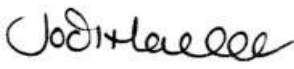
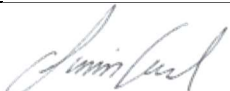




Our vision is to create an inclusive, friendly, safe and engaging learning environment which is grounded in our Christian values, enabling children to navigate obstacles, fulfil their potential and extend their horizons.

We value all members of our school community and encourage their individual talents and personalities so that each can shine in their own way.

Policy Name	Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy
Date written:	2021
Date of last update:	
Date agreed and ratified by Governing Body:	September 2021
Date of next full review:	September 2024
Signed by head Teacher: (Jodi Hacker)	
Signed by Chair of Governors: (Simon Curd)	

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1. What is “Early Years”?

For the purpose of this policy, “Early Years” refers to children in their first year of school.

Aims

The policy aims to ensure:

- That the children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives the broad range of knowledge and skill needed to progress through school and life.
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child is left behind.
- Close partnership working between practitioners and with parent/carers.
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- That children are provided with a secure, structures, caring and well resourced learning environment which meets all the individual needs of “young learners” to enable them to become confident, motivated and happy learners developing the skills and attitudes necessary for their own successful future learning.

2. Legislation

This policy is based on the requirements set out in the 2021 Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

3. Structure of the EYFS

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception Year. At Hawkhurst C of E Primary School, children join the Reception Class in the year that they turn five.

Children will all attend on a full-time basis from the start of the year. There will be two week settling in period as the children transition from preschools and nurseries to the classroom. There will be home visits from the EYFS lead and the Family Liaison Officer to talk about the children with their parents/carers to ensure a smooth entry to school.

In partnership with parents and carers we support the children in their learning journey through a rich variety of skills and experiences that provide the right foundations for outstanding progress through school and in life.

The EYFS is based upon these principles:

- A unique child – developing resilient, capable, confident, self-assured and excited learners.
- Positive relationships – supporting the children in becoming curious and independent
- Enabling environments – where opportunities and experiences respond to the individual needs of the child by developing a strong partnership between practitioners, parents/carers and the child.
- Learning and developing – an acknowledgement that the children learn in different ways and at different rates by understanding the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning i.e. Playing and Exploring, Active Learning and Creating and Critical Thinking.

4. Curriculum

Our Reception Class follows the curriculum as outlined in 2021 Revised Statutory Framework of the EYFS. The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development that are equally important and interconnected. However, the three areas known as Prime Areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The Prime Areas are:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

The Prime Areas are strengthened and applied through four Specific Areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Broad topics will be planned through observations and discussions with the children and a topic will only last as long as the children are interested in it. There will be Teacher Directed Activities where

practitioners will teach skills and concepts, Teacher Led Activities where practitioners will support and embed prior learning together with Child Initiated and Child Led activities where the children choose the activities that enable them to develop, scaffold and embed learning with their peers and are supported appropriately by practitioners. Some deviations from the topics will occur as these will link to significant events or interests. (e.g. religious festivals, snowy weather or a child finding a nest on the way to school, a child's achievements etc) and this is expected and celebrated.

We also look at the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning (CoETL). This gives us time to reflect and how and at what rate the children learn. By doing this we can adjust the provision to ensure that all children are experiencing purposeful and appropriate experiences and interactions with adults. These CoETL are:

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

Planning

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable them to learn effectively. Staff also take into account the children's individual needs, interests and stages of development and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies where appropriate.

We create an attractive, open ended and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment which is set up in discreet areas of learning and planned continuous provision. We also provide access to a stimulating, challenging and progressive Forest School area.

Effective learning builds and extends on prior learning and following interests. Effective planning is informed by observations of the children to ensure we follow their current interests and experiences. These observations are recorded in the children's "learning journey" to show "WOW" moments and development in their learning.

In planning and guiding children's activities practitioners reflect on the different ways children learn and include these in their practise.

Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult led and child initiated activities. Practitioners respond to each child's emerging needs and interests guiding their development through warm, positive interactions.

Play based learning is paramount and during child initiated learning sessions children direct their own learning from an enabling environment and resource bank provided by staff. Staff enhance play and extend as needed to influence individual learning steps. This learning is underpinned by the CoETL.

Our work is research informed. We have used the work of Alister Bryce-Clegg around open ended resources which enable pupils to drive forward their learning. We have also employed techniques from Greg Bolterell – (Can I Go and Play Now) which ensures that there are exciting hooks to stimulate ideas and learning. Adult interactions must be meaningful and supportive and not "interfering".

Practitioners are aware of individuals and groups next steps and support in play-based opportunities to scaffold children's learning. For example, an adult maybe observing a group of children who are using

the mud kitchen in a repetitive way. So, the staff may support their play by providing clipboards for mark making and writing recipes, scales for weighing ingredients and enhancing the recipes by encouraging the children to collect natural materials from the environment.

Whilst Child Led learning is favourable, it is recognised that for some learning, groups of children will need to be taken to complete specific tasks. Teacher Directed Learning sessions are carefully matched to the learning needs of the individuals and groups of children. As children grow older and as their development allows the balance gradually shifts towards more Teacher Led activities to help the children prepare for the more formal learning ready for Year 1.

The teaching of reading will begin within the first term. Children will begin with a single daily Read Write Inc. (RWI) phonics session taught as a whole class, covering set 1 sounds as well as oral blending and segmenting. After these sounds have been taught, individual assessments will take place to allow the children to be split into ability groups. As the year progresses phonics sessions will increase in length and include a speed sound lesson and a reading lesson. The children will be assessed every 6 weeks and progress will be recorded.

Each week all children will take home their reading book and a second phonically appropriate book plus a self-chosen book from the library to share an adult or sibling. To begin with children will develop their story telling skills through pure picture book. At an appropriate time, they will move onto the RWI reading scheme appropriate to the stage they are working at. Generally, all children should be accessing the phonically decodable worded books by the end of term 2. At the appropriate stage the children will be given “red” words (common exception words) as flashcards which they will take home to practice as part of their reading work. They will also be given nonsense words to build on their blending skills. All children will be listened to once a week 1-1 in school.

5. Assessment

At Hawkhurst C of E Primary School ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement and interest. These observations are used to shape future planning and are recorded in children’s “Learning Journeys”. Practitioners record and share these observations and “WOW” moments with parents regularly. During the children’s first term at school staff will complete a baseline assessment forming judgements based on their observations of the children. These will be used to assess the children’s entry levels and will allow staff to plan for children’s progression.

Across the year observations, photographs and examples of children’s work will be collected and added to the children’s learning journey. Data will then be recorded at the end of each term.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS Profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 Early Learning Goals indicating whether they have or have not (emerging) met the expected levels of development. Pupils are not assessed under “exceeding” in EYFS. The data will be moderated by EYFS/SLT and Year 1 staff internally or with members of the Quad schools.

6. Working with Parents

We recognise that parents are first and most enduring educators and we greatly value the contribution they make to their children’s education. We recognise the role that parents have played and their future role in educating the children. We do this through:

- Talking to parents/carer about their child before they start school, completing home visits in a majority of cases.
- Supporting children through the transition from preschool/nursery to Reception; members of the team visit or communicate with the main feeder nurseries and preschool where applicable, to meet the children and discuss progress with their keyworkers.
- Inviting parents to induction meetings during the term before their child starts school and to workshops during the Reception year in order to detail how we aim to work with their child, particularly in relation to Phonics, Maths and Forest School.
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting with parents twice a year at which parents and teacher discuss their child's progress on private. Parents receive a report on their children's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.
- Arranging a range of activity afternoons throughout the year that encourages collaboration between children, school and parents.
- Inviting parents to their child's learning journey through a home journal book where parents/carers can share achievements and activities outside school with us. The children then share these with their teachers and peers.
- Providing parents opportunities to celebrate and share their child's learning and development by coming into school to events such as parties and shared breakfasts.
- Sending out a regular newsletter from the classroom which includes activities to embed learning at home and celebrating events and achievements with the class.

7. Safeguarding and Welfare Procedures

Our Safeguarding and Welfare procedures are outlined in our Child Protection policy.

In line with statutory requirements all EYFS staff have supervision regularly throughout the year.

8. Out of Year Group Applications and Deferred Entry to School

When a child who is of reception age and born between 1st April and 31st August (Summer born) is not deemed ready by their parents/carers/guardians to start school in their expected year group, then the parents/carers/guardians can apply for admission outside of the normal age group.

Requests for admission outside of the normal age group should be made in writing to the head teacher as early as possible in the admission cycle associated with the child's birth. This will enable the school and the admissions agency sufficient time to make a decision before the closing date for admissions for the year.

Parents/carers/guardians are not expected to provide evidence to support their request to defer the child's admission. However, where provided, it must be specific to the child and might include medical or educational or psychological reports. There is no legal requirement for this evidence to be secured from an appropriate professional; however, failure to provide this may impede the school's ability to agree an admission deferral.

Parents/carers/guardians are required to complete an application to standard entry to the school, in case any request for admission out of year group is declined. This application shall be cancelled subsequently if the school agrees to accept a deferred application for entry into reception year the following year. Deferred applications must be made using a paper CAF to the LEA, with written confirmation from each named school included. Applications for deferred entry will be processed in the same way as all

applications for the cohort in the following admissions round and offers will be made in accordance with the school oversubscription criteria.

As a school we believe that a child should be educated in their age appropriate group. In our professional opinion, children who do not experience the full EYFS are disadvantaged both socially and academically when transferring to Key Stage 1. Through our highly skilled approach to differentiation, we feel that every child's needs can be catered for in their age appropriate year group, to ensure strong academic and emotional development.

In principle, a decision to admit a child outside their appropriate year group needs careful consideration and will only take place in exceptional circumstances. In order to assess the suitability of admission out of year group, the following considerations will be applied:

- It is the responsibility of the parents/carers/guardians of the child to provide independent evidence to demonstrate that their child will thrive in the year group they are requesting and also provide evidence that the child's appropriate year group is not meeting their needs.
- We recommend that children are admitted to school in EYFS at one admission point (September) and that staggered admission (Spring or Summer term) into school is not the preferred route for our school.
- If successful, any application can be cancelled if the school agrees to accept a deferred application for entry into Reception (Year R) the following year.
- Deferred applications must be made via paper CAF to LEA with written confirmation for each named school attached.
- Deferred applications will be processed in the same way as all applications for the cohort in the following admissions round and offers will be made in accordance with the schools oversubscription criteria.

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the FGB every three years as a minimum.

Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

This checklist lists the policies and procedures that we must have according the EYFS statutory framework.

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See Medical Needs Policy
Administering medicines policy	See Medical Needs Policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See Fire Evacuation Procedure Board
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Attendance Policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See Complaints Policy