

CURRICULUM POLICY FOR THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

Our EYFS Department

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is the statutory guidance for all children from birth to age five. As we have our entire EYFS department on one site this enables a seamless transition from one year group to the next and allows continuity of learning and teaching.

How we help children learn

Children start to learn about the world around them from the moment they are born. The care and education offered by our EYFS department helps children to continue to learn by providing interesting activities that are appropriate for their age and stage of development.

Learning and development

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil 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 Framework September 2025

The unique child is central to our curriculum. We observe the children's development and learning; assess their progress and plan for next steps. We support each child to form positive relationships with their key person, who responds to their needs in a sensitive and consistent way. We provide an environment in which the child can participate in rich learning opportunities that stimulates their interests and responds to their needs through a wide range of teaching and play based learning strategies.

Learning Styles- To replace learning through play

At the nursery we recognise that no two children are the same, either in character or in the way in which they learn. Therefore, all children are encouraged to explore all the learning opportunities on offer to them. The staff team will provide the children with avenues for purposeful play on an independent or collaborative level as well as plan adult-initiated activities on a 1:1 basis or in a small group. In all approaches the staff endeavour to inspire the children to naturally create new ways of exploring resources, which is a key focus of the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning.

The Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning

We aim to ensure that the three Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning; playing and exploring, active learning and creating and thinking critically are embedded into our practice. We encourage every child to enjoy their achievements and develop their own ideas.

We seek to encourage children's natural curiosity by providing plenty of opportunities to investigate and explore inside and outside. We encourage our children to 'have a go' at every activity and to persevere to a satisfying conclusion. Full details of each characteristic of effective teaching and learning, along with examples of how to support these can be found in Annex 1.

Educational Programmes

Educational programmes must involve activities and experiences for children, as set out under each of the areas of learning. The expectations for children's development must ensure that cognitive development proceeds hand-in-hand with their social and personal development. Definitions for the Educational Programme for each area of learning can be found in Annex 2.

The Curriculum

For each area of learning the practice guidance sets out the Early Learning Goals. These goals state what it is expected the children will know and be able to do by the end of Reception year. We use the Statutory Framework for the EYFS using the Educational Programmes to plan and deliver activities that meet the next steps for individual children and then assess against the 'Development Matters' guidance.

Oral Health

In addition to promoting the overall good health of the children, there is also a statutory requirement to promote good oral health in the EYFS. At Hazelwood School Nursery the children are provided with whole milk, containing higher levels of calcium to strengthen teeth. Throughout the day, there is fresh water available to the children and not sweet or fizzy drinks as these would be detrimental to good oral health. There will be a planned 'Oral Health Week' each academic year, which will encourage the children to think about all aspects of good oral health, including, but not exclusively, toothbrushing and a healthy diet. Where possible, we will endeavour to have a dentist/oral hygiene expert visit the children to discuss at appropriate age levels.

There is also a dedicated section in the library that houses age-appropriate stories that reference the importance of looking after your teeth and oral hygiene.

Curriculum Enhancement

To further enhance our curriculum, we have specialist teaching sessions and specific focus weeks. Meadow and Forest have weekly music and PE sessions. Forest has fortnightly Forest School sessions if they are booked in on those days that Forest School is offered. Forest also has weekly swimming lessons. Throughout the year we have enhancement weeks, for example, Health & Safety Week, Science Week and world Nursery Rhyme Week, to further extend the children's experiences and learning.

Assessment

Formative assessment is embedded into our curriculum. We assess how the children are learning and developing by observing them frequently. We use the information we gain from observations, photographs, and samples of their work as well as the staff's professional judgement. Parents are encouraged to contribute by sharing information about their children. Observations of what each child can do are used to identify where they are on their own development pathway. Staff record their observations and photographs in a 'learning journey' This helps us to plan for ways in which to strengthen and deepen the child's current learning and development.

We have a tracking system in place which measures each child's development against the 'Development Matters' guidance, with a particular focus on the observation checkpoints within the 7 areas of learning. Progress can then be measured and areas for support and extension highlighted. At each of the two parents' meetings parents are provided with information on how their child is progressing, and with a formal written report at the end of each year detailing their child's progress and the next steps to progress their learning further. We ensure all children receive 2-year-old developmental checks and this is shared with parents. At the end of the EYFS (in Reception) the children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals. The ELGs highlight what children are expected to achieve by the end of their reception year. At the end of reception, children are assessed against the criteria for the ELGs where they will be judged to be either emerging or at the expected level. These results are then sent to the Local Authority, who then submit it for the National EYFS Profile data set. The Early Learning Goals for all 7 Areas of Learning can be found in Annex 3.

Areas in which the child's learning needs to be challenged and extended are identified and planned for using the appropriate higher age band in the 'Development Matters' guidance but not

to the detriment of them meeting the expected levels in the prime areas of learning. In the case of an able Reception child, aspects of the Year 1 curriculum are introduced. Areas in which the child needs support and consolidation are pinpointed. Support is given and a Student Support Plan is implemented in consultation with the SENCO if necessary. Similarly, if a child is judged to be gifted and talented, they are highlighted on the gifted and talented register and extension is provided for them on an individual basis.

Prime and Specific Areas of Development

The EYFS Curriculum is split into 3 Prime Areas and 4 Specific Areas:

Prime Areas

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

Specific Areas

- Literacy
- Maths
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts & Design

Annex 1- Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning

Playing and Exploring	
Children will be learning to:	Examples of how to support this:
Realise that their actions have an effect on the world, so they want to keep repeating them.	Encourage babies' exploration of the world around them. Suggestions: investigating the feel of their key person's hair or reaching for a blanket in their cot. Play games like 'Peepo'. As they get more familiar, the baby or toddler will increasingly lead the play and want the adult to respond.
Reach for and accept objects. Make choices and explore different resources and materials.	Show and give babies interesting things, such as a rattle or a soft toy. Arrange for babies to take part in Treasure Basket play. Offer open-ended resources for babies and toddlers to play freely with, outdoors and inside.
Plan and think ahead about how they will explore or play with objects.	Provide different pebbles, shells and other natural materials for children to explore and arrange freely.
Guide their own thinking and actions by talking to themselves while playing. For example, a child doing a jigsaw might whisper under their breath: "Where does that one go? – I need to find the big horse next."	Help children to develop more control over their actions by giving them many opportunities to play freely and find their own ways of solving problems. When appropriate, sensitively provide a helpful commentary. You might suggest: "Why don't you look for the biggest pieces first?" That will help a child who is trying to solve a jigsaw. Children may copy your commentary by talking out loud to themselves first. In time, this will develop into their 'inner voice'.
- Make independent choices. - Do things independently that they have been previously taught.	Provide a well-organised environment so that children know where materials and tools are and can access them easily. Provide enough materials and arrange spaces so that children can collaborate and learn alongside peers. Once children know how to use scissors, they can use this skill to achieve what they want to do. For example, they may want to make a mask or cut out material for a collage.
Bring their own interests and fascinations into early years settings. This helps them to develop their learning.	Extend children's interests by providing stimulating resources for them to play with, on their own and with peers, in response to their fascinations. Join in with children's play and investigations, without taking over. Talk with them about what they are doing and what they are noticing. Provide appropriate non-fiction books and links to information online to help them follow their interests.
Respond to new experiences that you bring to their attention.	Regularly provide new materials and interesting things for children to explore and investigate. Introduce children to different styles of music and art. Give them the opportunity to observe changes in living things in the setting, and around the local environment. Take children to new places, like a local theatre or museum.

Active Learning

Children will be learning to:	Examples of how to support this:
• Participate in routines, such as going to their cot or mat when they want to sleep. • Begin to predict sequences because they know routines. For example, they may anticipate lunch when they see the table being set or get their coat when the door to the outdoor area opens.	Help babies, toddlers and young children feel safe, secure and treasured as individuals. The key person approach gives children a secure base of care and affection, together with supportive routines. That can help them to explore and play confidently.
• Show goal-directed behaviour. For example, babies may pull themselves up by using the edges of a low table to reach for a toy on top of the table. Toddlers might turn a storage box upside down so they can stand on it and reach up for an object.	Provide furniture and boxes at the right height to encourage babies to pull themselves up and reach for objects. Opportunities to play and explore freely, indoors and outside, are fun. They also help babies, toddlers and young children to develop their self-regulation as they enjoy hands-on learning and sometimes talk about what they are doing.
• Use a range of strategies to reach a goal they have set themselves.	Provide plenty of high-quality, open-ended resources for children with freely, inside and outdoors. Suggestion: children can use wooden blocks to make lots of different structures.
• Begin to correct their mistakes themselves. For example, instead of using increasing force to push a puzzle piece into the slot, they try another piece to see if it will fit.	Help young children to develop by accepting the pace of their learning. Give them plenty of time to make connections and repeat activities.
• Keep on trying when things are difficult.	Help children to think about what will support them most, taking care not to offer help too soon. Some children learn by repeating something hard on their own. They learn through trial and error. Others learn by asking a friend or an adult for help. Others learn by modelling. They watch what you do or what other children do.

Creating and Thinking Critically

Children will be learning to:	Examples of how to support this:
• Take part in simple pretend play. For example, they might use an object like a brush to pretend to brush their hair, or 'drink' from a pretend cup. • Sort materials. For example, at tidy-up time, children know how to put different construction materials in separate baskets.	Help babies, toddlers and young children to find their own ideas by providing open-ended resources that can be used in many different ways. Encourage and enjoy children's creative thinking as they find new ways to do things. Children need consistent routines and plenty of time so that play is not constantly interrupted. It is important to be reflective and flexible.
• Review their progress as they try to achieve a goal. Check how well they are doing. • Solve real problems: for example, to share nine strawberries between three friends, they might put one in front of each, then a second and finally a third. Finally, they might check at the end that everyone has the same number of strawberries.	Help children to reflect on and talk about their learning through using photographs and learning journeys. Share in children's pride about their achievements and their enjoyment of special memories. Suggestion: you could prompt a conversation with questions like: "Do you remember when...?", "How would you do that now?" or "I wonder what you were thinking then?"
• Use pretend play to think beyond the 'here and now' and to understand another perspective. For example, a child role-playing the billy goats gruff might suggest that "Maybe the troll is lonely and hungry? That's why he is fierce."	Help children to extend their ideas through sustained discussion that goes beyond what they, and you, have noticed. Consider 'how' and 'why' things happen.
• Know more, so feel confident about coming up with their own ideas. • Make more links between those ideas.	Help children to come up with their own ideas and explanations. Suggestion: you could look together at woodlice outdoors with the magnifying app on a tablet. You could ask: "What's similar about woodlice and other insects?" You could use and explain terms like 'antennae' and 'thorax'.
• Concentrate on achieving something that's important to them. They are increasingly able to control their attention and ignore distractions.	Offer children many different experiences and opportunities to play freely and to explore and investigate. Make time and space for children to become deeply involved in imaginative play, indoors and outside.

Annex 2 - Educational Programmes

Communication and Language

The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes, and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, storytelling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Children's personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Strong, warm and supportive relationships with adults enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. Children should be supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as EYFS reforms early adopter framework 9 necessary. Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently. Through supported interaction with other children they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate, and resolve conflicts peaceably. These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.

Physical Development

Physical activity is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy, and active lives. Gross and fine motor experiences develop incrementally throughout early childhood, starting with sensory explorations and the development of a child's strength, co-ordination, and positional awareness through tummy time, crawling and play movement with both objects and adults. By creating games and providing opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors, adults can support children to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination, and agility. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being. Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination which is later linked to early literacy. Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practise of using small tools, with feedback and support from adults, allow children to develop proficiency, control, and confidence.

Literacy

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).

Mathematics

Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. Children should be able to count confidently, develop a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers. By providing frequent and varied opportunities to build and apply this understanding - such as using manipulatives, including small pebbles and tens frames for organising counting - children will develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary from which

mastery of mathematics is built. In addition, it is important that the curriculum includes rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space, and measures. It is important that children develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, have a go, talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.

Understanding the World

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them – from visiting parks, libraries, and museums to meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses, and firefighters. In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes, and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains. Enriching and widening children's vocabulary will support later reading comprehension.

Expressive Arts and Design

The development of children's artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage in the arts, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. The quality and variety of what children see, hear, and participate in is crucial for developing their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate through the arts. The frequency, repetition and depth of their experiences are fundamental to their progress in interpreting and appreciating what they hear, respond to and observe.

Annex 3 - Early Learning Goals

Personal, Social & Emotional Development	Self-Regulation	• Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly. • Set and work towards simple goals, being able to wait for what they want and control their immediate impulses when appropriate. • Give focused attention to what the teacher says, responding appropriately even when engaged in activity, and show an ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.
	Managing- self	• Be confident in trying new activities and show independence, resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge. • Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly. • Manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet and understanding the importance of healthy food choices.
	Building Relationships	• Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others. • Form positive attachments to adults and friendships with peers. • Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs.
Communication & Language	Listening, Attention and Understanding	• Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions. • Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding. • Hold conversations when engaged in backand-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers.
	Speaking	• Participate in small groups, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary. • Offer explanations for why things might happen, making use of recently introduced • vocabulary from stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems when appropriate. • Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher.

Physical Development	Fine Motor Skills	• Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases. • Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paintbrushes and cutlery. • Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing.
	Gross Motor Skills	• Negotiate space and obstacles safely, with consideration for themselves and others. • Demonstrate strength, balance and coordination when playing. • Move energetically, such as running, jumping, dancing, hopping, skipping and climbing.
Literacy	Comprehension	• Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary. • Anticipate (where appropriate) key events in stories. • Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems and during role play.
	Word Reading	• Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs. • Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by sound-blending. • Read aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent with their phonic knowledge, including some common exception words.
	Writing	• Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed. • Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters. • Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.
Maths	Number	• Have a deep understanding of number to 10, including the composition of each number. • Subitise (recognise quantities without counting) up to 5. • Automatically recall (without reference to rhymes, counting or other aids) number bonds up to 5 (including subtraction facts) and some number bonds to 10, including double facts.
	Numerical pattern	• Verbally count beyond 20, recognising the pattern of the counting system. • Compare quantities up to 10 in different contexts, recognising when one quantity is greater than, less than or the same as the other quantity. • Explore and represent patterns within numbers up to 10, including evens and odds, double facts and how quantities can be distributed equally.

Understanding The World	Past and Present	• Talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society. • Know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class. • Understand the past through settings, characters and events encountered in books read in class and storytelling.
	People, Culture and Communities	• Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, • discussion, stories, non-fiction texts and maps. • Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class. • Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and (when appropriate) maps.
	The Natural World	• Explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants. • Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class. • Understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter.
Expressive Arts & Design	Creating With Materials	• Safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function. • Share their creations, explaining the process they have used. • Make use of props and materials when role playing characters in narratives and stories.
	Being Imaginative and Expressive	• Invent, adapt and recount narratives and stories with peers and their teacher. • Sing a range of well-known nursery rhymes and songs. • Perform songs, rhymes, poems and stories with others, and (when appropriate) try to move in time with music.

Early Learning Goals

Literacy
Comprehension
• Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary. • Anticipate (where appropriate) key events in stories. • Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems and during role play.
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Communication and Language
Listening, Attention and Understanding
• Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions. • Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding. • Hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers.
Speaking
• Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary. • Offer explanations for why things might happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems when appropriate. • Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Self-Regulation

- Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly.
- Set and work towards simple goals, being able to wait for what they want and control their immediate impulses when appropriate.
- Give focused attention to what the teacher says, responding appropriately even when engaged in activity, and show an ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.

Managing Self

- Be confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge.
- Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly.
- Manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet and understanding the importance of healthy food choices.

Building Relationships

- Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others.
- Form positive attachments to adults and friendships with peers.
- Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs.

Physical Development

Gross Motor Skills

- Negotiate space and obstacles safely, with consideration for themselves and others.
- Demonstrate strength, balance and coordination when playing.
- Move energetically, such as running, jumping, dancing, hopping, skipping and climbing.

Fine Motor Skills

- Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases.
- Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paintbrushes and cutlery.
- Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing.

Mathematics

Number

- Have a deep understanding of number to 10, including the composition of each number.
- Subitise (recognise quantities without counting) up to 5.
- Automatically recall (without reference to rhymes, counting or other aids) number bonds up to 5 (including subtraction facts) and some number bonds to 10, including double facts.

Numerical Patterns

- Verbally count beyond 20, recognising the pattern of the counting system.
- Compare quantities up to 10 in different contexts, recognising when one quantity is greater than, less than or the same as the other quantity.
- Explore and represent patterns within numbers up to 10, including evens and odds, double facts and how quantities can be distributed equally.

Expressive Arts and Design

Creating with Materials

- Safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function.
- Share their creations, explaining the process they have used.
- Make use of props and materials when role playing characters in narratives and stories.

Being Imaginative and Expressive

- Invent, adapt and recount narratives and stories with peers and their teacher.
- Sing a range of well-known nursery rhymes and songs.
- Perform songs, rhymes, poems and stories with others, and (when appropriate) try to move in time with music.

Ratified by Education Committee via email on 13 November 2025