

Horton Lodge Community Special School

'Working Together – Achieving Potential'



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Approved by:

Date:

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1. Introduction

'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.'

The EYFS...promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.'

(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, 2012, DfE).

2. Our aims and principles

We use the principles of Conductive Education to teach children and develop all aspects of learning. Explicit links can be made between the overarching principles of the EYFS (underlined) and the principles of Conductive Education.

A Unique Child

- Conductive Education is a holistic teaching approach, looking at the whole child and considering all of their needs.
- We are committed to the belief that every child CAN learn and therefore all activities are viewed as learning opportunities.
- Children are encouraged to be active, independent learners who develop the ability to problem-solve and apply skills (orthofunction)
- The experiences will build on what the children already can do.
- Our curriculum will be carefully structured, following the EYFS Development Matters Guidance Material, recognising children's different starting points and relevancy to their different levels of need.

Positive Relationships

- No child is excluded or disadvantaged.
- The Teacher / Conductor-Teacher models practice and promote positive relationships with staff and children.
- Children have opportunities to work in a range of groups and develop their social skills. Working with others is seen as a source of motivation.
- We forge strong links with parents and carers.

Enabling Environments

- We ensure the learning environment is attractive and well organised.
- We provide opportunities for children to engage in indoor and outdoor activities planned and directed by adults as well as activities that offer opportunities for child choice and free play.
- We provide facilitation (equipment, manual, use of environment) to enable the children to succeed. Experiencing success is crucial.
- We observe and respond appropriately to children, informed by our knowledge of how children learn and develop.



Learning and Development

- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. They all enter the setting at different starting points. Activities and resources are differentiated to meet individual children's needs ensuring each pupil accesses an appropriately personalised learning journey. If a child reaches Year 1 and their personalised learning journey is still best suited to the EYFS then we may wish continue with an Early Years curriculum to support their learning and development.
- We seek to address the needs of the whole child through the holistic nature of Conductive Education and in partnership with physiotherapists, speech therapists and appropriate specialists.
- Learning is active. Developing the child across the prime areas will be considered in all activities.

3. Induction

The school's individualised induction programme aims to make the transition into school life as smooth as possible for all children and their parents. Hence we arrange:

- A visit and tour of the school and an opportunity to meet with staff working in the EYFS.
- Opportunities for children to spend time in school, both with and without their parents.

The manner in which children are introduced to the school depends on their individual needs. Some children visit over a period of time with and without their parents. Other children build up from half days without their parents. Once children are attending school without their parents, contact is maintained through the home – school diary or See Saw app and telephone conversations. We encourage parents to be part of their child's school life and provide a range of partnership opportunities both formal and informal.

4. Staffing and organisation of classes

The EYFS is led by a Teacher and supported higher level teaching assistants and teaching assistants and has input from a Conductor / Conductor Teacher. Physiotherapists are an integral part of the staff team and spend time working with the children. Every child participates in a swimming session in the school pool. In addition to this the school is supported by a school nurse, Speech and Language Therapists, a teacher for hearing and visually impaired pupils and an educational psychologist, as well as other professionals as needed.

Organisation will change annually depending on the number and needs of pupils. However, we will endeavour to recognise pupils individualised needs whilst ensuring all pupils have equal access to activities regardless of age, ability, gender or race (see equal opportunities policy).

The Early Years Foundation Stage is organised into times in which the children take part in teacher led activities, and times in which they can choose from a variety of carefully planned activities based within the seven areas of learning and designing to help children progress through age & stages of development, towards the Early Learning Goals. Learning activities are planned by the teacher with input from the rest of the team.



5. Curriculum

The curriculum is well planned to ensure children can select a wide variety of activities and explore as independently as possible. The recognition of the prime areas in the EYFS, namely Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Communication and Language and Physical Development, perfectly complements the holistic nature of Conductive Education that seeks to promote 'Orthofunction' (children who are as active and independent as possible and demonstrate an ability to problem-solve and apply skills).

The classroom is organised to enable pupils to be as independent as possible when transferring around the room. Children are shown and taught different ways of moving around using the apparatus set up in the classroom.

We provide our pupils with a broad and stimulating range of experiences appropriate to their stage of development, and we plan opportunities and activities for the children to develop across the seven areas of learning and development.

We recognise that the way in which the curriculum is presented must be constantly monitored and adjusted according to the needs of the group at the time. Key to our planning is that children within our EYFS will need structured play sessions as well as opportunities for free play. These are repeated sessions that consist of a sequence of exploration activities that involve using all of the senses. We recognise that children need to learn the 'characteristics of effective learning' through repetition and modelling, and how to make use of their senses and organise their sensory motor learning before playing independently and in more purposeful ways.

Prime areas

The following areas are fundamental, work together and move through to support development in all other areas:

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

Specific areas

These 'include essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society.'

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Technology is recognised as being an integral part of the curriculum. It is imbedded into all areas of learning and adapted for children's individual needs. The role that this plays in our school in terms of communication is key and therefore children are encouraged to develop their access skills right from the start.

6. Home-school partnership

We believe that parents and carers are our partners in children's learning. We try to develop a close working relationship between home and school involving parents in their child's development as much as possible. Some of the ways we encourage this are;



- Adopting an 'open door policy' so that parents and teachers have the opportunity to chat informally at the beginning and end of the school day
- Welcoming parents to participate in swimming sessions once a week
- Involving parents and carers as helpers for regular classroom activities and for special events such as educational visits within the local area
- Building communication through home-school initiatives such as 'pirate Ted'.
- Welcoming parents to informative 'coffee mornings' organised by the class teacher, where parents and carers are invited to come, meet and chat with each other.
- Communication via the home-school diary, See saw app and phone calls as appropriate.
- Formal consultation meetings held six-monthly (for under 5 year olds) or annually (once the child is 5 years of age) to discuss pupil progress
- Focussed parent workshops including the use of Alternative and Augmentative Communication and Conductive Education
- Parents evenings
- Whole school newsletter
- School website

7. Links with community

We use opportunities offered by the local community in the following ways:

- Explore local environment through educational visits related to specific topics and the interests and needs of the children in the group at any one time
- Visits from the people in the local community who come to talk to the children (police, fire service, nurses, etc...)
- Link days with local primary schools

8. Equal opportunities

We seek to develop inclusive practices that promote and value diversity and difference. Inappropriate attitudes and practices are challenged and children are encouraged to value and respect others (see Equal Opportunities Policy).

9. Assessment, Recording and Reporting

We use 'Development Matters' and 'Early Learning Goals' (from the EYFS) to support our observations and assessments. Our assessment procedures are:

- Each child has a 'Learning Journey', where positive achievements, observations, annotated photographic evidence and samples of work are kept across all seven areas of learning and development.
- Each child has with them a 'Learning Journal' in which practitioners record observations across the day, during continuous provision activities, during adult led group activities, or incidental moments, for instance, during assemblies or mealtimes.
- In their Learning Journal each child has termly 'Next steps', which is the Explorers version of a individual education plan, giving a picture of what a child's targets are. They each have a summary of the previous term, and state the interests of the child and their preferred modes of learning. It gives ways in which adults can



enable children to explore as independently as possible and so move on to their next step. They reflect the EHCP targets and are monitored across the term.

- A report is written detailing progress every 6 months (when the child is under 5) or annually (once the child is 5 years of age).
- All assessment systems are used throughout the year and provide a basis for reporting to parents and inform future attainment and to set targets.

10. Monitoring and evaluation

Under the oversight of the Senior Leadership Team, the EYFS teacher has the responsibility for the co-ordination and leadership of our overall provision. Their role includes:

- Ensuring provision of appropriate, comprehensive and stimulating curriculum.
- Providing opportunities for child-led activities as well as adult-led activities, taking into account the children's individual abilities and needs.
- Leading their staff teams and supporting them in ensuring the school's policies and practices are delivered to a high standard.
- Co-ordinating planning, assessment, recording, reporting.
- Maintaining good liaisons with parents and the community.
- Reporting on standards and on teaching and learning to the Headteacher and governors.

We are also monitored by external agencies such as the LA Early Years team and Ofsted. Links with other policies
The EYFS policy is reviewed annually and presented to the Governing Body.

11. Links with other policies

This EYFS Policy is linked to our:

- CE policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy
- ATAAC
- Health and Safety