

# Hillesley C.E.V.A. Primary School



# Early Years Policy

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## Early Years Policy

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EFYS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Hillesley CE VA Primary School in partnership with parents and carers we enable the children to begin the process of becoming active learners for life.

We endeavour to ensure that children "learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe." We aim to support children in their learning through "teaching and experiences that give children the broad range of skills that provide the right foundation for good progress through school and in life." (Statutory Framework for the EFYS 2012)

### Our Philosophy

At Hillesley CE VA Primary school we believe that **every child matters** and deserve the best possible start in life. In the Early Years Foundation Stage we aim to provide this by looking at what the children can do and by supporting them in ways that affect their future life chances. We acknowledge the role of parents as an vital part of their child's development and believe that the partnership with parents is integral to the provision of high quality early learning in school.

At this school we aim to provide a broad, balanced curriculum which will enable each child to develop emotionally, socially, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential. Each child is unique and valued as an individual. Children become independent learners through the provision of a balance of child initiated and adult led experiences. Play based activities are at the heart of learning where first hand experiences offer a realm of opportunities to be interested, excited and motivated.

The EFYS is based upon four principles:

- **A unique child**-developing resilient, capable, confident and self-assured individuals.
- **Positive relationships**-supporting the children in becoming strong 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 children learn in different ways and at different rates.

### A Unique Child

We recognise that every child has the potential to be 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 certificate worship, stickers and team points to encourage a positive attitude to learning.

#### **Inclusion**

At Hillesley CE VA Primary School we value all children and their families. We value the diversity of individuals within our school and ensure equal access to all provisions available. We believe that all children matter and give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. Planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities, taking into account children's range of life experiences. In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children.

Assessments take into the account contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential special educational needs is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Where children are identified as needing extra support within the setting the parents/carers, practitioners and the SEND coordinator work together to create a plan to identify how the child will be given extra support. We liaise closely with a range of outside agencies in order to support and help the child and their parents/carers.

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 learn effectively.
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contributions of all children are valued.
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping.
- Planning challenging activities for the most able children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills.
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.
- Providing support and challenge for our children by working with other age groups within the class.

### **Safe guarding**

It is important to us that all children at Hillesley CE VA Primary 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.

"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."

At Hillesley CE VA Primary 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 2012. We understand that we are required to:

- Promote the welfare of children.
- Promote good 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 have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment are safe and suitable for purpose.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and meet the needs of the children.

### **Positive Relationships**

At Hillesley CE VA Primary School we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

#### **Parents as Partners**

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

- Talking to parents about their child before their child begins school.
- The children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during our taster sessions and when staff visit children in their own setting.
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school.
- Inviting all parents to school events throughout the year.
- Supporting the children through the transition from pre-school to Reception with the children attending part time through the first 3 weeks of term.
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher. There is a formal parents meeting twice a year at which the teacher and parent discuss the child's progress in private. Parents receive a written report on their child's attainment, progress and characteristics of learning at the end of the school year.
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents; celebration worship, termly Church worship, welly walks, school and class performances and open days.
- Operating an 'open door' policy, key members of staff are available at the end of each school day for parents with concerns or queries.
- Enabling parents to have a thorough knowledge of the range of activities they tackle at school by looking at their child's learning journals which the children bring home to share each Friday.
- Providing parents with opportunities to celebrate their child's learning and development through completing home link pages and characteristics of learning summaries in their child's learning journals.
- Providing children with rainbow words, phonics packs and cards to enable parents to support their child's learning at home.
- Providing parents with termly topic webs detailing the kinds of activities and areas of learning we will be exploring at school.

### Enabling Environments

At Hillesley Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development and learning, observation, assessment and planning.

The planning within the EYFS follows the KS1 medium term plans which are based around half termly and termly themes. These plans are used as a guide for weekly planning; however we may alter these in response to the needs of the children.

#### **Assessment**

The Statutory Framework requires two levels of assessment in the EYFS. **Formative** assessments involve noticing what children say and do through observations. These observations are recorded in the children's learning journals which also contain observations and comments made by parents. These observations are

then used to plan 'what next' in terms of planning, organisation, learning environment and experiences to extend the children's learning. The teacher and nursery nurse will ensure that they do not take prolonged breaks from working or playing with the children to write up written observations.

**Summative** assessments involve comparing a child's attainment with a description of what would be typical for children of roughly the same age. These periodic assessments will provide an overview of progress throughout the year.

At Hillesley Primary School we use the Gloucestershire Summative Development Record to track progress of pupils through 'Development Matters' attainment bands. This information feeds into the formal reporting of attainment at the end of the Reception year. At the end of the ETFS each child will be assessed against 17 Early Learning Goals using a 'best fit' approach. The teacher will indicate whether children are 'emerging', 'expected' or 'exceeding' levels of development. This is the EYFS profile, the final data of which will be sent to the LA in June. We provide a written summary to parents reporting their progress against the ELGs and a short commentary on the three characteristics of effective learning. The EYFS/KS1 classroom is organised to allow the children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can either be active or quiet. The classroom is set up in learning areas where children are able to locate resources independently. The EYFS and KS1 children also have their own enclosed outdoor area, known as the friendship garden. 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 opportunities to explore use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children develop in all seven areas of learning.

In the outdoor environment we provide children with a wide variety of adult led and child initiated activities and opportunities for the children to work independently and collaboratively both on large and small scales. We value the friendship garden as an integral learning area for all the children with unrestricted access. The friendship garden is used in all weather helping the children to develop their skills and knowledge of the world around them. The friendship garden promotes creativity, investigation, problem solving and enables them to build and practice skills, develop communication, collaboration, active learning and enjoyment.

### Learning and Development

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision 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 for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

#### **Prime Areas:**

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

We will also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

#### **Specific Areas:**

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Knowledge of the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

"Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Play is used as an essential part of 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 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 must 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 it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1." (Statutory Framework for EYFS 2012)

### Characteristics of Learning.

Planning and guided children's activities will reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. At Hillesley Primary School we support children in using the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning. These are;

- **Playing and exploring**-children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- **Active learning**-children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- **Creative and thinking critically**-children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

At Hillesley CEVA Primary School the Reception children are taught by a trained and very experienced Nursery Nurse, she works and plans closely with the Key Stage 1 teacher both to ensure the children experience a wide and varied curriculum and also to have the chance to work with the whole class to develop their social and interaction skills. The Reception children are involved with all aspects of school life, taking part in worships, concerts, productions, trips and events.

### Health and Safety

At Hillesley Primary School all staff are aware of and adhere to the School Health and Safety Policy, there are clear procedures for assessing risk which includes procedures for keeping children safe during outings and for any aspects of the environment or provision that may require a further risk assessment. The Headteacher ensures all members of staff are aware of Child Protection Procedures.

In line with the EYFS Statutory framework 2012, at Hillesley Primary School we undertake;

- There are systems in place to ensure that medicines and the systems for obtaining information about a child's needs for medication are kept up to date. Medicines (both prescription and non-prescription) are only administered to a child where written permission for that particular medicine has been obtained from the child's parents/carers on the same day. At Hillesley Primary School a written record is kept each time a medicine is administered to a child and informs the child's parents/carers. Training is provided for staff where the administration of medicine requires medical or technical knowledge. Medicines are stored in the school office or staffroom fridge if necessary, areas where children do not have access.(Statutory framework for the EYFS 2012)
- Fresh drinking water is available at all times.
- Children's dietary needs are recorded and acted upon when required
- The EYFS/KS1 classroom has a sink and snack area and the children are offered a healthy snack each morning.
- A first aid box is accessible at all times and a record of accidents and injuries is kept. As of September 2012, all teaching assistants are paediatric first aid trained.

- A health and safety policy stating and procedures which cover identifying, reporting and dealing with accidents, hazards and faulty equipment.
- Mobile phones are stored in a lockable cupboard or in areas where children do not have access, such as the staffroom. There is one school mobile phone which is used during outings. Taking photographs of children using a mobile phone is not permitted under any circumstances. Photographs of children should only be taken using school cameras. These cameras should not be removed from the school premises unless being taken on class trips or visits. Photographs are not to be saved on personal or home computers.
- Parental permission to use photographs of the children is collected annually and a written record is kept of this information.

### Induction

At Hillesley Primary School we realise the importance of a positive introduction to school, for both child and parents/carers. Therefore our admission arrangements are carefully organised and regularly reviewed to ensure that all parties are happy and confident and fully informed about all aspects of our induction programme.

During the summer term prior to a child's entry into the Reception year the following procedures have been put in place to ensure successful transition.

- Parents are invited to a meeting to ensure they know Hillesleys induction and admissions programme and are given the chance to any concerns they may want to express any concerns they may have. Parents will also have the opportunity to meet the Head teacher/Senior leadership and members of the EYFS teaching staff.
- During this meeting the parents are encouraged to complete an "all about me" booklet with their child. This will be used during the autumn term to support transition and to inform planning.
- The children will be invited to two separate "taster sessions" to the EYFS/KS1 class. Further visits can be arranged if needed. On the second visit the children will be given their first Learning Journal which may be used during the summer holidays to record children's drawings, photographs. This will again be used to aid transition and planning in the autumn term.
- Members of staff from Hillesley Primary School will make visits to our feeder settings during the summer term. The number of visits will depend on the child's needs and how much information gathering is required in order to support the child's transition. This may include home visits if it is necessary.

### Transition to Key Stage One

During the final term in Reception a written summary of achievement is completed for each child, usually the E profile is used for this purpose. The profile indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development or if they are exceeding expected levels or not reaching expected levels (emerging). The parents are also given a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three characteristics of effective learning. Both the teacher and nursery nurse are involved in the creation of these documents.

The mixed age nature of our classroom means that reception children work and play closely with both Key Stage 1 children and staff from their first days in school, this helps aid a smooth transition into Year 1. The children continue to have access to the friendship garden and take their learning journals home each week to share with their parents/carers.

### The School Community

Hillesley CEVA Primary School is a Church of England School with well established links to the local church of St. Giles. We attend worship at the church each term, with regular worships led by the St Giles clergy team. We also regularly use the church as part of our RE teaching. At Hillesley CEVA Primary School we embrace the Christian ethos and also ensure our children learn about the wide variety of cultures and beliefs of all faiths within our society at an appropriate level for Foundation Stage children.

The school also has relationships with local playgroups, nurseries and childminders. We regularly invite local playgroups to attend school events including our welly walks.

The Governing Body take an active role in all aspect of school life and a named Governor is appointed to liaise with the Foundation Stage.

It is the responsibility of the Foundation Stage Team to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Head Teacher and Foundation Stage Team will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

Policy Updated 2016

Policy Review 2019 unless required before.