



## Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

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| SLT Responsible      | EYFS Lead |
| Last reviewed        | June 2024 |
| Ratified by Trustees |           |

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of their reception year (age 5). At HCCAP we accommodate children from the age of 2 to 5 years old. There is a maximum capacity of 40 children in the pre-school with a pre-school manager, a deputy manager and 4 pre-school assistants. We also have 2 reception classes with 30 children in each class. To ensure best practice we have a teacher assigned to each class and two teaching assistants who support across both classes to promote a village approach. Reception and pre-school staff will interact with all children in EYFS.

## **Aims**

***“When we succeed in giving every child the best start in their early years, we give them what they need today. We also set them up with every chance of success tomorrow.”***

*Development Matters Sept 2020*

In the EYFS at HCCPA we believe that all children are entitled to the best possible start in their school life, both intellectually and emotionally, in order to enable them to develop their full potential and succeed in the future.

We aim to support each child's welfare, learning and developmental needs by:

- recognising that all children are unique and special
- understanding that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates
- providing a safe, secure and caring environment where children feel happy and know they are valued by the staff looking after them
- fostering and nurturing children's self-confidence and self-esteem through their developing awareness of their own identity and role within the community
- teaching them to express and communicate their needs and feelings in appropriate ways
- encouraging children's independence and decision-making, supporting them to learn through their mistakes
- developing children's understanding of social skills and the values and codes of behaviour required for people to work together harmoniously
- supporting children to develop care, respect and appreciation for others, including those with beliefs, cultures and opinions which differ to their own
- understanding the importance of play in children's learning and development
- providing learning experiences which reflect children's interests to encourage and develop their natural desire, excitement and motivation to learn
- providing experiences which build on children's existing knowledge and understanding in order to challenge, stimulate and extend their learning and development
- providing effective learning opportunities in the whole environment, both inside and outside

## **Statutory Framework for EYFS**

We adhere to the 'Statutory Framework of the EYFS' and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings:

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships;
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents/ carers;
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven curriculum areas, using play as the vehicle for learning;
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support;
- Work in partnership with parents and carers;
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment and by the children's own ideas and interests;
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-initiated, child-initiated and adult supported;
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and outdoors.

## **Early years Curriculum**

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve and in some cases exceed the Early Learning Goals.

All seven areas of learning and development are important and interconnected.

Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive, both in the EYFS and into Key Stage 1. These three areas are the prime areas:

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

Children are also supported through the four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World

- Expressive Arts and Design

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice.

Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

1. Playing and exploring - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.
2. Active learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties.
3. Creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which they can explore, think creatively and be active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

We have created a curriculum overview document for pre-school and reception which is progressive, and we use this to create medium term plans. Each term we explore different 'I Wonder...' themes each of which offers experiences in all seven areas of learning. We use the children's ideas and interests to inform our short-term planning, alongside our observations which identify areas we need to focus on. We always remain flexible to allow for unplanned circumstances and children's responses. Staff continually evaluate children's learning to ensure that individual 'Next Steps in Learning' and personalised learning needs are met.

Children will engage in whole group and small group activities alongside their independent learning time which we refer to the children as 'choosing time'. There are also allocated times for whole class daily 'carpet learning sessions'. We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those which are planned by adults. During children's play, the adults in class interact when appropriate to stretch and challenge them further.

The curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the EYFS framework: 'Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities'. We create a stimulating learning environment to encourage children to free-flow between inside and outside and utilise learning opportunities between pre-school and reception. This can include older children supporting younger children to engage in different activities. Also, children working and playing within both the pre-school and reception classrooms depending on their learning needs and stage of development.

### **Observations and assessment**

As part of our daily practise we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform our future plans. We record our observations in a variety of ways such as taking photos/videos/ writing post it notes and adding assessment for learning (AFL) to plans in reception. Everyone in class is encouraged to contribute.

Observations of children's achievements are collated in their own personal, online 'Tapestry' Learning Journal. Parents/carers receive a notification when an observation has been added to their child's Learning Journal and they can then view this observation and any related photographs/videos and assessments.

Parents/carers are encouraged to add their own comments and also to upload their own observations to show us what their children are able to do at home. Children's 'Next Steps in Learning' are shared on Tapestry so that parents/carers know how to help their children with their learning at home.

These ongoing observations are used to inform progress towards the Early Learning Goals (ELGs). The children's progress is reviewed continually. Throughout their time in Reception, parents/carers are welcomed in to share their children's learning; both informally through our 'open door' policy and more formally during parent/teacher consultations.

At the end of the year the EYFS profile provides a summary of every child's development and learning achievements including whether they have reached a 'Good Level of Development' (GLD). Children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals by the class teacher - who uses the exemplification case studies, and their knowledge of the children to make a 'best fit' judgement.

This profile data is the statutory data that is sent to the Local Authority and used to help school benchmark and identify improvements.

### **Key person**

We have a key person system in place within the pre-school to ensure parents and children are able to make relationships with primarily one person, particularly at settling in. However, all pre-school staff can and will work with all children.

The role of the Keyperson is to ensure that the children are being regularly observed during their learning noting when there has been any significant learning. The Key person will use documents such as Birth to 5 to consider if a child is developmentally on track or not within their learning and decide on their next steps.

Key persons will be responsible for ensuring that the learning environment is set up according to next steps and interests, and provocations or enhancements are provided for their children regularly.

### **Safety and Welfare**

The safety and welfare of our children is paramount at HCCPA. We have robust policies and procedures in place to ensure their safety.

In Reception we provide a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to take risks, follow rules and stay safe. We comply with the welfare

requirements set out in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage and understand that we must:

- Promote the welfare of all children;
- Promote good health and oral hygiene;
- Manage behaviour effectively and appropriately;
- Ensure all adults working with children are suitable to do so;
- Ensure that the environment is safe and all equipment and furniture is fit for purpose;
- Ensure all children have a challenging and enjoyable learning experience.

We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious fruit snacks, access to water throughout the day, allocating significant time for physical development and following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident.

Staff and visitors are prohibited from using their mobile phones in our classrooms, only the class tablets are used to photograph children (for Tapestry observations and assessment purposes) and children must be appropriately dressed in photographs.

HCCPA has robust systems in place to ensure that all practitioners who have regular contact with children are suitable for their role.

The EYFS staff hold the Paediatric First aid qualification, which is a statutory requirement of the EYFS.

The Child Protection Policy is in place to ensure the safety of all stakeholders. There are two designated safeguarding leads within the Primary Phase one of whom is the EYFS leader. Staff have access to the 'My Concern' safeguarding system to log any concerns regarding any aspects of safeguarding and behaviour. All staff are vigilant in reporting concerns and receive regular safeguarding training.

### **Nappy changing**

- Parents will supply nappies, wet wipes and nappy sacks.
- Children wearing nappies will be changed mid-way through each session to keep them comfortable and avoid nappy rash. They will also be changed as necessary if they have soiled or are over wet or uncomfortable, as and when the children need.
- Whenever possible the child should be changed by their key person and NEVER by anyone who has not provided a satisfactory DBS.
- When changing a nappy, staff members must wear disposable gloves which are to be removed after every nappy change, disposed of and new ones worn for the next nappy change. Nappy changing stations to be cleaned with disinfectant spray between changes.
- Children to never be left unattended on the changing table.
- Children are encouraged to use the steps to reach the changing mat, staff not to lift heavy children onto the changing table.

- Dirty nappies are to be disposed off in a nappy sack in the Sanagenic bin provided which is emptied regularly.

### **Toilet Training**

Our staff will help parents decide if their child is ready for toilet training, Children are positively encouraged to use the toilet or a potty, depending what stage they are with potty training. For the children that are just out of nappies staff will ask throughout the session if the toilet is needed. A child will never be forced on to the toilet or potty if he or she is unwilling to try.

Good hygiene practices are always followed at the Preschool and the children are shown how to use the toilet and how to wash their hands each time they have used the toilet. 'Accidents' will be dealt with calmly, sympathetically and in a way that does not make the child feel they have done anything wrong.

Feedback on progress will be daily with the parents / carers and plans adapted as and when necessary.

### **Inclusion**

We value all our children as individuals, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meets the needs of the individual child supporting and challenging them appropriately in order for them to reach their full potential.

We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so, work closely with parents/carers and outside agencies.

### **Partnership with parents/carers**

We recognise the importance of parents/carers as children's first educators. We believe they have a significant role to play in the lifelong education of their child. We strive to create and maintain partnerships with parents/carers as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child's learning. We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child's education and care in numerous ways.

- Talking to them about their child's interests and needs during home visits and transition events/sessions;
- Being welcoming and approachable and having an open-door approach for parents to voice concerns/ask questions;

- Inviting parents/carers in for welcome events and workshops to gain an understanding of how their child learns;
- Inviting them to 2 parent consultations across the year to discuss how their child has settled and share progress and next steps for learning;
- Valuing parents' contributions to their child's online learning journey using Tapestry;
- Using Tapestry to share children's next steps, share ideas for home learning and videos demonstrating how we teach phonics etc;
- Encouraging parents to read with their child at home
- Providing curriculum planning overviews for each term, highlighting how they can support their child at home;
- Welcoming parents as volunteers into our school;
- Providing parents with an end of year summary report detailing achievements and their child's EYFS profile;
- We also draw on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on outings and inviting members of the community into our setting to talk about their lives, work and experiences.

### **Lunchbox policy**

We ask for parents/carers not to overfill their child's lunchbox and to consider portion sizes to prevent food wastage. We also ask that no confectionary such as chocolate bars or sweets to be included in lunchboxes along with any high sugar soft drinks/fizzy drinks.

Lunchboxes should contain at least one portion of fruit/vegetable. Grapes, cherries, tomatoes to be halved and cut lengthways.

### **Special diets and allergies:**

The pre-school has a nut free policy and parents are asked to support this policy through NOT including nuts or any nut products within packed lunches. This includes peanut butter, Nutella/chocolate spread (unless it's one which does not contain nuts), Kinder Bueno bars or any relating products.

We ask parents/carers to inform us if their child has any food allergies or special diets so procedures can be put in place to manage these.

We also ask that NO juice is to be put in bottles during normal sessions – this is due to children having allergies to the additives within them and adhering to the good oral hygiene guidelines. Therefore we are a WATER ONLY setting.

### **Transition**

Transitions are carefully planned for and significant time is given to ensure continuity of learning and care. At times of transition, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child and other settings.

Parents/carers of pre-school children will be offered a meeting with their child's key person in the setting before the child starts. This is a valuable time to talk 1:1 with them and answer any concerns/queries they may have.

Pre-school children will have at least one settling session before they start their regular hours. If needed the child will have additional settling sessions. This will be based on a discussion between the parents/carers and the child's key person.

If children have previously attended another setting/childminder the key person may make contact, again the aim of this will be to support the child to settle into pre-school successfully.

Children new to reception will be invited to attend a Teddy Bear's Picnic with their parents/carers to develop familiarity with the settings and practitioners in July before they start. Our Reception staff will also visit or contact the local nurseries and preschools in return, to familiarise themselves with the children.

Reception parents/carers are also encouraged to take up the offer of a home visit (by the Reception class teacher and TA) or have the option to instead meet with staff in school.

To support our pre-school children starting in reception, children have frequent interactions with reception staff in the shared outside environment and they are regularly invited into the reception classrooms such as for story time.

At the end of the EYFS, our Reception teacher meets with the Year 1 teacher to liaise with them and discuss the individual children and their specific needs. This is so that their new teachers are able to plan for their 'next steps in learning' from the moment they enter their new class. Children will spend an afternoon a week in term 6 in their new classroom and have a transition day to ensure that they are familiar and comfortable with their new teacher and are 'next year ready'.

At HCCPA we strive to give every child the best possible start in their educational journey. We want all of our children to develop a positive attitude to learning in order to prepare them for the next stage of education, laying secure foundations for future learning and development.