



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 and the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework.
- 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 (SEND/EAL).
- 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 schemes of work followed throughout the school.

The content of the curriculum includes:

### **PRIME AREAS**

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

### **SPECIFIC AREAS**

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World (which includes Science, History, Geography, Religious Studies, ICT and French).
- Expressive Arts and Design (which includes Art, Craft, Music, DT and Drama).

### **CHARACTERISTICS OF LEARNING**

- Playing and Exploring
- Active Learning
- Creating and Thinking Critically

In the Nursery each term a broad theme is adopted to include the seven 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 Early Years departments, however, response to the immediate interests (child-initiated) of the children is considered crucial for an appropriate, relevant and inspiring curriculum for all children and this is factored into planning.

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.

The children move into Year 1 at the end of the Reception year. The Year 1 teachers are informed on children's level of progress and development within the EYFS to create a strong transition. This is met by transition meetings between the class teachers and observations of the children by the Year 1 staff in the term before they move up to Year 1. Any child who has not met the some of the ELG's will continue to work on these at the beginning of Year 1.

### **Organisation in EYFS**

A team of experienced teachers and teaching assistants staff the EYFS department. Each child has a 'key person' who, in this setting, is fundamentally the class teacher. H/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. The key person's role is to ensure that every child's learning is tailored to meet their individual needs and provide specialist support where appropriate.

Within the Early Years department, the Nursery is set in a cottage adjoining the Reception classes. 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 toilets and handwashing facilities. There is a well-equipped kitchen which can be used for the children to carry out cooking activities. Gated stairs lead to a bathroom, staff room and a rest room.

In Reception there are two learning pods linked by a large central area where the children come together for child-initiated role-play, ICT, snacks, singing and many other activities. There is a well-equipped outside play area, to which the children have access during the day. They are also able to use the Nursery garden during EYFS free flow sessions.

All the EYFS children have access to the well-equipped playground and outside learning area to the front of the main Pre-Prep building. There is also a weekly Forest School session, a Natural History Museum full of artefacts and objects of interest, a large woodland area and a covered sand-pit. Nursery also have a Wonder Woodland for further outdoor learning opportunities.

The Nursery day is split into two sessions. Parents may choose morning or afternoon sessions or full days with the opportunity to increase attendance during the year to prepare for Reception. There are spaces for 20 children in both the morning and afternoon sessions. Where there are available spaces then intakes occur termly, and children may join the Nursery the term in which they turn 3 years old (if this falls within the first half of term in the spring and summer terms only) meaning they could spend up to 5 terms in Nursery on date of birth.

All pupils in Nursery are able to transfer automatically into Reception and at this point there is also an intake of external pupils. All the children are then organized into two main teaching groups. There is, however, flexibility in grouping to meet the needs of the children. *The academic year 2023-24 has been organised as one cohort due to pupil numbers.*

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 short, medium and long term.

### **Wrap Around Care**

*Larks: 8-8:15am*

Larks is a free session supervised by Pre-Prep Staff and is available each morning in the Pre-Prep Hall for children who are dropped off before the normal school hours. To ensure appropriate staff ratios are in place, parents are required to book by the end of the previous week. The children are registered as they arrive.

*Robins: 3:40-4:40pm*

Nursery - If you require wrap-around childcare until 4.40pm this can be booked at an additional cost of £8 per session. Termly bookings can be made at the end of the preceding term and are allocated on a first-come-first served basis. Ad hoc bookings are also accepted though are dependent on places being available.

Reception - Robins is a free session supervised by Pre-Prep staff and is available after school and is held in the Pre-Prep Hall/ PP Classroom. To ensure appropriate staff ratios are in place, parents are required to book by the end of the previous week. The children are registered at the start of the session and are signed out as they are collected.

*Owls 4:40 – 5.30pm*

Owls is a free session supervised by Pre-Prep staff and is available after Robins, held in the Pre-Prep Hall. To attend, each child must have been booked in by the Friday of the previous week. Children are registered at the start and are signed out as they are collected. During Owls the children are provided with a sandwich, fresh fruit and drinking water. Owls is only available for Reception-Year 2 children, however in exceptional emergency circumstances, staff ratios will be altered to accommodate Nursery-aged children.

### **Admissions Policy**

Pupils are admitted to school in accordance with our Admissions Policy (full details may be found on the school website).

*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.

### **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 with a Nursery Handbook and 'All About Me' questionnaire before the start of term. The children are invited to visit two terms before they are due to start for a 'taster' session with their parent. At this visit, there is ample opportunity to discuss any questions parents may have with the Head of Nursery.

During the term before they start, they are invited to attend a 'settling-in' session with or without a parent to give them the opportunity to meet the staff and the other children who may be working and playing alongside them. A greeting card addressed to the child is also posted in the holiday before the child starts.

Parents and children are invited to 'pop in' to Nursery the day before term starts, to familiarise themselves with the surroundings and meet the staff again.

In September parents are also invited into the Nursery Curriculum Information Evening.

### **Entry into Reception**

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

#### *Taster Morning*

The children are invited to visit two terms before they are due to start for a 'taster' session with their parent. At this visit, there is ample opportunity to discuss any questions parents may have with the EYFS staff. If helpful, staff can visit home or pre-schools to observe children in a familiar setting.

#### *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. A 'home learning' bag is sent home, which includes provisions and ideas of activities to share at home before children start in September.

#### *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. They are then given the opportunity to ask questions and to discuss any of their child's special difficulties or needs. In September, parents are invited into a Pre-Prep Curriculum Information Evening.

### *New Parent Welcome Pack*

The parents are provided with a comprehensive welcome pack including the Pre-Prep Handbook, 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.

### *Pop into Reception*

Parents and children are invited to 'pop in' to school the day before term starts, to familiarise themselves with the surroundings and meet the teachers again.

### **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 provide an optional Wednesday afternoon in the autumn term when the children can go home after lunch. This is increased to a full week in the spring and summer term.

Starting school for the first time brings with it new routines, social situations and experiences which can be very exhausting. Therefore, we advise to limit, where possible, children attending before and after school sessions (Larks, Robins and Owls) until at least the second half of the autumn term.

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

We follow our school's 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 staff team 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 that these resources are monitored and updated or replaced as necessary throughout the year.

### **Role of the EYFS staff**

It is the role of the EYFS staff, under the guidance of the Head of Pre-Prep/EYFS:

- 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. All EYFS children complete a Baseline Assessment within the first 3 weeks of the term they join. In the final term of Reception, and EYFS Profile is completed for each child.

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 interactions and observations and these are often documented through photographic evidence and a short summary.

The timetable ensures that the EYFS staff 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 an individual online Learning Journal, which contain notes of observations, next steps in learning and key assessments that show progress over the year. It also contains evidence of the child's achievements. At St Hugh's we use *Tapestry*. ([www.tapestryjournal.com](http://www.tapestryjournal.com)).

Reporting: We formally report to parents in December and July as well as hold Parent/Teacher Meetings in October and March. However, we operate an open-door policy to always keep lines of communication open.

## **Safeguarding**

Please refer to the school's Safeguarding Policy. It is important to reiterate here that - *Mobile phones, personal cameras and smart watches are not permitted in the EYFS setting.*

## **Children with special education needs**

We recognize that all pupils have different learning styles, however where it is identified that extra support or challenge is required then the appropriate provision can be put into place after consultation with parents, members of the EYFS team and the Learning Support Department. In consultation and agreement with the parents, the child may be included in the school's SEND / MAT (More Able and Talented) registers.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The EYFS includes:

- regular appraisals by the Head of Pre-Prep, staff development review meetings and Supervision Meetings
- lesson observations of EYFS teaching staff to ensure effective teaching and learning
- monitoring the seven Areas of Learning 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.
- Weekly staff meetings to share good practice and discuss pastoral / academic development of pupils

## **Monitoring and Review**

*Reviewed: January 24*

*Reviewed by: Head of Pre-Prep & Head of Nursery*

*Next Review: September 2024 - Head of Pre-Prep & EYFS – JLB/ Head of Nursery- NL*