

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE 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 and 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 as early as possible and support any child with special educational needs.
- 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).

A whole-term thematic approach is used in the reception classes, alongside the planning of key literacy and numeracy skills to be taught. Response to the immediate interests of the children, however, 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

Each child has a 'key person' who, in our 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 Reception class 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. A team of experienced teachers and teaching assistants staffs the EYFS department.

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 team meets 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 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.

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.

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 familiarised with the

organisation 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, parents are invited to complete an informal questionnaire, to share general information about their child with the Reception Team

Moving towards full time education

It is our policy to admit all children 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 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

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-ordinator ensures 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. She also ensures 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-ordinator

It is the role of the Early Years Co-ordinator, 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 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 informs 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 of 13 assessment scales each of which has nine 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 feeder pre-schools.

The children in the EYFS are continually assessed through observation in the form of spontaneous written observations, planned focused 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 educational 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 plan 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 Watts (Head of Pre-Prep)

Anne Smith (Acting EYFS Co-ordinator)

Reviewed: Jan 2010

Review date: Jan 2011