

Hallcroft Infant & Nursery School



EYFS Policy
January 2020

Introduction:

"Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfill 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. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up." EYFS Statutory Framework 2012

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of reception year at age five. Early Years Provision at Hallcroft is available for children from three plus, starting part time in Foundation One, which we call Acorn Class, most children access this provision for 15 hours per week, those children who are eligible for 30 hours provision attend Foundation One full time. All children progress to full time at the beginning of the school year in which they are five years old. This is Foundation Two, currently the children in Foundation Two are in Oak and Willow Classes.

The EYFS is based on four principles, each of which shall be addressed individually in this policy in terms of our Aims, Intent and Implementation at Hallcroft:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development.

A Unique Child

Aims:

At Hallcroft we recognise that every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured and aim to support them develop holistically as learners and individuals.

Our Early Years Curriculum is concerned with the development of the whole child. It is not possible to separate a young child's need for learning experiences from their need for care and emotional support.

Intent:

We recognise that children develop in individual ways at varying rates. Our curriculum is built upon what the child already knows, this gives children ownership of their learning from the very beginning of their education. *Through this prior knowledge feeling like "experts", which gives the confidence to explore and extend their learning.*

Implementation:

Our curriculum plans in opportunities to revisit and recap knowledge and skills acquired across topics and subjects to allow for consolidation and deeper learning opportunities. The Foundation Team provide opportunities for supporting and extending learning through multisensory, first hand experiences. In Foundation One we use our daily "Big Question" to allow the children to become familiar with articulating their learning and sharing their ideas, this not only helps the children to develop their language skills and vocabulary but also gives them ownership of their ideas and allows them to make links with their own knowledge and enables them to develop the ideas they wish to explore. In Foundation Two the children access the whole school topics, which are carefully planned so that themes, skills and knowledge are revisited to allow greater depth of understanding, allowing the children to make links within their learning and become "experts" across the curriculum.

Positive Relationships

Aims:

At Hallcroft we aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Intent:

Parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we work to foster a partnership between the child, parents and teachers. We also work to develop relationships with the children throughout our school community with staff members and pupils caring for each other and working together.

Implementation:

Parents are informed and involved in the learning process. This begins with an opportunity to join our Toddler Group which is run on Wednesday afternoons in Acorn Class. The group enables the children to familiarise themselves with their surroundings and staff and yet still be with their parent or carer.

We also visit the children at home before they begin Acorn class, to find out likes, dislikes and build on all the learning that has taken place.

There are formal and informal opportunities to share information with parents about their child. On entry, we begin developing the child's "Learning Journey" which is a record of their progress and achievements. Parents are able to contribute to this and are invited to look at it. There are termly parent's evenings for our children. At the end of Foundation One, the parents receive the electronic version of their Learning Journey, which includes annotated photographs and future targets. The Learning Journey moves with the child into Foundation Two, where staff continue the child's learning and development. At the end of Foundation Two, there is a statutory report to parents under the seven areas of Learning and Development.

We ensure that parents/carers are informed about the curriculum and school life through newsletters, curriculum outlines, weekly class letters and homework sheets linked to the weekly learning in the classroom, our planning board and the school website.

Staff are available every day at the beginning and end of sessions for informal discussions, to help with concerns and to share "good news". We encourage parents to share significant moments with us by recording them on a "wow leaf", or "acorn", which we all share in and then place on our "Wow Tree!"

Key Person

The children in Foundation One are organised into small groups with a key person who is a Teacher or a Teaching Assistant. This helps to reassure the children and make them feel safe as well as building good relationships with the parents.

For full time children the key person is the Teacher supported by the Teaching Assistants. We also have Teaching Assistants who support children with individual needs.

Enabling Environments

Aims:

At Hallcroft we have worked with leading experts within the EYFS to develop our learning environment to make the children feel safe and secure whilst maximise the learning opportunities we provide our children and allow them to take their learning to the next stage. Our curriculum begins with what the child already knows and plans in opportunities to revisit and recap knowledge and skills acquired across topics and subjects to allow for consolidation and deeper learning opportunities.

Intent:

Through our environmental provision, planning and providing children with the skills and vocabulary needed we support our children being able to extend and articulate their own learning and become confident, independent learners.

Implementation:

The Learning Environment

Our Foundation Stage Classes are organised to allow children to explore and learn safely and securely both inside and outside. The children have the opportunity to access the indoors and outdoors during the session or day and the areas are planned for. The equipment is available for the children to allow them to make decisions, choices and develop independence as well as repeat and practise new skills. Our learning environment has been carefully planned to allow for "Communication Friendly Spaces" which help us to develop the children language skills to the maximum. We use our "Little Questions" which are carefully linked to our weekly planning to provide the children with ideas for them to develop their learning and help them to make links within our topics.

We offer children:-

- Water play
- Sand play
- Malleable play (dough, clay, cornflour mixture for example)
- Creative activities
- Maths area
- Writing area
- Construction area
- Computing - computers, interactive whiteboard, programmable toys, listening centre, talking tins etc
- Imaginative play/role play areas
- Reading area
- Floor play
- Independent use of resources
- Outdoor area with areas for wheeled toys, a covered area, a sand pit, large scale water play, large construction resources, dens, climbing frame, balancing equipment, dressing up and opportunities to allow children to develop their gross motor co-ordination in ways that cannot be explored indoors
- Displays that encourage participation, exploration and discovery

We place a strong emphasis on reading, speaking and listening and developing vocabulary. We want children to love books and enjoy learning to read. We place great importance of books and use our "Ten Favourite Stories" as a way to give children confidence to orally retell stories and to use books and stories independently in their play. We use our "Ten Favourite Books" in Foundation One as a way to begin our topics as they provide familiarity and allow the children to already feel as if they are experts in the topics. We encourage our parents to support us in recognising the importance of enjoying books by inviting them into school for "Books and Biscuits" time, and by providing library books for the children and parents to share together at home.

Our children take part in daily phonics, following the "Letters and Sounds" programme and progress through the phases in differentiated groups. All our children take part in a daily "Word Aware" session to help to develop and extend the children's vocabularies.

The children also have access to other areas within school such as the hall for physical and creative development, assemblies and lunches when they are full time. The part time and 30 hour children use the hall when they stay for lunch club. We also use the school field and running track daily in Foundation Two.

Off site visits help children to gain first hand experience of a wide variety of activities such as a walk to the park or a trip to an environmental centre. Visitors also come into school to support the curriculum such as theatre companies, dental nurses.

The Wider Context

We work in partnership with other professionals such as Speech Therapists, Health Visitors, Physiotherapists and the Inclusion Team to ensure that the learning environment and opportunities meet the child's needs.

We have links with the Children's Centre and are developing ways to support the children and their families in our community. Staff from the Children's Centre are always available to support families within school who feel they would benefit from additional support.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

Our curriculum is built upon what the child already knows, and plans in opportunities to revisit and recap knowledge and skills acquired across topics and subjects to allow for consolidation and deeper learning opportunities. We observe the children to understand their current interests, development and learning. Our medium term planning is based on termly themes in Foundation One, and half termly themes in line with our full time school long term planning in Foundation Two. These plans are broad and flexible to respond to the needs and interests of the children. We regularly assess children's learning to use this to inform future planning.

Our assessments are based on our observations of the children and "significant incidents" are recorded, for example, on post it notes, observation sheets and Ipads. Children are formally assessed on entry to their part time education within the first few weeks using the "ages and stages" document and Scholarpack, which enables us to track and record our assessments. This forms part of the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile which is completed at the end of the Foundation Stage. This is a statutory requirement. Each child's level of development is assessed against the Early Learning Goals. We indicate whether a child is meeting the expected levels of development, or if they are exceeding expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). Parents are given the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. The report is also given to the Year 1 teacher to inform them of each child's stage of development and learning needs and assist with the planning in Year 1.

Learning and Development

Aims:

Underpinning all areas of Early Years Education are the Characteristics of Effective Learning, by providing high quality continuous provision in our environment we aim to give our children the opportunities to develop these skills in a safe and stimulating way.

Intent:

We intend to give our children ownership of their own learning and seek to provide them with opportunities to extend their knowledge, make links and explore their own ideas.

The Characteristics of Effective Learning

Playing and Exploring - engagement

- Finding out and exploring
- Playing with what they know
- Being willing to have a go

Active learning - motivation

- Being involved and concentrating
- Keeping trying
- Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

Creating and thinking critically - thinking

- Having their own ideas
- Making links
- Choosing ways to do things

Areas of Learning and Development

The E.Y.F.S is made up of seven areas of learning. There are three prime areas and four specific areas. The prime areas are initially given more focus with the delivery of all areas becoming equal as the children progress through the Foundation stage.

Prime Areas

Communication and language

Physical development

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Specific Areas

Literacy

Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy

Understanding the World

Expressive arts and design

Implementation:

Within Foundation One much learning takes place through continuous provision, where our staff scaffold and develop children's learning through using effective interactions and questioning to allow children to explore and extend their knowledge through play. Children in Foundation One also take part in daily "Big Question" sessions where learning is articulated, explored and modelled by staff. We also use our "Little Questions" throughout our high quality child friendly environment to help children to initially scaffold their learning while they gain the skills and confidence to develop their learning further. We provide them with opportunities and resources to help them develop across the Characteristics of Effective Learning.

Within Foundation Two learning through play is still of great importance and now runs alongside more directed learning opportunities. In Foundation Two we continue to use our "Little Questions" to scaffold their learning and allow children to develop their learning further.

Learning throughout the Foundation Stage can be evidenced in Learning Journeys and in the Literacy, Maths and Topic work books in Foundation Two.

Resources

Resources to support learning in the Early Years are extensive and are stored in Nursery and in the Reception classes. "Our 10 favorite books" support our language development and become well known by the children. We use a wide variety of resources and pupils access them independently from labelled shelving units in Nursery and Reception.

Equal Opportunities

All children regardless of gender, age, creed, ethnicity, (or any other protected characteristic) aptitude or ability have equal access to the range of activities and experiences offered in the EYFS.

Special Needs

All children will have access to all areas of the EYFS Curriculum. Children with SEND will be given differentiated tasks, according to their individual needs and abilities.

How to help at home

- Every half term the school website is updated with current Knowledge Organisers for Foundation Two children relating to the learning for that half term; enabling parents to support learning at home. Topic Wheels illustrate the learning in each of the 7 areas of learning within Foundation One.
- Weekly letters and homework tasks are sent home in Foundation One and Two to allow parents to support and extend their child's learning at home. These tasks when returned to school become a valuable part of the child's Learning Journey.

Assessment and Recording

- Each term every child in EYFS is assessed using the EYFS Development Matters document and given an attainment level in months based on their knowledge and skills

Responsibilities and Review

- All teaching staff have responsibility for implementing all aspects of this policy.
- The EYFS subject leader has the role of monitoring history through lesson drop ins, book scrutiny, planning scrutiny, discussions with pupils and teachers and environment walks.
- The EYFS subject leader will review this policy and the curriculum as required.