

	Name of School	
	Policy review Date	1 st July 2021
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	Who reviewed this policy?	Mr C W Hobson
	Date approved by Board of Trustees?	8 th July 2021

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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Early Years Strategy Statement Rationale

At Hornchurch Academy Trust we recognise the vital importance of high quality early years' education, in setting a positive foundation for young children's learning and development.

We believe children's learning experiences should be relevant, imaginative, motivating, enjoyable and challenging and we endeavour to provide this through a carefully planned rich and varied curriculum

1. Aims:

- To inspire children through an imaginative and immersive curriculum, ensuring that the children are happy and enthusiastic to learn and that we foster and nurture the children's imagination and curiosity
- To develop an enabling environment - 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.
- To nurture independent and self-motivated learners, encouraging the children to adapt their work, think critically and take risks with their learning
- To prepare the children for 21st Century Life by ensuring that each and every child is literate and numerate, empathetic towards others, resilient and ambitious to succeed in whatever they set out to achieve
- To be their best in all they undertake, encouraging each and every child to try new things, work hard and push themselves to continue to achieve and to persevere in any activity that is before them
- To become curious about the world around them and practice the technique of Enquiry. Encouraging the children to develop problem solving skills, tackling any activity they set out to do
- To be aware of the wider Community, starting with their local community and providing opportunities to experience and learn about other communities and cultures further afield
- To become World Wise by fostering and nurturing the children's social and interpersonal skills, ensuring that they have the opportunity to work as a member of a team and can share their experiences and knowledge with their peers

EYFS applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. It is based upon four principles:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships



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- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) that applies from September 2021](#).

This document also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Structure of the EYFS

The two EYFS settings at Hornchurch Academy Trust cover reception classes only. Children start Reception in the academic year of which they turn 5 years old.

4. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2021.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the 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.

4.1 The Prime areas are:

- **Communication and Language** – Listening, Attention & Understanding and Speaking.
- **Physical Development** – Gross Motor & Fine Motor skills
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development** – Self-Regulation, Managing Self & Building Relationships

4.2 The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

- **Literacy** – Comprehension, Reading & Writing
- **Mathematics** – Number & Numerical Patterns
- **Understanding the World** – Past & Present, People Culture & Communities & The Natural World
- **Expressive Arts and Design** – Creating with Materials & Being Imaginative

4.3 Characteristics of Effective Learning:



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The EYFS also includes the Characteristics of Effective Learning. These are regularly assessed through observations and planned for throughout the EYFS.

The three characteristics are:

- **Playing and Exploring** – children investigate and experience things and ‘have a go’
- **Active Learning** – children concentrate and keep trying if they encounter difficulties, as well as enjoying what they achieve
- **Creating and Thinking Critically** – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things

4.4 Planning:

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staff working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, 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.

In planning and guiding children’s activities, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

4.5 Teaching Strategies:

We ensure that there is a balance of adult led and child initiated activities across the day. We believe that even during child initiated activities the adults’ role and interaction with the children is essential as this helps to build the children’s understanding and so guides new learning. The role of the adult is to continually model, demonstrate and question what the children are doing, either through participation in the children’s game or encouraging the children to participate or complete a task with the adult. The children are taught through a number of different strategies that are both Early Years based as well as direct teaching and investigative learning approaches. We Provide children with a safe and nurturing environment in which they feel safe and secure to learn. Planning follows Development Matters.

Play:



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Learning through play is an important and integral part of the Early Years curriculum and classroom. We believe children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them. We use prior assessment (obtained from pre-school and home visits) of the children's skills and knowledge, as the starting points for these experiences. We carefully plan the environment and opportunities within this environment to reflect on what has interested the children, making sure that we provide opportunities to extend and practice the skills they have learned through direct teaching. We ensure that each of the different areas of learning are represented in the environment and provide different experiences and opportunities to learn. We believe it is important that adults take an active role in child-initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating and extending their play. Achieving and maintaining the balance between child initiated and adult led activities is very important to us.

Direct teaching:

We have opportunities throughout the sessions in which each child is encouraged to participate in an activity led by the teacher or teaching assistant. The children participate in daily phonics sessions focusing on Phase 2 onwards; revisiting and ensuring Phase 1 activities are embedded throughout the phonics sessions each week to give each child a solid grounding in phonics. We follow the Active Learn maths scheme of work, which provides a purpose for learning and applying all maths skills. Guided reading sessions are taught on a weekly basis to all children and each child is heard reading individually at least once every half term. All direct taught sessions are carefully planned and tailored for each class using previous assessments of the children's knowledge, skills and ability. Planning is changed and tailored regularly and in response to the result of taught sessions, ensuring all teaching and learning is relevant and challenging for each child. When pupils are ready and show aptitude and interest, they will be given opportunities to develop letter forms, words and simple sentences. This will always be pupil led.

Inclusion at the Foundation Stage:

We believe that all our children matter. We give them every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of their wide ranging life experiences when we plan for their learning.

Within the Early Years Foundation Stage, we have realistic, but high expectations that challenge the children so that every child achieves to the best of their ability. We help them do this by planning to meet the individual needs of every child as well as the needs of different groups of learners. These include pupils with disadvantage, boys and girls, children with SEND, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children from different ethnic groups and of those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.



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We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build on and extend the children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence.
- Using a variety of teaching strategies that are based on children's learning needs.
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support all children, and to help them to learn effectively.
- Offering a safe and supportive learning environment, in which the contribution of all children is valued.
- Employing resources that reflect diversity, and that avoid discrimination and stereotyping.
- Planning differentiated activities that challenge all children, their educational needs and cater for their ability.
- Monitoring children's progress, and providing support where necessary (such as speech therapy, 1:1 support, working with the Educational Psychologist).
- Identifying and informing the SENCo of any concerns, seeking advice where necessary.
- Identifying groups of learners within our setting and ensuring that all groups and individuals are planned for effectively and make good progress.
- Regular data analysis carried out by the leadership of the school, which enables us to identify individual needs and groups of learners' needs.

Classroom Organisation:

The Early Years classrooms are organised with defined areas with clearly labelled resources to ensure that children can access these easily and confidently. They are planned carefully to provide the children with the opportunity to access all seven areas of learning. Classrooms have the opportunity for children to experience writing, maths, creative play, role-play, construction and small world play, as well as quieter reading areas. The outdoor area is as important as the indoor environment and is something we continue to develop, creating the links between the indoor and outdoor environments.

5. Assessments, Observations and Target Tracker

At Hornchurch Academy Trust ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).



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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 are:

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

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child.

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.

6. Working with Parents and Carers:

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. The progress check and EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Each child is assigned a key person who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

6.1 Transition:

See Appendix 2

7. Safeguarding and Welfare Procedures:

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by talking to children about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth

We follow [statutory guidance](#) for safety around supervised tooth brushing.



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The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

7.1 Health and Safety:

Within the school we follow a set of guidelines regarding different aspects of Health and Safety.

- **Healthy school meals** – our children when they enter Reception are entitled to a free school meal and are provided with this. The school meals are carefully catered and follow a healthy food model.
- **Healthy snack** – Fruit and milk are provided and are available for children to eat. We also encourage children to try new or more exotic types of food/fruit.
- **Accidents and First aid** – There is a trained Paediatric First aider on site at all times. All first aid cupboards are clearly labelled and regularly updated. All accidents are recorded and parents are informed of any accidents. If a more serious accident occurs (e.g. significant bump, scrape or graze) parents will have a phone call home to inform them of anything that has happened before the end of the session.
- **Fire alarms** – A fire alarm practise is organised at least once a term and all of these are timed and recorded. We have set fire doors throughout the setting and the caretaker carries out regular safety checks.
- **Child Protection and Safeguarding** – We have a very clearly set out safeguarding policy. Each School has an allocated Safeguarding team



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

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 health and safety policy
Administering medicines policy	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See health and safety policy
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
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy



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Appendix 2: Transition

There are two transitions during the Foundation Stage at Hornchurch Academy Trust that we manage with care.

- The first transition that occurs during Early Years is the transition from Nursery/Pre-school/Child-minder/Home to Reception. This jump from part time schooling to full time can be very daunting for both parents and their children and we aim as a school to ensure that any transition is as smooth and comfortable as possible.
- In order to do this, parents are invited to a new intake meeting during the summer term to provide parents and carers with information about the school and the curriculum. We also have the opportunity to talk about other general information subjects, such as school dinners, reading books and an opportunity to meet the EYFS team.
- We invite the children to an intake tour.
- There are transition meetings planned during the summer term between pre-schools and the EYFS lead, allowing the Early Years Practitioners to provide further information about each child's development and pass on any other important information about each child (e.g. medical, SEN, EAL, etc.)
- The reception teachers and teaching assistants conduct home visits and meet the children, parents and carers in their own environment.
- The final transition is between Reception and Year 1. During this transition the children have an opportunity to visit their new classroom, teacher and teaching assistant. There is also the opportunity for Reception teachers and Year 1 teachers to meet and inform the child's new teacher about each child's level of development, ELG achievement and any other information about each child (e.g. medical, SEN, EAL, etc.).



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Appendix 3:

Agreed local variations

Upminster Infant School

Curriculum:

At Upminster Infant School we use the Early Years International Curriculum as a basis for our planning and capture the children's curiosity through the following topics:

Autumn 1 This is Me	Autumn 2 Animal Explorers
Spring 1 To the Rescue	Spring 2 Blast Off
Summer 1 The Brilliant Bug Ball	Summer 2 Going Places

Visits:

The part of visits plays a very important role at Upminster Infant School, as these are seen as an opportunity to further develop our children's view of their world or community. In the Spring term we have a visit from a Mobile Zoo, a Superhero Workshop and a Planetarium to support our Animal Explorers, To The Rescue and Blast Off topics. In the Summer Term we go on a school trip to Thurrock Thameside Nature Park to provide learning opportunities for our Going Places topic. We ensure that there is a ratio of 1:5 on our visit.

Child Protection and Safeguarding:

We have a very clearly set out safeguarding policy. Our Safeguarding Lead is Mrs Lendon (Head of School) and the other members of the team are Mrs Hebron and Mrs Connolly.

Relationship with Parents and Carers:

- Parents and carers are invited to various workshops and celebrations each half term. Here they have the opportunity to celebrate achievements and learn more about the EYFS curriculum.
- We have weekly newsletters, informing parents and carers of what we are focusing on during the week, important dates and useful websites to consolidate learning.
- We have a Reception notice board in the school playground with any important information, PE days, dates and sounds/numbers we are learning that week.
- We also send home/school links books as an open communication between home and school and are checked on a daily basis.
- We have 'Wow Books' where the children can stick certificates, photos or information about what they have done at the weekend or in the school holidays. They share these books with the class on a regular basis.



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Agreed local variations

Scargill Infant School

The broad possible topics are:

Autumn 1 Marvellous Me	Autumn 2 Celebrations
Spring 1 Dinosaurs	Spring 2 On the Farm
Summer 1 Minibeasts	Summer 2 People Who Help Us

Note: Observed needs and children's interests which vary from cohort must be considered and catered for. Most importantly the curriculum should always be flexible and respond to children's individual needs and interests, so that mini-topics e.g dinosaurs, vehicles, can form part of the curriculum.

Visits:

The part of visits plays a very important role at Scargill Infant School, as these are seen as an opportunity to further develop our children's view of their world or community. In the Autumn Term we have a Diwali workshop in school and we take a trip to the local shops. We also have a phonics workshop for parents. In the Spring term we have a visit from Dino Girl for our Dinosaurs topic and a maths workshop for parents. Wellgate Farm will come and visit for our On the Farm topic. In the Summer Term we have a minibeast workshop as well as conducting our own minibeast hunt. In Summer Term we have an assembly for parents and a trip to either the bus garage or fire station. Throughout the year we invite parents into stay and play with their children.

Child Protection and Safeguarding:

We have a very clearly set out safeguarding policy. Our Safeguarding Lead is Miss McGahey (Head of School) and the other members of the team are Mrs Meintjes, Mrs McLoughlin and Mrs Harwood.

Relationship with Parents and Carers:

- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school
- children from our main feeder pre-schools visit in the summer term before they start and participate in a transition unit
- inviting parents/carers in to share and discuss their child's Learning Journals with them once a term
- providing their child's Google Classroom account for parents/carers/children to share information, photographs and activities



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- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: Christmas Concert, Stay and Plays, Reception Parent/Carer Assembly, maths and phonics workshops, Sports Day, school outings etc
- providing children with practical challenges and activities to complete at home with their parent or carer to reinforce what is being taught at school
- sending home, the class pet with the pet's diary to allow parents/carers to complete and help their child to share any special news with their peers
- fortnightly newsletters to inform parents about what the children are learning and events happening at school