

# Harvills Hawthorn EYFS Policy



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This policy outlines the teaching, organisation and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage at Harvills Hawthorn Primary School. The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all the teaching staff.

## *Curriculum Intention*

In the Early Years Foundation Stage at Harvills Hawthorn Primary School, we aim to provide an atmosphere in which children can make the transition from home to nursery to school as secure and happy an experience as possible. We want to offer a friendly, caring environment where all children feel valued and welcomed. We firmly believe it is our duty to help prepare all of our children for the next stage of their lives to enable them to contribute positively to their community. We believe in the potential of every child so all our children are given the opportunity to develop the ability to surprise themselves and those around them. They are taught to challenge themselves to build confidence and resilience which they can apply to their own life experiences, now and in the future.

We believe that the Early Years Foundation Stage is an integral part of a child's education where all learning begins. It is the foundation that all other learning builds upon. We aim to provide a wide range of learning experiences to ensure learning is inspiring, exciting, purposeful and builds upon prior knowledge. Our ultimate aim is to ensure that all children receive the very best start to their education so they can continue to grow, learn, succeed and enjoy life.

Every child deserves the best possible start in life and also has the support they need to fulfill 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 combined with high-quality early learning provides the foundations children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. ('The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.' DfE March 2014).

## *Curriculum Implementation*

At Harvills Hawthorn Primary School, we pride ourselves on the consistent approach to teaching and learning that can be observed across all phases of school. This is achieved through our commitment to cutting edge CPD and quality first teaching on a daily basis. Expectations of staff and pupils are high, resulting in good or outstanding progress in all phases. There is a universal understanding of what outstanding teaching, learning and assessment should entail. These strategies are consistently used throughout school and it is the expectation of leadership that all lessons will include a variety of these to enable learners to reach their full potential. Active learning is essential in all aspects of the lesson. All staff use the same terminology so that learners develop a knowledge and understanding of the different ways they learn.

At Harvills, we believe outstanding teaching, learning and assessment must include the following:

1. Challenge for all
2. Collaborative learning
3. Assessment for learning
4. Questioning
5. Progression within lessons and books
6. Learning behaviours

We are working hard to promote our pupils' English and ensure that they all achieve to the very best of their ability. Pupils are encouraged to read widely and often. English is fundamental to all subjects. Consequently, we believe that all stakeholders have a role to play in supporting and developing our pupils' English skills to ensure they can communicate effectively in today's society. All children are expected to follow our school's non-negotiables for presentation. This includes a focus on learning to write in the cursive script.

### The EYFS Curriculum

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 at the beginning of the school year in which they turn five years old. At Harvills Hawthorn Primary School we use the statutory document 'Development Matters' to plan lessons, activities and assess all of our children.

#### **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.

#### **To achieve our aims we will:**

Provide a stimulating, interesting environment which encourages learning through play and exploration, using all the senses, both indoors and out.

Provide high-quality teaching and facilitate high-quality learning through exciting, first hand experiences

Value and build on previous experiences

Allow time for children to produce learning of depth and quality

Acknowledge that how children learn (the Characteristics of Effective Learning) is as important as the content taught

Provide a foundation for positive attitudes and values

Celebrate achievements

Deliver the curriculum using a variety of teaching strategies and cater for a variety of learning styles

## Learning and Development

### The Foundation Stage Curriculum

We aim to provide a broad, balanced and holistic approach based on the four themes of the Early Years Foundation Stage (A Unique Child, Positive Relationships, Enabling Environments and Learning and Development.) The curriculum is organised around seven areas of learning:

Three Prime Areas- which are crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development  
Communication and Language  
Physical Development

### Four Specific Areas-

Literacy  
Mathematics  
Understanding of the World  
Expressive Arts and Design

The prime areas begin to develop quickly in response to relationships and experiences, and run through and support learning in all other areas. The prime areas continue to be fundamental throughout the EYFS. The specific areas include essential skills and knowledge. They grow out of the prime areas and provide important contexts for learning.

Within each of the areas, is a series of age-related steps which produce a fuller framework for learning and teaching experiences. The curriculum is accessed through a combination of play, child-initiated and adult-directed activities.

### Learning through Play

Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. 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. There is an ongoing judgement to be made by practitioners about the balance between activities led by children and activities led, or guided, by adults. Practitioners respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning they will experience in Year 1.

### A Unique Child

At Harvills Hawthorn Primary School, we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We know that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by their school and home environments and we begin to build links with the families. We observe how each child learns to

gain an understanding of the characteristics they develop to become effective learners. We use questioning, praise and encouragement to develop a positive attitude to learning and high self-esteem. During their first year at school, the children are introduced to the learning habits. They are taught to be observant, investigative, curious, determined, imaginative, adventurous, co-operative and to use reasoning. Children begin to understand the concept of the growth mindset. They are taught that they can 'grow their brains' so that they understand that everyone can learn with practice and effort. The children are taught how to learn and how to become successful learners.

In the EYFS, we have realistic, but challenging, expectations and meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests
- developing their self-esteem and confidence through a creative curriculum and learning environment
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based upon children's learning needs
- providing a wide range of opportunities and environments to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which each child's contribution is valued
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary

It is vital that all children in the school are safe. Through citizenship teaching and the nurturing programme we provide children with opportunities to help them develop the skills they need to keep themselves safe. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards both in the real and virtual world.

### *Positive Relationships*

Here at Harvills, we recognise that children learn to be confident and independent through the development of secure relationships. We develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families. Staff develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them.

We have good links with the local feeder playgroups and regular visits are undertaken throughout the year. The EYFS teachers meet with staff to discuss new intake children.

### *Enabling Environments*

We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. The role of both the indoor and outdoor environment in learning/organisation of learning provides opportunities for child-initiated activities reflecting the topic where they can develop gross motor skills, social skills etc. We provide stimulating resources which are accessible and open-ended so they can be used, moved and combined in a variety of ways.

## *Observations, Record Keeping and Assessment*

### Pre-school visit:

This is one of our first personal contacts with the children entering our provision and whilst it is primarily an opportunity to meet and talk with the child and his/her parents or carers, it is also a time for staff to begin gathering information regarding the child.

### Home Visit:

This is a valuable time to find out about the children in their own environment. We carry out a very informal assessment of the child during play activities, which is part of the initial baseline and aid to planning when the child enters the setting.

*For more information please see our Home Visiting policy at the following link*

<http://www.harvillshawthorn.co.uk/other-information.php>

### Baseline Assessment:

On entry to Foundation Stage, all children are baselined against Development Matters Ages and Stages. This is an informal assessment done with all children and the results are collated and analysed. These results enable the teachers to plan for the next steps of all children. It also provides the school with the evidence to monitor the school's performance in later years as the children progress through the school.

Assessment evidence is collected through practitioner observations. Adults will observe and interact with children carrying out activities which they have initiated, interacting with peers and other adults. This may be in the form of anecdotal (WOW) observations, planned long observations, photographs, scribed child's voice and contributions from parents or carers.

Adults will observe children playing and learning across both the Prime and Specific Areas of the curriculum. For example, they will observe the children interacting with others, listening and responding, mark making or writing, using and applying their phonic and mathematic skills etc. This will be through an play-based activity that the child has either chosen or shown interest in. Adults will record the child's voice and their achievements in their assessments and make a judgement about the age and stage of development that each child is working within. This information gathered is then used to ensure individual needs are met.

All Nursery pupils are assessed on their language and communication skills using the WELLCOMM tool. The WELLCOMM tool scores children based on their use and understanding of language based on their age in months.

- If a child achieves a Green score, it means that they are using and understanding language at an age appropriate level.
- If a child scores Amber, it is an indication that a child is working below age appropriate level and will require some extra support.
- If a child scores Red, it is an indication that a child is working significantly below an age appropriate level and may require some more specialist involvement with other agencies or Inclusion Support.

- Children that scored Amber or Red are screened again later in the Autumn term to see if they are now working at an age appropriate level in their use and understanding of language. If not, they are identified for a further layer of support in Reception.

Pupils who are new to the school and join Harvills later in the Reception year will also be screened using the WELLCOMM tool to ensure that staff are able to assess their use and understanding of language and can identify any support needs early on.

#### On-going assessment:

Informal, verbal assessments of the children take place continually amongst staff as progress or difficulties are noted or commented on. Staff respond to this kind of assessment by adapting their teaching style, expectations, level of support, language or activities to suit, usually instantaneously. We also use jottings, photographs and written observation sheets to record developments, incidents or any significant information related to the children. This proves to be a valuable aid to our planning and helps us to make informed decisions about the appropriateness of our curriculum and to make monitoring and reporting of the children's development more accurate and accountable. Parents/carers are informed via the end of term and end of year reports and via parent/carer consultations.

#### Observations

Adults carry out a half-termly long observation of all children to track their progress, observe their interactions with others, identify their interests and plan for their next steps in learning. This is a useful tool in identifying and planning for the children's needs. To ensure that a balanced and holistic view of the child is represented in their learning journey, we ensure that a mixture of staff have observed the child across the course of the school year.

Each observation is then added to the child's Learning Journey which is accessible to all adults working with the child. This enables staff to clearly identify the child's next steps in learning. Parents and carers are welcome to ask to see their child's Learning Journey and they are also invited to share their child's Learning Journey with them during Inspire sessions and sessions where parents are invited into school.

All staff will also complete anecdotal observations when any child displays new learning spontaneously. This could be anything from learning to zip up their coat to counting to 100!

#### Assessment for Learning:

As part of the learning process, children will discuss with their peers, and/or with relevant adults, the outcomes of their learning, it's merits and the ways in which it can still be improved. This will be done on a regular basis and will involve:

- Children's conversations to help determine whether success criteria have been met
- Conversations with teaching staff to help determine whether success criteria have been met
- Use of AFL strategies

All of the above will support and augment school's formal assessment procedures.

#### Planning

Teachers plan learning using the statutory document "Development Matters" to ensure that all areas of learning are covered equally throughout the week, term and year.

Short term plans indicate targets, Success Criteria, child-initiated and adult-led focus activities, play-partner activities, evaluations and next steps. Planning is monitored termly by the Early Years Foundation Stage Lead to ensure consistency, quality teaching and learning and a broad and balanced coverage of the curriculum. Teachers take into account the children's interests and incorporate this into weekly planning where possible through reviewing long observations and discussions with children and staff.

### **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**

We aim to identify as soon as possible children who have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). Together with the help of parents/carers and the school's Inclusion Manager we plan for individual needs through provision mapping across the Foundation Stage. If a child is in need of support in multiple areas, we can plan an Individual Provision Map {IPM} to support them and personalise their learning experience further, enabling them to make progress in their areas of need. This approach is in line with the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice.

For Nursery children with complex needs, links will be made with Early Years Inclusion Support (ISEY) at the Coneygre Centre and where appropriate and necessary through Sandwell Inclusion Support. Children in Reception upwards will be supported through Inclusion Support at Connor Education Centre where school can seek advice and strategies from Educational Psychologists, Special Educational Needs Advisory Teachers, sensory support etc.

We have also bought into an Enhanced Speech Service where we have a speech therapist available in school to work with pupils who have Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) once a week. This enables us, as a school, to offer early identification and assessment, support and strategies to support pupils in developing their SLC skills.

### **Social, Emotional and Mental Health**

#### **Nurture**

Reception pupils in need of extra support in managing their feelings and behaviour, turn taking and social skills can access extra support for this through our Nurture provision. Children may be identified by staff or parents and carers and will then be assessed using the Boxall Profile tool to decide whether attending the Nurture group would be beneficial to them.

#### **What is a Nurture Group?**

Nurture groups offer an opportunity to benefit from the early nurturing experiences that some children lack, giving them the skills to do well at school, make friends and deal more calmly with the trials and tribulations of life, for life.

Our Nurture group is a class of up to 10 children, run by two members of staff, overseen and supported by the school's Inclusion Manager. Children attend Nurture in the afternoon and remain an active part of their main class group during the mornings.

Nurture groups assess learning and social and emotional needs and aim to give whatever help is needed to remove barriers to learning. Children are supported by role modelling, demonstration and gestures. The relationship between the two staff, always nurturing and supportive provides a role model that children observe and begin to copy. For more information, please visit the following link:

<https://www.nurturegroups.org/>



### Drama Therapy

School also have access to a Drama Therapist. If children are in need of accessing this support, they can be placed on the waiting list for a block of 6 sessions. Children can be identified by staff and/or parents. During drama therapy, children are given the opportunity to explore and develop social skills, empathy and self-confidence through using movement, play and drama. The child is able to use their imagination and have a creative outlet in a supportive environment.

### More Able, Gifted and Talented

Teachers will be mindful of the extra needs of more able, gifted and talented children and will differentiate questions and activities to allow for further progression and challenge. When a child exceeds the Early Learning Goals, the teacher will plan for their learning needs specifically using the KS1 curriculum and children will also be assessed using the Stage One AWL (assessing without levels) tool.

In the case of particular talents, parents and their children will be signposted to (where appropriate) extra curricular activities such as choir, arts, sports clubs etc.

The More Able, Gifted and Talented Lead will liaise with the class teachers to ensure individuals' needs are met and that appropriate targets are set and reviewed regularly. Please also refer to the school's More Able, Gifted and Talented Policy.

### Admissions and Transition

#### Principles:

Transition should be a smooth and seamless journey for all children, which takes account of the differences and particular needs of children. This relies on close, respectful relationships between families and schools.

- If children have attended a previous Early Years setting, we will liaise with the previous setting via the annual Sandwell Transition meeting. If the is setting outside of Sandwell, we will either make arrangements with parents or carers or the previous setting to gather any relevant information.
- For children who may have difficulty settling into school or children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND), we will work closely with parents and carers to plan an individual transition plan with personalised arrangements. This may include: extra transition visits for children, home visits by staff, visiting the child in their current setting and liaising with outside agencies who are involved with the child.
- We usually have a yearly intake to Nursery. Children who have their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday before the 31<sup>st</sup> August will start Nursery in the Autumn term. If there are still Nursery places available after the Autumn term, any remaining places will be offered to pupils who have had their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday during the Autumn term, for a January intake.
- We have one intake in September for Reception children.

#### Transition from home to Nursery:

- We provide a pre-visit for all children entering the setting for the child to attend with their parent/carer.

- We offer a home visit for Nursery children and an information booklet regarding the organisation and expectations of Harvills Hawthorn Foundation Stage.
- We have a staggered intake when children enter the beginning of the Foundation Stage (Nursery) thereby getting to know the children and his/her parents/carers that much more quickly.
- Parents/Carers have the option of staying with their child if it felt to be in the best interest of the child.

#### Transition into Reception:

Children entering Reception can find the transition process daunting whether they have attended a previous early years setting or not. We aim to make this transition as comfortable as possible for children and their families.

- We provide a pre-visit for all children entering the setting for the child to attend with their parent/carer.
- Parents are invited to a Reception parents intake meeting in the Summer term of the academic year before their child is due to start in Reception.
- Individual arrangements can also be made for pupils who are struggling with the transition process.

#### Links between the Nursery and Reception:

- The Nursery and Reception children share our indoor and outdoors facilities.
- They have separate registration, snack, whole class teaching and focus times. At certain times children will have the opportunity to experience 'free-flow' learning, indoors and outdoors, giving them further opportunities to access learning through an activity that best suits their learning needs.

Reception pupils attend the whole school assemblies, Nursery children begin to join some assemblies when they are settled and demonstrate readiness to do so, this is usually during the late Spring or Summer term.

All Foundation Stage pupils participate in a weekly Values assembly and also in major celebrations throughout the year e.g. Harvest, Christmas, focus weeks.

#### Links between the Reception and Year 1:

- Reception and Year 1 teachers meet in the summer term to discuss the children's learning styles, age and stage of development and plan for a smooth transition into Key Stage One.
- Reception children meet their Year 1 teachers in the summer term and initially spend an hour in their new classes. Following this, they will also spend a whole day in their new classes to ensure that transition is as smooth as possible for them. Again, for pupils that may struggle with transition, individual arrangements can be made.

The EYFS principles and experiences underpin and dovetail into the National Curriculum at Year 1. These two curriculums merge to form a continuum of learning.

#### **Partnership with Parents/Carers**

Parents and carers are regarded as partners in their child's learning. They are encouraged to add to the evidence used to compile a rounded picture of their child's progress by adding key achievements or

'Magic Moments' to their child's learning journey. These 'Magic Moments' can be communicated verbally, written on a Magic Moment slip or emailed to the EYFS parents' email address.

[Eyfs.parents@harvillshawthorn.sandwell.sch.uk](mailto:Eyfs.parents@harvillshawthorn.sandwell.sch.uk)

There are both formal and informal opportunities for parents/carers to be involved in their child's learning and education. Parents are encouraged to join in any of our activities whenever they are able. We hold weekly LAMP (Learn Alongside Me Please) sessions for both Nursery and Reception pupils and their parents. These begin after the children have successfully transitioned into the setting in the Autumn term (and after the January intake for Nursery) and provide an opportunity for parents to become immersed in the learning environment and experience a learning session from entry to the setting to the end of session. Parents are also welcomed into school to take part in Action for Children Stay and Play sessions, sports days and special assemblies as and when they arise.

We encourage parents/carers of the children to come in to school on an informal basis to look at the children's learning and to talk to the EYFS staff. We also encourage parents/carers to request a more formal appointment to discuss their child's progress in school at any point in the school year, should they feel that this is necessary.

Parents will receive two informal reports on their child's learning and progress and one formal, end of year report which summarises pupils progress towards achieving the Early Learning Goals and also the Characteristics of Effective Learning\*. There is also a more formal opportunity for parents to attend a parent's evening once a year. Parents will be informed of the date in the Autumn term.

*\*The Characteristics of effective learning take into account children's learning styles. Children learn using a variety of learning styles, which are unique to them. The Characteristics of effective learning help focus on **how** children learn rather than **what** children are learning.*

### Full time Nursery Provision

Harvills Hawthorn offers a fixed number of places for the 30 hours entitlement, at the moment this is fixed at a maximum of 10 places. This will be reviewed in line with the demand for 30 hour places. For full details on the 30 hours offer at Harvills Hawthorn, please see our [Nursery admissions policy](#).

**The pattern of attendance that we offer for a full time (30 hour) place at Harvills Hawthorn is:**

Monday:	8.45am-11.45am	12.30pm-3.30pm
Tuesday:	8.45am-11.45am	12.30pm-3.30pm
Wednesday:	8.45am-11.45am	12.30pm-3.30pm
Thursday:	8.45am-11.45am	12.30pm-3.30pm
Friday:	8.45am-11.45am	12.30pm-3.30pm

**A charge will be made for the cost of supervision and a meal during the 45 minute dinnertime period.**

Children will be greeted and collected from their Nursery classroom by their dinnertime supervisor at **11.45am**. Their dinnertime supervisor will take them to the dinner hall to support and supervise them throughout this period. They will be supported in:

- Developing independence in health and self-care skills e.g. washing and drying hands before lunch.

- Selecting the food that they would like for lunch (taking into account any allergies or dietary preferences).
- Helping to further develop skills such as using cutlery, cutting food up effectively etc.
- Reinforcing table manners and social skills around the dinner table.

They will also spend time on the playground supported by their dinnertime supervisor, giving them a chance to continue to develop their play and social skills with others, before being taken back to the Nursery setting to begin the afternoon session at **12.30pm**.

If parents require further childcare on top of the government funded 30 hours, top-up hours can be purchased. The maximum pattern of attendance across a day of childcare at Harvills Hawthorn is:

7.45am-8.45am	(Breakfast club)
8.45am-11.45am	(Nursery Am)
11.45am-12.30pm	(Dinner time)
12.30pm-3.30pm	(Nursery Pm)
3.30pm-6.00pm	(After-school club)

### Equal Opportunities

All the children in Harvills Hawthorn Foundation Unit are treated with the same respect, concern and professional expectations regardless of ability, religion, culture, lifestyle, social background, race, gender, ethnicity, age or language. We are committed to ensuring that displays, books and equipment reflect the diversity of backgrounds from which our children come. All children are given access to all areas of Early Years learning and adults sensitively intervene to ensure this, if necessary.

### Health and Safety

How do we maintain a healthy and safe environment?

By ensuring staff and/or children are aware of and carry out:

- Personal hygiene
- Safety procedures, locking doors and gates
- Maintenance of clean environment
- Maintenance of clear exits and pathways
- Emergency fire drill/evacuation procedures
- Trained first aid staff available.
- Trained staff to deal with spills and bodily fluids.

### Curriculum Impact

- Smooth transitions between home and school, Nursery and Reception, Reception and Year 1.
- Happy, confident and independent children.

- Parental satisfaction, measured through verbal and written feedback to the teachers and Head Teacher and via parental consultations and comments.
- Children to achieve a 'Good Level of Development' by the end of Reception
- Evidence of high quality learning and teaching; measured by planning, assessments, annotated learning samples and observations of individual children at work and play.

### **Summary Statement**

In the Harvills Hawthorn Early Years Foundation Stage, it is our aim to provide the best early years' experience we can for the children using our provision. We are dedicated professionals who are passionate about making learning fun, exciting, appropriate and effective to give young children the kind of start to school to which they are entitled, deserve and in a style they need.