeracy skills to be taught.

In both the Nursery and Reception, however, response to the immediate interests of the children is considered crucial for an appropriate, relevant and inspiring curriculum for all children and this is factored into planning.

The children move forward into National Curriculum Level 1 as individually appropriate.

The value of quality play experiences is recognised in the school and much thought and planning is undertaken to ensure that this aspect of the Early Years curriculum remains a high priority.

## **Organisation in Nursery and Reception**

A team of experienced teachers and teaching assistants staffs the EYFS department. Each child has a shared 'key person' who, in this setting, is fundamentally the class teacher. She is the first point of contact for the child and his or her parents, and is supported by a team of practitioners who also contribute towards the child's care and learning.

Within the Early Years Unit the Nursery is set in a cottage adjoining the main Pre-Prep Reception class. The cottage has been sympathetically renovated to retain the homely ambience and still has many of its original features. The main teaching area is a large, light, open-plan extension to the front of the building with bi-fold doors opening out onto covered decking containing a sunken sandpit. This veranda leads to a well-equipped garden and outdoor play area. The ground floor includes two additional teaching areas with IT provision and a home corner, and purpose-built toilet and hand-washing facilities. There is a modern, well-equipped kitchen which can be used for food preparation and for the children to carry out cooking activities. Gated stairs lead to a bathroom, staff room and a rest room/additional ICT station for the children's use.

In Reception there are two classrooms linked by a large central area where the children come together for play, snacks, singing and many other activities. There is a small, but well-equipped outside play area, to which the children have access at most times during the day. They are also able to use the Nursery garden and outdoor play area regularly. All the EYFS children have access to the newly developed playground and outside learning area to the front of the main Pre-Prep building where there is a large outdoor classroom, an amphitheatre, a large woodland area and a covered sandpit

The Nursery day is split into two sessions. Parents may choose morning or afternoon sessions or full days. There are spaces for 16 children in the morning sessions and 10 children in the afternoon sessions. Intakes occur half-termly and children may join the Nursery in the term they turn 3 years old.

In Reception there is an intake of up to 24 children in September, which is organised into two main teaching groups. There is, however, flexibility in grouping to meet the needs of the children.

The style of teaching and organisation of the curriculum changes gradually over the year as the children develop. The teams meet weekly to plan in the long, medium and short term.

## **Admissions Policy**

Pupils are admitted to school in accordance with the County admissions policy, and forms PR1 are completed for all pupils. (Full policy is available on the school website or from the school office).

## **Entry into Nursery**

Parents of children joining Nursery are invited to a tour of the school and to see the Nursery provision. They are given a welcome pack and parent questionnaire before the start of term. The children are invited to visit during the term before they start to give them the opportunity to meet the staff and the other children who may be working and playing alongside them.

## **Entry into Reception**

Our aim is to establish a smooth and successful transition from home or pre-school to full time education. This is facilitated by:

### *Preliminary school visits*

Parents are invited, with or without their children, to tour the school and to see displays of work across the entire Key Stage.

### *New Parents Evening*

This is held in the term prior to the term in which a child starts school, when parents are invited to a 'New Parents Evening'. On this occasion the parents are introduced to their child's teachers, the other members of the EYFS staff and see the classroom in which their child will be based. They are also introduced to aspects of the Reception day and of the curriculum (including the RWI scheme we use for literacy and our individual handwriting approach). They are then given the opportunity to ask questions and to discuss any of their child's special difficulties or needs.

### *New Parent Welcome Pack*

The parents are provided with a comprehensive welcome pack, which includes information on the start of term, our aims in the first few weeks of the child's schooling, the daily routine, lists of policies and procedures available, uniform lists and permission forms, etc.

### *Teddy Bears' Picnic*

The children are invited to visit the school for an afternoon 'Teddy Bears Picnic' in the preceding summer term to enable them to become familiarized with the organization of their classroom, with other essential areas such as cloakrooms, etc., and to get to know the staff and other children in their class.

### **Parent Questionnaires**

During the summer term prior to their child's start at St. Hugh's, the parents are invited to complete an informal questionnaire, to share general information about their child with the EYFS team.

### **School website**

There is an informative St Hugh's website containing all the above information and, in addition, offers a virtual tour of the school site, general information about St. Hugh's and the latest news.

### **Moving towards full time education**

It is our policy to admit all children to Reception in the autumn term of the academic year in which they reach the age of five years. However, we do believe that it is important that all the children attend school on a part-time basis initially as school demands a great deal of the young child. The school week for Reception is shortened by one afternoon (Wednesdays) for the autumn and spring term and this is increased to the full week for the summer term. Starting school for the first time brings with it new routines, social situations and experiences which can be very exhausting, so we advise that the children do not attend 'late class' until at least the second half of the autumn term.

### **Health & safety in EYFS**

We follow our schools guidelines on health and safety. Children remain in their classrooms at the end of each day until they are collected by a parent or similar person authorised by the parent.

### **Staffing, Equipment and Resources**

The EYFS Co-ordinators ensure that the correct adult:pupil ratio is maintained throughout the day and that the area in which the children work and play is a safe and secure environment. They also ensure that appropriate equipment and resources are provided that inspire children and support the curriculum, and, in liaison with other EYFS staff, the Head of Pre-Prep and the subject heads, that these resources are monitored and updated or replaced as necessary throughout the year.

### **Role of the Co-ordinators**

It is the role of the Early Years Co-ordinators, under the guidance of the Head of Pre-Prep:

- to organise the delivery of EYFS Curriculum and to ensure progression and development.
- to monitor planning and quality of delivery within the curriculum.
- to keep abreast of developments within early Years and undertake INSET when required.
- to monitor and update resources.
- to carry out risk assessments as and when needed to ensure the safety of all children and EYFS staff.
- to liaise with and support outside Pre-school establishments linked to the school.

### **Equal Opportunities**

All children have an equal entitlement to a good Early Years Curriculum regardless of gender, race, culture, Religion, disability and special or medical needs.

### **Assessment and Record-keeping**

All assessment and observations inform our planning, enabling us to complete the profiles and to deliver a curriculum that is specific to the children's needs.

It is statutory to complete the Foundation Profile for each pupil. The Profile comprises assessment scales and points.

Our meetings with both parents and the children in the summer term preceding their first term with us are an important part of the assessment process and we also make use of information provided by outside feeder pre-schools.

The children in the EYFS are continually assessed through observation in the form of spontaneous written observations, planned, focussed observations and photographic evidence.

The timetable ensures that the adults in the classroom are given as many opportunities as possible to observe all the children over a period of time and respond appropriately by supporting and extending learning. This ongoing assessment informs the teachers of the individual needs of the children and supports the medium and short term planning.

Children have individual portfolios ('Learning Journeys'), which contain notes of observations, key assessments that show progress over the year and evidence of the child's achievements.

### **Children with special education needs**

Every child experiencing some difficulty is discussed with both the teacher and the parents and if necessary suggestions to help and support the child are made. In consultation and agreement with the parents, the child may be included in the school's SEN register.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Monitoring the EYFS includes:

- regular appraisal by Head of Pre-Prep and staff development review meetings
- lesson observations of reception teaching staff to ensure effective teaching and learning
- monitoring the six curriculum areas through subject tracking, in order for assessment of early learning goals to be consistent
- weekly planning meetings to ensure continuity of provision
- EYFS action plans to identify key areas of development within the EYFS, monitored and reviewed regularly
- work scrutiny carried out regularly by Head of Pre-Prep and subject heads
- Children's progress also monitored through individual and class tracking sheets.

### **Monitoring and Review**

This policy is monitored by the Headmaster and the SMT and made available to parents and governors.

**Sally Russell (Head of Pre-Prep)**

**Jessica Blythe (Head of Nursery/EYFS Co-ordinator Nursery)**

**Anne Smith (EYFS Co-ordinator - Reception)**

Reviewed: September 2011

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