



EYFS Policy

Revised: April 2024

To be reviewed: April 2027

At Halstead Community Primary School, everyone takes pride in demonstrating respect and kindness. In our inclusive, nurturing environment, we inspire and challenge our children through memorable learning experiences. We build a flourishing family which embraces individuality and independence where everyone can succeed.

Aims

Our aims are to ensure that every child in Reception will:

- Be happy and feel positive about school
- Feel safe and secure in their new environment
- Make friends and develop confidence in relating to new children and adults
- Become more independent and self-confident about tackling new skills and activities.
- Develop good attention skills and the ability to concentrate on tasks.
- Achieve the best in all areas of the curriculum and be proud of their achievements
- Develop good social, moral, cultural and spiritual awareness

Principles that underpin this policy

We recognise that children under 5 year's olds have very specific needs. They need:

- To be in a class with a good adult to pupil ratio. All of our Reception classes have a full time teaching assistant in them.
- Access to outside safe learning areas and easy access to washing and toilet facilities. EYFS children have access to separate toilet facilities and their own learning environment.
- Classrooms that are organised and make effective use of the space available.
- Children are given an appropriate amount of time to adapt to their new environment, to settle in and to learn new social skills.
- A smooth transition from their nursery setting.
- The Early Years curriculum provides opportunities to explore, investigate, create, manipulate, talk, imagine, listen and time to practise and master new skills.
- It builds on what our children already know and can do.
- It ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged;
- It offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children and activity that provides opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
- It provides a rich and stimulating environment.
- Early years practitioners are encouraged to attend relevant training provided internally and are led by an experienced EYFS leader.

Leadership and Management

The EYFS leader will manage and coordinate all of the staff within the Foundation Stage. She will report to the Head teacher and governors on the Foundation Stage.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

At Halstead Community Primary School, we are committed to inclusion in all its aspects and ensure that all children, regardless of ability, race, gender, culture, SEND or disability, are given appropriate opportunities to access the EYFS curriculum. In order to achieve this, we provide a differentiated curriculum and, where possible, additional support.

When twins enter the EYFS we put them in to two different Reception classes. This helps develop their independence, social interaction with their peers and self-confidence.

In the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage. Some children progress beyond this point. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds. 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 to learn effectively;
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;

Reception Curriculum

The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is carefully structured in order to provide for:

- The different starting points from which children develop their learning, building on what they can already do.
- Relevant and appropriate content that matches the different levels of young children's needs.
- Planned and purposeful activity that provides opportunities for teaching and learning both indoors and outdoors.
- Teachers produce a medium term plan based on the topic, together with weekly plans which detail the activities provided for the children, learning objectives, adult involvement, assessment opportunities and evaluation.

Our Reception curriculum recognises the above principles and aims to incorporate them as far as is practically possible. The curriculum is based on seven broad areas of learning, three of which are classed as Prime Areas and the other four areas are classed as the Specific areas. They are then broken down into 17 Early Learning Goals which are as follows:

Prime Areas:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
 - Making relationships
 - Self-confidence and self-awareness
 - Managing feelings and behaviour
- Physical Development
 - Moving and handling
 - Health and self-care
- Communication and Language
 - Listening and attention
 - Understanding
 - Speaking

Specific Areas:

- Literacy
 - Reading
 - Writing
- Mathematics
 - Numbers
 - Shape, space and measure
- Understanding the World
 - People and communities
 - The World
 - Technology
- Expressive Arts and Design
 - Exploring and using media and materials
 - Being imaginative

Play in the Foundation Stage

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control impulses and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They can take risks and make mistakes, think creatively and imaginatively.

At Halstead Community Primary School, we believe that well-planned play, both indoors and outdoors, is a key way in which young children learn with enjoyment and challenge. Through play, children can develop an understanding of the world around them. They can practise and build up ideas, concepts and skills. They learn how to control impulses and to understand the need for rules.

They can take risks and make mistakes, think creatively and imaginatively. They learn to communicate with others as they investigate or solve problems. They are able to express fears or relive anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations. They can be alone, be alongside others or co-operate as they talk or rehearse their feelings. We help children to learn through their play by planning and resourcing a challenging environment, supporting children's learning through planned play activity, extending and supporting children's spontaneous play and developing children's language and communication in their play.

The Role of Adults

All adults in the Foundation Stage should be aware of the need for children to actively explore their environment, be independent learners, set their own challenges and make their own discoveries. It is the adult's role to provide suitable learning resources, activities and experiences, to stand back and observe, to intervene where appropriate to extend children's learning and to create a safe and secure environment in which all children and adults feel valued.

Assessment

The main purposes of monitoring and profiling children's achievements are:

- To gain an all-round profile of each child's developing capabilities
- To highlight any specific needs and to plan appropriate learning paths
- To enable parents to be informed and contribute to their child's educational progress
- To enable staff to assess the effectiveness of their own planning and teaching and to monitor what is being achieved
- To inform future planning

We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of observational notes, photos, evidence in books, learning folders and parent and child's voice.

During the children's first half-term in the reception class, the teacher assesses the ability of each child using Target Tracker. Target Tracker is then used to inform planning. Children will be assessed using Target Tracker on an ongoing basis and for children's steps to be reported termly. Children are then assessed at the end of the year against the Early Learning Goals. Parents receive an annual report that offers brief comments on each child's progress in each area of learning. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs and gives details of the child's general progress.

The role of parents

We believe that all parents have an important role to play in the education of their child. 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 starts in our school;
- the children have the opportunity to spend time with their class teacher before starting school;
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school;
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our Reception classes;

- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents each term at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher.
- parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year;
- having flexible admission arrangements for children with SEN difficulties that enables children and parents to become secure by allowing time to discuss each child's circumstances;
- arranging for children to start school over the first three weeks of term. We stagger the starting time of each child over this period, so that the teacher can welcome each child individually into our school.
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents;
- offering a range of activities that support the involvement of parents. There is regular communication with home through the child's school diary. We invite parents to curriculum evenings to discuss the kind of work that the children undertake in the Reception class.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The quality of our provision for the children in the Foundation Stage is our main priority. To ensure that we provide the best possible quality of teaching and learning, we have a rigorous system for monitoring and evaluation. All planning is monitored regularly. The individual Reception teachers are also responsible for evaluating their own planning and practice and identifying areas for improvement. Where necessary training courses are attended by members of the Foundation Stage Team in order to improve their own knowledge, skills, and understanding and the effectiveness of their teaching. Team members also meet on a weekly basis to discuss planning, organisation, resourcing or training needs. Where major improvements are deemed necessary, these are implemented through the School Improvement Plan.