

**HITHERFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL AND
CHILDREN'S CENTRE**

GROWING TOGETHER



**Teaching and Learning Policy for the
Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**

Document Control

Change Record

Date	Author	Version	Change Reference
			No Previous Document
Dec 2016	T. O'Flynn	1.1	Changes made in line with new practice in EY
March 2021	T.O'Flynn	1.2	Explanation of curriculum added and changes to assessment systems.
March 2022	J Holliday	1.3	Changes made in line with new Statutory Framework
February 2024	J Holliday	1.4	Changes made to reflect current practice

Distribution

Reviewers	Approvers	Distribution
Achievement Committee	Full Governing Body	

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Introduction to the Early Years Foundation Stage

“All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives, so their experiences in early years 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 provide the foundation children need to fulfil their potential.” DFE – Early Years Statutory Framework

Our Early Years consists of two Nursery classes (52 full time equivalent places) and a large, three form entry Reception. In the EYFS, we are committed to providing high quality education and care for all children. We strive to create a nurturing and stimulating learning environment which promotes challenge, exploration and fosters a love of learning.

The EYFS framework is based upon four principles which underpin our practice:

- **A Unique Child** - Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- **Positive Relationships** - Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- **Enabling Environments** - Children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them build on their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- **Learning and Development** - Children develop and learn 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. Practitioners teach children through their interactions within the challenging, playful opportunities they have provided to engage them in the prime and specific areas of learning and development.



The Early Years Curriculum intent

By 'curriculum' we mean: all the things that we want children to know, experience and be able to do as a result of their time in the EYFS at Hitherfield. We aim for all children to have the experiences and learning opportunities in order that they can meet the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) set out by the statutory Early Years Framework at the end of their Reception Year. We believe that a strong foundation is vital for excellent future progress in school and in life; our priorities reflect our specific school context and we aim to develop curious and confident learners who:

- explore and respect themselves, their community and wider world;
- show a level of emotional literacy which enables them to understand and express their feelings and to manage a range of social situations;
- display an ability to navigate the EYFS environment independently and with a widening vocabulary to describe their world;
- have a developing understanding of the Hitherfield Learning Dispositions in order to experience success as well as overcoming setbacks, recognising how they did so;
- have a secure phonological awareness (up to phase 4) and an ability to blend sounds in order to learn to read simple words and sentences;
- develop a love of literature;
- explore and fulfil their physical potential, including the ability to hold a pencil with an appropriate grip and to form all letters correctly;
- the numerical knowledge and a deep understanding of numbers to and within 10, in preparation for their future learning;

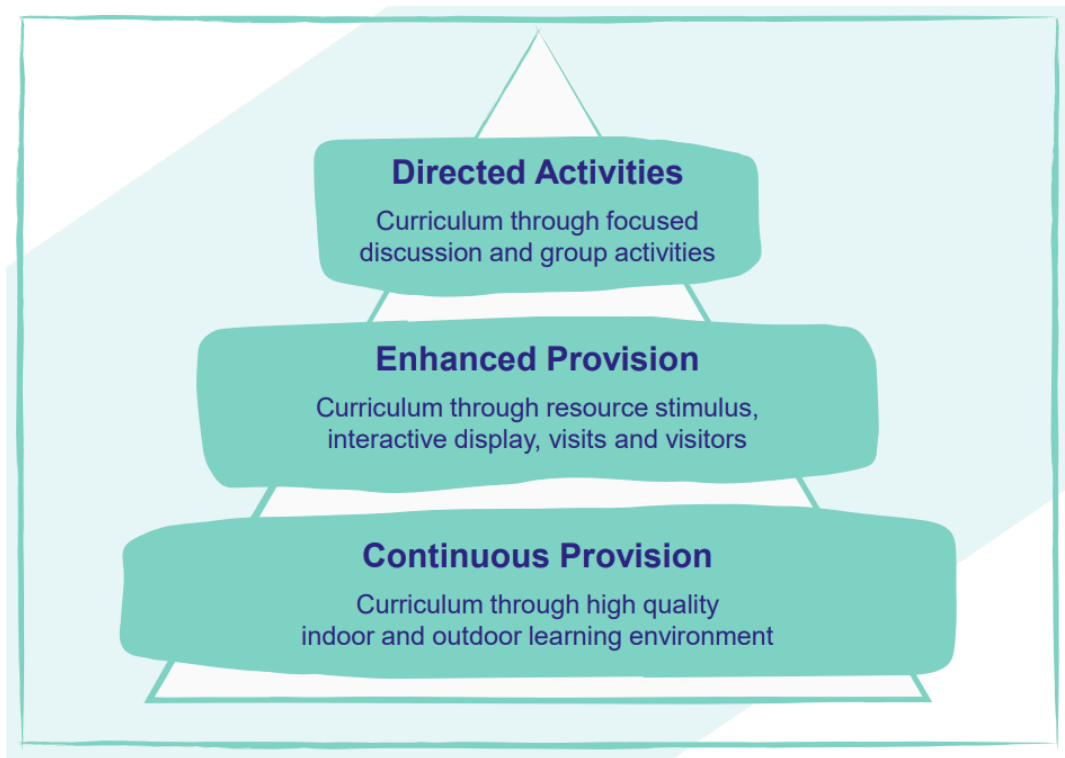
The Early Years Curriculum Implementation

OFSTED – September 2015

“Teaching should not be taken to imply a ‘top down’ or formal way of working. It is a broad term that covers the many different ways in which adults help young children learn. It includes their interactions with children during planned and child-initiated play and activities: communicating and modelling language, showing, explaining, demonstrating, exploring ideas, encouraging, questioning, recalling, providing a narrative for what they are doing, facilitating and setting challenges. It takes account of the equipment adults provide and the attention given to the physical environment, as well as the structure and routines of the day that establish expectations.”



In order to implement a balanced, rich and broad play-based curriculum that enables children to be prepared for Year 1, our pedagogical approach looks like this.



Continuous Provision:

Child led play within the EYFS learning environment is a key component of our curriculum and crucial to the children's development. Making independent choices helps children to develop positive learning dispositions such as: being reflective, resilient, creative, curious, collaborative and risk-taking. Through this, they will be better prepared to tackle difficult problems and solve them. They will also have the opportunity to develop key social skills and self regulation.

Staff understand child development; they recognise each child's different starting points and learning needs and interact in a way that deliberately supports each individual child's development in each of the key areas of learning. The role of the adult within child-initiated play is crucial: to scaffold and foster children's ability to interact with their environment and its resources appropriately and effectively; to play alongside children within the environment, helping to model language skills and ideas; to extend the children's learning further and to prompt their creative thinking. This in turn will also help to strengthen relationships formed with children.

Enhanced Provision:

High-quality play is supported by our well organised environment, which responds to children's interests and gives them a range of new experiences. We enhance our Early Years learning environment (both inside and outside) in a variety of ways including: introducing new resource stimuli linked to our half termly topics, providing opportunities to explore concepts that the children have demonstrated an interest in, weekly 'Outdoor Learning' sessions and through educational visits and visitors. These enhancements help us to ensure that our curriculum is well balanced and brings new ideas and experiences into the children's lives.

Directed Activities:

We believe that high levels of child involvement lead to accelerated levels of progress. Our environment is set up to give children the opportunity to self-manage, to take initiative and self-direct their learning. However, we recognise that there are some skills which need to be explicitly taught and so adult directed activities take place at various points throughout the day.

Children in Nursery are introduced to key knowledge and skills through explicitly taught 'carpet sessions'. Areas of focus include:

- a daily phonics input to develop phonemic awareness and oral blending, utilising the Foundations for Phonics Programme (Little Wandle);
- regular visits to 'Number Land' to introduce early mathematical concepts to children;
- a daily story / song session to help foster a love of reading;
- regular topic sessions, based on quality texts, to introduce children to new ideas, concepts and vocabulary;

The skills the children develop through these sessions are further embedded and developed through their interactions within the learning environment and with adults.

As children move into and through Reception, children experience the following directed activities :

- a systematic phonics curriculum (Little Wandle) and appropriate interventions for those who need it;
- a daily storytime sessions to model reading skills and to foster a love of reading;
- the systematic teaching of handwriting;
- a modelled writing session and 'must do' writing experience, weekly;
- a systematic numeracy curriculum (Mastering Number) which is supported by developmentally appropriate taught activities, small group activities and

- independent experiences;
- daily topic sessions, based on quality texts or specific areas of the continuous provision, to introduce children to new ideas, concepts and vocabulary;
 - formal PE lessons to explicitly teach healthy lifestyle skills that are used and applied through the continuous provision;
 - weekly outdoor learning sessions focusing on the natural world, including seasonality, plant and insect life cycles and gardening;

The explicit teaching of other skills such as handwriting, cutting, catching etc are introduced carefully, as and when appropriate, to individual children, groups of children or the whole class. Decisions regarding this are made according to a child's stage of development and 'readiness' to move on further through the learning process.

The Early Years Curriculum - Impact

We keep records of a child's attainment in the prime and specific areas of the EYFS framework and monitor each individual's progress. At Hitherfield, assessment takes place in the following ways:

Reception Baseline Assessment:

The Reception Baseline Assessment is completed during the first 6 weeks in which a child starts Reception. It will assess a child's early mathematics, literacy, communication & language. The data generated will not be shared with the school and will only be used as a progress measure when a child completes KS2. Our Hitherfield baseline will also be completed by the end of the first half term. This judgement will be made by triangulating information gained from: home visits, discussions with parents / carers, information from previous settings and key observations of the child within the learning environment.

Online Learning Journey

Each child has an online Learning Journey on Seesaw. This can be accessed and contributed to by school adults and parents/carers in order to capture each child's learning and development both in and out of school. We utilise Seesaw to capture achievements but, in line with the principles of the Early Years Framework, will not seek to generate a raft of physical evidence to support a judgement.

Formative Assessment in Nursery

In Nursery, children are the 'Focus Child' twice in a year. During the focus week, parents/carers are asked to provide information about their child's current interests and whether they have any questions or concerns about their child's development. Families are also asked to send in photos from home, which we use with the children to find out their interests and experiences outside of school.

Throughout the Focus Week we observe the child, paying close attention to their learning and development, and intervening in a way that leads to progress for the child. We encourage adults to concentrate on the quality of the interactions that they are having with the children. This means that observations are only recorded if they demonstrate that significant learning has taken place for the child.

Observations about a child's strengths and interests as well as areas for development are used to inform planning future learning experiences for that child and are discussed with parents/carers at Parents' Evening.

Formative Assessment in Reception

Formative assessment takes place daily and is carried out by all practitioners. It includes informal observations of children during play, carpet sessions and adult directed activities. These observations help to inform forward planning. As children progress through Reception, they learn to access their Learning Journey independently, allowing for greater opportunities to capture the 'child's voice' and to enable children to reflect on their own learning and achievements.

When each child is developmentally ready, they are given a physical work book where their 'must do' writing activities are collated. Work is marked with an 'S' if the child was supported or an 'I' if the child produced the work independently.

Little Wandle half termly assessments are conducted and are used to plan interventions and additional reading provision.

Summative Assessments:

When a child is in Nursery, school staff provide parents/carers with a written summary of their child's development through the 'End of Year Report'. This 'progress check' highlights the areas in which a child is progressing well and the areas in which additional support is needed.

At the **end of the EYFS**, Reception staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents/carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents/carers through their child's 'End of Year Report'.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters [guidance](#)) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

Pupil Progress Meetings:

Following each assessment cycle, Pupil Progress Meetings are held in order to identify children that require additional support and to discuss what this might look like.

Assessment & Planning Cycle:

	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4	Term 5	Term 6
Nursery	Baselines	Focus child 1	Focus child 1	Focus child 2	Focus child 2	Objective led planning
Reception	Baselines	Objective led planning	Objective led planning	Objective led planning	Objective led planning	Objective led planning

Tracking:

Our tracking cycle is outlined below:

School based assessments	Data drop 1 October	Data drop 2 December	Data drop 3 March	Data drop 4 June
Nursery	Prime areas - age related	Prime and specific areas - age related Prime areas - age related - for January starters	Prime and specific areas - age related	Prime and specific areas - age related
Reception	For returning Hitherfield children: Prime and specific areas - non age-related For children new to Hitherfield: Prime areas and Literacy & Maths - non age-related	Prime and specific areas - identify where the children are currently related to the ELGs - non age-related	Prime and specific areas - identify where the children are currently related to the ELGs - non age-related	Judgement as to whether children have met their ELG

The Role of the Adult:

Sir Michael Wilshaw says:- *“Early years provision is only as good as the quality of interaction between adults and children.”*

Neuroscience has shown us that the ‘growth of children’s language is linked to the quality of back-and-forth interactions’ they have with their caregivers (Romeo et al., 2018). Within these quality interactions, children learn best when they are explicitly taught vocabulary and are provided with a good model of grammar. Both the quantity and quality of our talk matters. At Hitherfield, adults respond to each individual child’s interests and actions, deciding how to move them on with their learning and understanding at that moment. Using their sound knowledge of child development, they give kind but precise feedback that helps a child to reflect on and develop their learning further. Each time they interact with a child, they are observing, assessing, planning for, and responding to, that individual child.

To ensure that our interactions with children are of the highest quality, we follow guidance and resources from Foundations for Language (Little Wandle) and the approaches for supporting communication and language development identified by the Education Endowment Fund.

An Enabling Environment

We have a workshop style environment both indoors and outside. All resources are available to the children and they select what they want to do in each area. The principle is that resources are accessible to the children and they are varied, open-ended and of high quality. This gives children the opportunity to select resources to support their chosen activity.

To support this, the areas are clear, stocked and tidy at the start of the day:- most tables and carpet areas are free of equipment but the resources are available next to these areas. All containers are clearly marked so children know where everything goes and can learn to replace the resources after use.

It is vital that resource storage areas are well stocked, tidy, clearly labelled (with picture/object shape and word) and arranged to allow optimum child access. Providing a ‘shadow space’ for resources (as seen with the water/sand equipment above) helps children to be independent when tidying up. The ‘shadows’ relate to the base of the object that should sit on them. They are cut from coloured card or paper and glued to the shelf.



Sand/water

Creative

When a class is organised in this way, the children are in control of their learning. They are able to select the area in which to play, the resources to use in that area and what to do with them. Children's choices are naturally guided by the areas and resources available and it is therefore crucial for their learning and development to have areas to play in with varied, high quality, open-ended resources nearby

At Hitherfield, we recognise that the outside provision is key to us delivering our curriculum and in providing children with diverse, meaningful and challenging learning experiences. Our environment is planned for and set up with child's safety and their independence in mind. Research has shown us that children learn how to be safe in their environment through experience; therefore, we strongly encourage children to take risks in safe ways.

A Unique Child

We understand that each child is an individual with different experiences and needs. We endeavour to provide for children using their backgrounds to enrich their learning. Developing positive relationships are crucial to children feeling secure, valued and included; at Hitherfield there is a shared respect between the children and the adults working with them. We take account of each child's stage of development and any additional learning needs and strive to help them to progress to the best of their abilities. We celebrate children's accomplishments and achievements, no matter how big or small, as this will help each child to develop a positive self-identity and self-esteem. In partnership with parents/carers, we support children in feeling secure, safe, trusting and happy to come to school every day.

Well-being and behaviour:

At Hitherfield we consider supporting the well-being of children to be a vital aspect of our work. In the EYFS, children's Personal, Social and Emotional Development is a prime area of learning and our curriculum supports children to: learn to get on with others, make friends, understand and talk about feelings, learn about 'right' and 'wrong', develop independence and ultimately feel good about themselves.

Positive behaviour in the EYFS is supported through:

- Predictable and consistent routines
- Supporting children to recognise their feelings and be able to label these
- Praising positive behaviour
- Talking and Listening
- Modelling

- Supporting children to develop independence

In the EYFS, the whole school Behaviour Policy is applied in an age appropriate way and children are supported to understand their choices and the consequences of these choices. We recognise the role that parents/carers play in supporting their child's PSED and aim to work with parents/carers to support a child's behaviour.

Transitions

Transition is successful when:-

1. Practitioners know each child, including their interests and needs
2. The school is able to meet these interests and needs
3. Practitioners have formed a relationship with each family
4. Children know, and like, the practitioners
5. Children are familiar and happy with their new school environment, its routines and expectations
6. Children have met and made friends with some of the other children who will be in their class

Children transitioning from Hitherfield Nursery: -

In the Summer Term, the children in Nursery begin to access the outdoor provision in Reception in the period after lunch. This means that the children have the opportunity to become familiar with and confident in the Reception environment and begin to establish relationships with some of the adults working in Reception. They also complete a session in their new class as part of the whole school transition day.

Getting to know new to Hitherfield children: -

Contact with the pre-schools: Most children attend a pre-school setting and practitioners there will know them very well. One way we get to know the new child is to contact the pre-school to understand the strengths and interests of each child as well as how they operate within their current learning environment.

Stay and Play session in school: New children attend a Stay and Play session in July with their parent / carer. This allows the children a chance to explore their new class, to meet some of the staff and to meet other children that will be coming to school with them.

Home visits: These are conducted either at the end of July or the start of September. The home visit is crucial as it is the starting point for building a relationship with our families; a

time to exchange information and a further opportunity to gain a better understanding of the children.

Before the children arrive: -

Preparing the environment: Information gathered from the pre-schools, the families, the child and observations give the Reception staff a good picture of the new group of children they will be working with. Our staff can then prepare the environment to ensure that every child will have a wide choice of activities and that routines and expectations can be established from day one. For example; coat pegs, self-registration, resource storage and labels will all be in place so that routines can be taught from the first day. This contributes to the children developing a feeling of safety and security in regard to their learning spaces.

Induction into Reception: The induction period is carefully planned to ensure the children remain happy and confident at this time and are given the extra support they need to settle in. During their first week of Reception, children for 3 transition sessions ahead of their first full day; the first two morning sessions are conducted with half the class at a time before a morning session with the whole class.

This model means that, in the potentially anxious first couple of days, we have a maximum of 15 children in each class with all the staff. This allows us to give the children more attention and immediately establish routines and expectations.

Induction into Nursery:

The induction process into Nursery is similar to that in Reception but staggered over the course of 2 weeks instead of one. We also expect Parents / Carers to stay with their child for at least the first session and as long as necessary, as they help teach the routines too. This is especially valuable for children with English as an additional language as the parent can translate the messages from the staff. The settling sessions into Nursery are as follows:

- Stay and Play session in small groups
- FT children to start (mornings OR afternoons only for the four days)
- Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday children to start (mornings only for the first week)
- Wednesday/Thursday/Friday children start (afternoons OR mornings only for the first week)
- All Children at regular patterns (children will only start their regular patterns if they are fully settled)

Transition to Year 1:-

In the last half term, the transition from Reception to Year 1 becomes a focus in order that children are fully prepared for the next stage of learning. Children begin to join KS1 for some of their play times. They generate questions they have about the transition and Year 1 children are invited to answer these questions through an assembly. As part of our whole

school transition day, children meet their new teacher and spend some time in their new classroom and with their new class. On this day, teachers complete a comprehensive hand-over to ensure that key information about each child is shared and that the new teacher learns as much as they can about how best to support each child.