Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Hampton Lakes Primary School

Policy last reviewed:	September 2026
Next review due:	September 2027
Member of staff responsible:	Mrs Helen Lloyd
Ratified by:	HL LGB

1. Rationale

"Every child deserves the best possible start to life and support to achieve their full potential. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their life chances. A secure safe and happy childhood is important in its own right and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up."

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of their reception year.

This policy works within the legal frameworks relating to:
Safeguarding, Child Protection and Prevent, Sex and Relationships Education, First Aid and SEN-D.

2. Principles of the EYFS

At Hampton Lakes Primary School we strive to meet every child's entitlement to develop a love of learning that will enable them to have the best future life chances.

The statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage states four overarching principles to the early education that should shape practice in the Early Years. 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**; there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers;

• Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs promoting a commitment to continuous provision both indoors and out and;

• Children **develop and learn** in different ways and at different rates.

3. The Early Years Curriculum

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

These three areas, the *prime* areas, are:

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

Providers must also support children in 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.**

Our Curriculum is established on the principles of promoting a deep love for learning that develops young people as leaders and innovators in their own right. We have a child centred approach to learning that is developed through skilled adults providing relevant, suitable resources and apparatus. All areas of the curriculum are given equal weighting, and are regarded with the same level of importance and are interlinked in learning. Our Curriculum includes fundamental British Values to teach children a sense of self and belonging; enabling them to learn and stay true to the values that make people good human beings. It strives to ensure that children can live together peacefully, with each of them playing a pivotal role in the diverse world in which we live.

At Hampton Lakes we deliver learning opportunities through a balance of adult led, adult guided and child-initiated activities, and commit to the **Characteristics of Effective Learning**:

- **Playing and Exploring**
- **Active Learning**
- **Creating and thinking critically**

We believe that through play and continuous provision our children are able to make sense of the world in which they live. They practise and construct ideas, developing as independent thinkers, and they learn how to interact with others, taking responsibility of their own actions and choices. The environment will promote language acquisition, curiosity, investigation and innovation.

4. Observation, Planning and Assessment

Children are experts in the field of playing, and adults in our EYFS are experts at watching their children play; providing resources that encourage them to explore, investigate and hypothesise. As they play they are deeply involved in learning about the mechanics of how things work and are thoroughly engaged in learning. As adults observe they will skilfully ask probing questions that will both consolidate and extend the learning that is taking place. This will then allow adults to make informed judgements about the children's knowledge, understanding and the acquisition of their skills.

Observation

- Watching
- Talking to
- Positive interactions
- Questioning
- Playing alongside
- Short annotations
- Narratives
- Photos

The Enabling Environment

The environmental design and layout of the learning environment is instrumental for effective EYFS provision. Our children should be able to move freely, both indoors and out, independently and purposefully around the environment to demonstrate the skills they possess. We strongly encourage a balance of child-initiated activities with adult led tasks and adapt our provision accordingly.

- **Continuous Provision** – Children will be able to independently access a range of play based resources that are both developmentally appropriate and challenging.
- **Enhanced Provision** – Children will access pre-determined activities, in order that key workers will consolidate and extend children's abilities in all areas of the curriculum. These activities will be based upon the observations and assessments that have been carried out of the pupils.
- **Questioning / Sustained Shared Thinking** – Adults will use question cards to prompt children to talk at greater depth about the learning that they have engaged in.

Planning

We use Development Matters (DfE revised 2023) as a tool to identify next steps for children to deepen and extend their knowledge and understanding. We use our knowledge of children's interests in order to plan a purposeful curriculum, that will change according to the cohort we have. During planning sessions, discussions take place to ensure activities allow for characteristics of effective learning to be demonstrated and embedded. In reception the teachers use 'Drawing club' as a way of developing the children's writing. Little Wandle is followed as a scheme for the teaching on phonics in both nursery and reception. The White Rose Mathematics scheme forms the basis of teaching and developing mathematical thinking.

Assessment

We make regular assessments of the children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs.

- Baseline Assessment – Within the first 6 weeks of school life we carry out an initial assessment of each child, using Development Matters. This assessment will inform us of the prime areas of learning as well as attainment within the specific areas of learning at point of entry for each cohort. The children will also be assessed on entry to our nursery class using Development Matters. This information will be analysed within the EYFS team and shared with SLT. We also carry out The Statutory Reception Baseline Assessment which became statutory in September 2021 which has a focus on the children's communication and language skills, phonics and mathematical understanding.

- End of year Assessment – An overall judgement of each child's attainment in relation the Prime and Specific Areas of Learning in addition to a summary of the Characteristics of Effective Learning. The children in nursery will be assessed against phases using the Birth to Five Matters document and the children in reception will be assessed against the Early Learning Goals.

- Moderation – work samples and judgements are analysed to ensure a consistent approach to learning standards in-house, cross-school and with the Local Authority.

- Parent Consultations – Parents are formally invited to discuss their child's achievements twice a year. Parents are invited to attend informal Stay and Play sessions to see their child at work and play.

- End of Year Report – all parents will receive a formal written report at the end of the year detailing the achievements of their child.

- Learning Journal – Observations that are made of each child will be compiled into a learning journal to share with parents, both electronically and in paper format.

Transitions

We recognise that the more informed we are about our children the better placed we are to provide a purposeful curriculum, with a team of adults who are best place to support, and as such we take starting school very seriously and offer a range of activities to support with this transition, including:

- Prospective parents evening
- Daytime tours of school
- Preschool/nursery visits
- Stay for a play sessions

- Move up day in the Summer Term
- Home Visits in the first week of September for nursery and reception
- Staggered start in September for reception
- Flexible sessions for the first week in September for nursery.