

Early Years policy

Hawthorn Primary School



INDIVIDUALLY WE MATTER, TOGETHER WE SHINE

Approved by: Governing Board	Pupil progress and welfare	Date: 21/09/2023
Last reviewed on:	2021	
Next review due by:	September 25	



Early Years Policy

Rationale

This policy details the provision we make for the early experiences, learning and teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) at Hawthorn Primary school. We believe that every child is an exceptional individual and we celebrate and respect differences within our diverse school community. The ability to learn is underpinned by the teaching of basic skills, knowledge and values that equips our children for their future successes. We inspire our children to become accomplished, happy individuals, ready to reach their full potential in an ever-changing world.

Aims

The aim of this policy is to outline our approach to achieving the requirements and goals in the delivery of the statutory requirements for EYFS. At Hawthorn Primary, we aim to:

- give each child a happy, positive and fun start to their school life in which they can establish solid foundations on which to expand and foster a deep love of learning;
- offer each child a wide range of new and exciting experiences and give them the opportunity to consolidate, explore and test them out along with their own, individual experiences;
- enable each child, through encouragement and high expectations, to develop, to the full, socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally;
- to offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited opportunity for development;
- encourage children to develop independence within a loving, secure and friendly atmosphere;
- support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing;
- to help each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and developing the confidence to work towards personal goals.
- A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

At the end of EYFS, we expect that our children;

- have strong communication skills, both written and verbal. Our children also listen respectfully and with tolerance to the views of others,
- acquire essential skills in Early Reading, Writing and Mathematics'
- take pride in all that they do, always striving to do their best,
- demonstrate emotional resilience and the ability to persevere when they encounter challenge,
- develop a sense of self-awareness and become confident in their own abilities,
- are kind, respectful and honest, demonstrate inclusive attitudes and have a sense of their role in our wider society.

Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) that applies from September 2021.

Structure of the EYFS

At Hawthorn Primary School, our early years provision includes a 26 place Nursery for 3 and 4 year olds and a Reception class for 30 children.

Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2021.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World

▪ Expressive Arts and Design

Planning

Children learn in different ways. At Hawthorn, we ensure that every learning style is catered for. In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. The three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

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.

In our school, our school statement is 'Individually we matter, Together we shine'. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

- In the EYFS, we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We meet the needs of all our children through:
- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence.
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs.
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively.
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued.
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills.
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

The EYFS classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely, inclusive of all children. Adaptations are made for learners with additional SEND needs to ensure every child accesses a broad and rich and curriculum. The classrooms are set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The EYFS classrooms have their own enclosed outdoor area. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors, offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children time to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all seven areas of learning.

Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led, adult directed and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interactions. Our aim is to ensure that our outdoor provision also mirrors the opportunities available to the children in inside, offering a mix of adult-led, adult directed and child-initiated learning.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1.

Assessment

At Hawthorn School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers. Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts reception, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child. The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters guidance) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children at Hawthorn Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

Transition

Key to ensuring high quality early years experience is to ensure continuity between all settings and to ensure that the children's social, emotional and educational needs are addressed appropriately. At Hawthorn, transition is seen as a process, not as an event and is planned for and discussed with parents, children and practitioners of the pre-school settings that the children have attended.

Working in Partnership with Parents

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise that when parents and practitioners work together, the results have a positive impact on children's development and learning.

We encourage parent partnership through:

- Showing respect and understanding for the role of the parent/carer in the child's education
- Listening to accounts of their child's development and any concerns they may have
- Making parents/carers feel welcome by being friendly, approachable and having an open door policy
- Maintaining an on-going dialogue
- Transition meetings for parents/carers
- Being flexible in arrangements for settling children in
- Meeting with parents regularly to discuss progress
- Parents/carers receive an interim report during Parent Consultations on progress and a detailed report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.
- Inviting them in to share their child's Learning Journal and see a range of work
- Inviting them to weekly reading sessions
- Inviting them to Parental Engagement Workshops
- Updating our class page weekly to see 'Learning in action'
- Including 'WOW Moments' with parents/carers contributions in the children's Learning Journals.
- Inviting parents to attend stay and play sessions, celebration assemblies, performances etc. throughout the year.
- Inviting parents in the school to share their specialised skills

Safeguarding and Welfare Procedures

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

Attainment

% Children achieving GLD

Hawthorn Primary School	National
62%	65%

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by our Early Years Lead, Head Teacher and Governing Board

Clare Maksymczuk (Leader for Early Years)