

Halstead CP School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



Approved by the FGB
Signed :

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Halstead Community Primary School

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“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to their full potential. A child’s experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure safe and happy childhood is important in its own right, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. When parents choose to use early years services they want to know the provision will keep their children safe and help them to thrive. The Early Years Foundation Stage is the framework that provides that assurance.” – Statutory Framework for E.Y.F.S.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. In our school, the children are part-time for the first three weeks of school and then attend on a full-time basis.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development – within this are 7 Areas of Learning

A Unique Child

At Halstead Community Primary School we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children’s attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

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

In our school we believe that every child matters. 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 achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

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;

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- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- 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.

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. (See Child Protection Policy)

Welfare

"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."- *Statutory Framework for E.Y.F.S.*

At Halstead Community Primary School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2012. We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare of children.
- promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs, such as the reward system of smiley face stickers.
- ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose.
- ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

Positive Relationships

At Halstead Community Primary School we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make.

We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- having an induction meeting with parents;

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- making 'Home visits' before their child starts school;
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's development in our reception class and encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns;
- keeping parents informed of their child's **learning Tapestry**
- Encouraging parents to share their child's achievements by completing 'Achievement Tree' leaves
- organising a formal meeting for parents in Term 1 or 2 and Term 3 or 4 at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of the school year and there is an opportunity to gain an explanation of the statements regarding attainment;
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: Class assemblies, Sports Day, Christmas Play, School visits etc.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At our school the EYFS teacher acts a 'Key Person' to all children in EYFS.

We have well established links with the independent Halstead Community Pre-school. The EYFS teachers meet with staff at all local Pre Schools to discuss new intake children and visit the children in the pre-school setting. As our main intake source, staff and children from **Halstead Community Pre-school** are invited to school events (Christmas productions, Sport's Day etc.). Induction activities to aid transition include:

- giving children the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during 'Story time' and 'Teddy Bears' Picnic' sessions
- visiting children in their pre-school setting before they start school;
- providing information booklets to familiarise the children with the staff and learning environment
- visiting children in their home environment

Enabling Environments

At Halstead Community Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

The Planning within the EYFS follows termly themes. These plans are used by the EYFS teacher as a guide for weekly planning however the teacher may alter these in response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children. The termly and weekly plan are organised around the seven areas of learning whilst a daily plan incorporates the classroom routine and specific tasks as well as having evaluations on it to inform future planning.

Children are taught synthetic phonics using the 'Read, Write, Inc.' programme and are given weekly home reinforcement activities to support their learning.

We make regular assessments of children's learning, when appropriate, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the

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EYFS takes the form of interactions with the pupils and occasional observations involving the teacher and other adults. These observations are recorded on Tapestry with photographs. Observations from class, group activities and teacher judgement may also be used. The information provided by pre-school settings is also kept to aid assessment. There is also a much greater emphasis on information provided by parents and they are encouraged to send out of school achievements in for their child to show to the class.

At Halstead Community Primary School, we use Tapestry to record observations and assessment against Development Matters and the EYFS Profile. Judgements are recorded six times a year using SIMs to track progress before the final summative judgement is made and submitted to KCC. Moderation of judgements is generally undertaken within the Partnership or with a visit from an external Moderator.

Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress against the ELG's and assessment scales. Parents are given the opportunity to discuss these judgements with the EYFS teacher.

The Learning Environment

The EYFS classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The classroom is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The EYFS class has its 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 a chance to explore, use their senses and be physically active. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all 7 areas of learning.

Learning and Development

At Halstead Community Primary School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are inter-connected.

Teaching and Learning Style

Our Teaching and Learning policy defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in the EYFS just as much as through the primary phase. Features that relate to the EYFS are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that all staff have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;
- the range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences with relevant interventions used to extend play.
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS;
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;

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- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents;
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school;
- learn with and from older pupils to encourage collaborative ethos and relationships within the school (e.g., buddies, shared PDR, castles, shared reading, etc)

Play

Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development.

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Foundation Stage children have child initiated sessions to initiate their own play as well as short teacher input sessions and teacher directed activities.

Active Learning

Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Creativity and Critical Thinking

When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.

Children should be given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning, three **prime** areas and four **specific** areas, each of which has sub-areas within it:

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- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
 - Self-confidence and self-awareness
 - Managing feelings and behaviour
 - Making relationships
- Communication and Language
 - Listening and Attention
 - Understanding
 - Speaking
- Physical Development
 - Moving and Handling
 - Health and Self-care

- English
 - Reading
 - Writing
- Mathematics
 - Numbers
 - Shape, Space and Measures
- Understanding the World
 - People and Communities
 - The World
 - Technology
- Expressive Arts and Design
 - Exploring and Using Media and Materials
 - Being Imaginative

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teacher to follow the principles stated in this policy. There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. This governor provides feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion. The Headteacher/SLT member will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

Associated policies

- Child Protection
- Health and Safety
- Equality and Inclusion
- Curriculum