



**Early Years Foundation Stage  
Policy  
2018**

**Next review: Autumn 2021**

***Hurst Green School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.***



# Hurst Green Infant School and Nursery Early Years Policy

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Foundation Stage extends from birth to the end of the Reception year. Entry into Hurst Green Infant School and Nursery is at the beginning of the school year in which the children are five (although compulsory schooling does not begin until the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday).
- 1.2 The Foundation Stage is important in its own right, and also in preparing children for later schooling. It is the Early Learning Goals that set out what most children should achieve by the end of the Foundation Stage.
- 1.3 Children joining our school have already learnt a great deal. As well as learning at home, many have been learning in one of the various educational settings that exist in and around the village. The early years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:
  - it builds on what our children already know and can do
  - it ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged
  - it offers a curriculum which has at its heart child initiated learning experiences, facilitated and supported by dedicated practitioners
  - it offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, a content that matches the needs of young children, and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors
  - it provides a rich and stimulating environment.

## 2 Aims of the Foundation Stage

- 2.1 As stated in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, there are four guiding principles which should shape good practice. These principles underpin everything we do in the Foundation Stage at Hurst Green Infant School and Nursery. These are:
  - 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 and/or carers and
  - **Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates**. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

## 3 Teaching and learning style

- 3.1 The features of effective teaching and learning in our school are defined in our policy on teaching and learning. They apply to teaching and learning in the

Foundation Stage just as much as they do to the teaching and learning in Key Stage 1.

**3.2** Underpinning all of our planning and teaching is the understanding of how children develop and learn. This is reflected in our practice through an understanding of the importance of the three **characteristics of effective learning** identified in the framework. These 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 and
- **Creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

**3.3** The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the Foundation Stage are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents that helps our children to feel secure at school, and to develop a sense of well-being and achievement
- the range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions, and extend and develop the children’s play, talk or other means of communication
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children meet, and in some cases exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests, and develop all areas of the curriculum
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence
- the support for learning, with appropriate and accessible space, facilities and equipment, both indoors and outdoors
- the identification, through observations, of children’s progress and future learning needs, which are regularly shared with parents
- the good relationships between our school and the other educational settings in which the children have been learning before joining Hurst Green Infant School and Nursery
- the regular identification of training needs for all adults working at the Foundation Stage.

## **4 Play at the Foundation Stage**

**4.1** Through play our children explore and develop the learning experiences that help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up their ideas, learn how to control themselves, and begin to understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively both alongside other children and 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.

## 5 Inclusion at the Foundation Stage

5.1 We believe that all our children matter. 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 we are planning for their learning.

5.2 At the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations matched to the needs of our children, so that most children at Hurst Green meet the Early Learning Goals by the end of Reception. There may be some children who do not meet the Early Learning Goals, and they will be supported to continue working towards these in year 1. Some children will exceed the Early Learning Goals. We help them do this through careful planning which meets the needs of both boys and girls, including those children with special educational needs, more able children, children with disabilities and children from all social and cultural backgrounds.

5.3 We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build on and extend the children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence
- using a variety of teaching strategies that are based on children's learning needs
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children, and to help them to learn effectively
- offering a safe and supportive learning environment, in which the contribution of all children is valued
- using resources that reflect diversity, and that avoid discrimination and stereotyping
- planning activities that are well matched to children's abilities and build on their next steps
- monitoring children's progress, and providing support as necessary.

## 6 The Foundation Stage curriculum

6.1 Our curriculum for the Foundation Stage reflects the 7 areas of learning identified in the framework. We recognise that all these areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected, but three areas are especially crucial for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These **Prime areas** are:

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

In addition to these are four **Specific areas**, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

- **Literacy**
- **Mathematics**
- **Understanding the world** and

- **Expressive arts and design.**

6.2 The 'Early Years Outcomes document' provides the basis for planning throughout the Foundation Stage.

## **7 Assessment**

7.1 In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, and no later than 30 June in that term, the EYFS Profile (the National assessment tool) must be completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, and their progress against the Early Learning Goals. The progress is recorded as Emerging-1, Expected-2, or Exceeding-3, at each of the goals. The Profile reflects: ongoing observations made throughout the year by practitioners, any relevant records about the child; and discussions with parents and carers.

7.2 During the first half term in Reception class practitioners judge each child's starting point in each of the seven areas of learning using the 'Early years outcomes' document. Using transition information from previous settings, along with observations made in the first weeks at school the teacher decides which age band the child's development falls within. These early assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children.

7.3 The teacher undertakes assessments throughout the Reception Year (roughly every three months) and updates children's individual record of development. At the end of the final term in Reception, practitioners use this record of development to inform the judgements they make for the EYFS Profile. These judgements will be reported to parents and the local authority. The child's next teacher uses this information to make plans for the year ahead.

7.4 Throughout the year each child builds up a folder of significant experiences known as a Learning Journey; this is a record of each child's work and progress. We share this with parents at each parental consultation meeting and at other opportunities throughout the year. We use Tapestry as an assessment tool to help support this.

7.5 Parents receive an annual report that gives feedback on each child's progress in each area of learning. It highlights each child's achievements, development needs, and next steps. In addition, we focus on learning behaviour in relation to the characteristics of effective learning. Annual reports are completed in June, and sent home to parents in early July each year.

## **8 The role of parents**

8.1 We believe that all parents have an important role to play in the education of their child. We recognise the vital role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. This is done through:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school

- the teacher visits all children, whose parents request, in their home setting prior to their starting Nursery. The Teacher visits children in their nursery settings before children start school.
- opportunities given to the children to spend time with their teacher before starting school through play sessions at school
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our reception class
- encouraging parents to come in and help in the classroom, or accompany us on school trips
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns;
- having flexible admission arrangements, and allowing time to discuss each child's circumstances
- arranging for children to start school in groups, staggered over the first week, so that the teacher can welcome each child individually into our school
- offering a range of activities, throughout the year, that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents
- providing various activities that involve parents, i.e. regular communication with home through the child's school diary, and inviting parents to curriculum evenings, in order to discuss the kind of work that the children are undertaking
- Parents can contribute towards their child's profile by informing the teacher of 'Wow' moments in their child's life at home.

**8.2** There is a formal meeting for parents in autumn and spring term at which the parents discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.

## **9 Resources**

**9.1** We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning.

**9.2** All children take part in a weekly Forest School session.