

# Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

## Document Control Page

### Revision History

Date	Type of change	Initials	Purpose of Revision
September 2021	Major	LW	Revision in line with new baseline/curriculum
September 2022	Minor	LW	Date changed in footer; p9 name of EYFS Governor added
September 2023	Minor	JW	Taken out named Governor - made generic reference
September 2024	Minor	JW	Transition section wording adapted
September 2025	Minor	LP	Updated statutory framework to 2025 Paediatric first aid staff linked to new safer eating within updated Early Years Framework 2025

**Date Approved by WGB Committee:** September 2025

**Date to be reviewed by Governing Body:** September 2026

*"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 Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It 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, 2021

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. In our school, all children join us, part time, at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. They all begin attending school full time by the October half term. Some children may require a longer induction period.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- 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;
- **Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.**

### Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning:

The 'prime' areas of learning and development are:

- Communication and Language
  - Listening, attention and understanding
  - Speaking
- Physical Development
  - Gross motor skills
  - Fine motor skills
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
  - Self-regulation
  - Managing self
  - Building relationships

The 'specific' areas of learning and development are:

- Literacy
  - Comprehension
  - Word reading
  - Writing
- Mathematics
  - Number
  - Numerical pattern
- Understanding the world
  - Past and present
  - People, culture and communities
  - The natural world
- Expressive arts and design
  - Creating with materials
  - Being imaginative and expressive

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are all equally important and inter-connected. 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.

## **A Unique Child**

At Hatch Warren Infant 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 and sharing 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 Hatch Warren Infant School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

In our school 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 planning for their learning.

In the EYFS we set realistic but 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;
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- planning challenging activities for all children;
- 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 Safeguarding Children 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 the Early Years Foundation Stage, 2021

At Hatch Warren Infant 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 **2025**. We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare of children.
- promote good health, including oral 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.
- 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 are 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.

## **Safer eating**

At Hatch Warren Infant School, we are regularly informed on updates made to the EYFS curriculum. The Early Years staff attend moderation training and policy update sessions to ensure that their knowledge is the most up to date to support and safeguard all pupils. Alongside the new Early Year Foundation Stage Framework being updated in September 2025, there has been a change to the safety and management around eating and first aid. All of our Early Years team will have the relevant Paediatric first aid training qualification in place to uphold the new safer eating policy set out in the new framework.

## **Positive Relationships**

At Hatch Warren Infant School, we recognise that children learn to be confident and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with all the children and their families.

## **Parents / carers as Partners**

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

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

- talking to parents / carers about their child before their child starts in our school; the teachers and teaching assistants offer to visit all children in their home setting prior to their starting school;
- providing children with the opportunity to spend time with their teacher and teaching assistant before starting school during story and class sessions;
- inviting all parents / carers to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school and to share ways in which they can support their child at home;
- inviting the parents during the induction period to watch videos on children's early math, phonics and reading skills recorded by subject leads to deepen their understanding of learning and development.
- Offering phonics refresher/new starter meeting to enable parents to feel confident in supporting their child with their learning at home.
- offering parents / carers regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our reception class;
- encouraging parents / carers to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. Each morning there is a member of staff on the classroom door to meet and greet children and parents. There is a formal meeting for parents / carers each term at which the teacher/teaching assistant and the parent discuss the child's progress in private. Parents / carers receive a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year;
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents / carers: come and learn with us afternoons, home learning opportunities, Sports Day etc;
- encouraging parents to read with their child at home and make comments in their reading records;
- encouraging parents to complete the children's talk books and wow moment certificates.
- welcoming parents as volunteers into our school.
- we also draw on our links with the community to enrich children's learning experiences by taking them on outings and inviting members of the community into our setting to talk about the lives, work and experiences.

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 as a 'Key Person' to all children in EYFS, supported by the teaching assistant.

We have good links with our local preschools and nurseries. Regular visits are undertaken by the EYFS teachers and Head teacher. The EYFS teachers meet with staff to discuss new intake children.

### **Enabling Environments**

At Hatch Warren Infant 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 the schools' Long Term Plan and Medium Term Plans, which are based around half termly themes. These plans are used by the EYFS teachers as a guide for weekly planning; however, the teachers alter these plans in response to the needs, achievements and interests of the children. This will be indicated on weekly planning.

Within the first six weeks that a child starts reception, staff administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects the children's next steps. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of formal and informal observation, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. Staff keep notes from some adult led activities and any photographic evidence is shared in the children's books.

Each child's level of development is recorded against 17 ELG's. Their progress is tracked on the schools own tracking system in October, February and June. Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written summary to parents / carers, reporting their progress against the ELG's and assessment scales. We give a reasonable opportunity for the parents / carers to discuss these judgements with the EYFS teachers.

Their progress is reviewed continually. Throughout their time in Reception, parents/carers are welcomed in to share their children's learning; both informally during planned times before and after school or more formally during parent/teacher consultations.

### **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 zones, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The EYFS classes have their 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 freedom to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. They also have an indoor corridor with a role-play area, more continuous provision activities and a set of four computers. The children are allowed to access the outdoor area and corridor on a free flow basis. We plan activities and resources for the children to access the free flow provision that help the children to develop in all 7 areas of learning.

### **Learning and Development**

At Hatch Warren Infant 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. The EYFS states that there are three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

- Playing and Exploring
- Active Learning
- Creating and Thinking Critically

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences. These 3 characteristics are incorporated within the planning of the EYFS and the children's individual abilities in each of the characteristics are shared with parents/ carers in the end of year written report. We provide children with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which they can develop these characteristics.

### **Teaching and Learning Style**

Our policy on teaching and learning 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 they do to the teaching in Key Stage 1. Features that relate to the EYFS are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents / carers, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement.
- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching.
- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication.
- 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.
- 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 / carers.
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school.

### **Playing and Exploring**

*"Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults."*

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, 2021

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.

### **Active Learning**

*"Children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy achievements."*

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, 2021

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 satisfactions as they take ownership of their learning.

### **Creativity and Critical Thinking**

*"Children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things."*

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, 2021

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.

### **Transitions**

At Hatch Warren Infant School, we recognise that starting school and moving up classes has the potential to be a stressful time for both children and parents. To this end we have established a strong procedure for transitions to ensure that our children and parents are as confident and secure as they can be when facing the challenges of each year group. We hold a meeting in the summer term before the children start school to provide parents with key information, school expectations, knowledge on our curriculum and assessment and advice on how they can help their child. The children then have visits to the school before the end of the summer term. All parents are offered a home visit prior to their child starting school. This gives children the security of meeting with their teachers in a safe, familiar environment and gives parents time to ask questions and share knowledge or any concerns they have about their child. At the beginning of the school year, new children are given staggered entry times to ensure that they have the time to feel welcomed and to support them in exploring their new environment. In Reception there is up to a four-week 'settling in' period to ensure that children have the time to become secure and familiar with the new routines before starting school full-time. At the end of Reception, children have the opportunity to meet with their new teachers in their classrooms prior to starting Year One. At the end of each school year, teachers have the opportunity to share their knowledge of each child's knowledge, understanding and achievements, including end of year assessment data, with their next class teacher to ensure that all teachers have a well-rounded picture of the children prior to the new school year. During children's time in Early Years, a range of shared activities are planned for all classes to help develop children's confidence and to ensure continuity in experiences throughout the Foundation Stage. Children make use of the whole school facilities, such as the hall, library and playing field for appropriate activities to ensure that children are confident and well prepared for moving around the school and for mixing with older children.

Throughout the Reception year, when children are ready, they are gradually introduced to whole school activities such as assemblies and to using the big playground and the wildlife area.

### **Community Links**

At Hatch Warren Infant School, the Foundation Stage classes enrich learning and encourage strong links with the local area through local visits to a museum, seasonal walks, visits to local places of worship etc and inviting in members of the local community during our annual topic on people who help us.

### **Monitoring and Review**

We are committed to providing the best possible experiences for our children. All adults in the Reception team have a key role in children's learning and development. Therefore, they are required to be knowledgeable and skilled in the EYFS curriculum. Any training needs for existing and new members of staff are identified and addressed as part of performance management targets.

We have a named governor responsible for the EYFS. This governor will discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners regularly and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion.

The Head Teacher, Deputy Headteacher and Year R Team Leader will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.